

BOC meeting 1/6/26

Tuesday, January 6, 2026 11:00 AM, 4th Floor Council Chambers

All 3 Commissioners and legal counsel John Murphy present. 5 on line. All items passed unanimously, except the snowplow study IPG item (c) was tabled. Recessed at 11:28.

A. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS: Opening and Reading of Bids/Letters of Interest on:

B. REPORTS AND REQUESTS FROM:

COMMISSIONERS:

- a) Election of Officers
- b) Approval of the Accounts Payable Docket
- c) 2026 Boards & Commissions Appointments: All 3 are on Board of Finance and Solid Waste Boards. Hazen on Drainage Board, PSAP Executive Board, and St. Joseph River Basin Commission. Carl Baxmeyer is on Michiana Area: Council of Governments and with Morton is on the Housing Consortium.
- d) 2026 Department Appointments: As far as I can tell, no changes. Phil Garrett remains County Attorney, with Frank Agostino Deputy County Atty (Assessor), Brandie Ecker Deputy County Atty., and Andrew Jones Deputy County Atty (Clerk). Sky Medors remains County Engineer.
- e) 2026 Commissioner Assignments remain mostly unchanged, with at least one commissioner assigned to each department and Board/Commission within the county. Nina Padilla was introduced as the new Veteran Service officer. She is a Navy Veteran.
- f) Approval of Confirmation Letter for No Objection to Proposed Precinct Boundary Changes to the St. Joseph County Election Division. Adopted. I commented briefly that such changes should be publicized more than once and in both area newspapers.

IPG:

- a) Approval of Request to Advertise for Letters of Interest twice in 2 papers Des. No. 2100024 :Construction
Engineering for Intersection Improvement at Douglas Rd. and Bittersweet Rd. Intersection, Roundabout
- b) Approval of Request to Advertise twice in SBT and Mishawaka Enterprise on 2 dates regarding Des. No. 1702832 Construction
Engineering for Pierce Rd. Reconstruction from US 31 to Juniper Rd.
- c) Tabled: Ratification of Agreement with Wightman Associates to Perform a Snowplow Route Study in the Northeast Area of St. Joseph County, cost not to exceed \$80,000. I note this contract was signed on 12/28/25. The focus of the study is northeast Granger, where a busy commercial corridor also has significant residential neighborhoods. Could improve efficiency by reducing numbers of left turns, by applying technology to improve routing efficiency. Staffing reductions have impacted supervisors, who must manage their own plow routes while also attempting to manage systemwide progress. To be done by October 2026.
- d) Approval of R&S 92403-D Change Order No. 1 with Rieth-Riley Construction for Resurfacing/Rehabilitation on Various Roads in the IEC Area, adding \$130,359; contract amount now \$1,868, 175. This used IEC budget funds.
- e) Approval of R&S 92502-S Change Order No. 1 with Milestone Contractors for Resurfacing/Rehabilitation on Subdivision Roads Throughout the County, adding \$378,237, contract now \$1,514,237 for additional paving sections. This was funded by the IEC budget funds..
- f) Approval of Change Order No. 9 for the SJEC Water Transmission Main & Fillmore Road Utilities Project in the IEC Area with HRP Construction, adds \$34,342. Contract now \$6,478,069. This corrects several fire hydrant installations as required by the DNR.

C. OLD BUSINESS:

D. NEW BUSINESS:

E: PUBLIC COMMENTS: (THREE MINUTE LIMIT)

Dan Caruso: Dec 10, the County Council hearing made a 7:2 vote saying we don't want to rezone for that data center. Could you please go on record to help create a 1-year moratorium on data centers in SJC? We need this time to judge how the current data centers affect the electric and water usage. The current data center footprints have expanded.

Baxmeyer responded personally: the impact of NOT approving the data center goes beyond local impact. There is little impact on the water, with a closed loop system. There will be a shortfall due to SEA 1. Who do you want to pay the tax bill? This was an opportunity to have the tax income from the proposed data center. This will affect ALL the residents of the county, not just Olive Township.