

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS meeting May 12, 2026

Started at 11:02, ended 11:29. Only Baxmeyer, Hazen and legal counsel present. Morton absent. 4 on line. All items approved unanimously.

A. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS: Opening and Reading of Bids/Letters of Interest on: None

B. REPORTS AND REQUESTS FROM:

COMMISSIONERS:

a) Approval of the Accounts Payable Docket

IPG: Bill Schalliol and Sky Medors

a) Approval of Easement Packages with American Electric Power (AEP) Describing Power Line Easement Across Vacant Land at SR Highway 2 & Larrison Boulevard

b) Approval of Highway Utility Agreement with Kankakee Valley REMC for

Reimbursable Utility Agreement Electric Line Relocation for Project Des. No.

2101682 for Walnut Road Over Potato Creek Bridge: cost estimated. \$9,258 for electric line relocation as Bridge 29 is replaced. This is a federal aid project; the county must reimburse the Utility Company.

c) Approval of Contract Amendment No. 3 to Preliminary Engineering Services

Agreement with Lochmueller Group for Intersection Improvement Project Des. No.

2100024 at Douglas & Bittersweet: Adds an additional \$12,920 due to design and plan revisions required to accommodate NIPSCO. Total contract is now \$583,360. The original contract was for \$504,604 but two previous amendments increased the contract by \$65,800. Public Works has reviewed this increased and deems it reasonable. There will be temporary speed restrictions in the area as a result of this roundabout work. Construction will start next year.

d) Approval of Consent Agenda

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT:

SMIPP Land Stewards at info@SMIPP.org

Managing invasive species can feel overwhelming, and many of us are tackling similar challenges across St. Joseph and Marshall Counties. SMIPP Land Stewards offers a place to share experiences, ask questions, learn effective techniques. SMIPP offers the Meet your Farmer events. The group is co-led with the Marshall County Soil Conservation District. This group hosts work days to eradicate invasive species like garlic mustard. SMIPP now has a website. They plan on August 26 to have a legislators walk and talk in Rum Village. SMIPP has quarterly meetings.

a) Department Updates Regarding Land Stewards Partnership with Marshall County &

Meet Your Farmer Annual Event: June 18, 2026, 5:30-7:30 pm at 54743 Buckeye Road, Mishawaka.

Dinner provided. Registration required: www.stjosephswcd.org/myfgathering

Local organic blueberry farmer John Nelson, will share the real-world rewards and hurdles of organic perennial agriculture.

This is the 3rd annual Meet Your Farmer event of the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District. Phone 574-936-2024, www.StJosephSWCD.org. Since 1959, the SJ Soil and Water Conservation District has championed the protection of our county's natural resources.

C. OLD BUSINESS: None

D. NEW BUSINESS: Baxmeyer announcements:

1. The Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), in partnership with St. Joseph County and Elkhart County, is pleased to announce two public listening sessions for the Rail Corridor Study focused on at-grade railroad crossings in eastern St. Joseph County. The listening sessions, led by consulting firm DLZ, will be held on June 9 and June 10, 2026, at Moran Elementary School (305 North Beech Road, Osceola, IN 46561) from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Identical sessions will be held on both dates to provide flexible attendance options.

The Rail Corridor Study is evaluating safety improvements and potential alternatives for the at-grade railroad crossings located on Ash Road, Apple Road, Beech Road, and Cottage Grove Avenue. The study aims to identify solutions that enhance safety, improve mobility, and address community concerns along this corridor.

A previous study, conducted from 2023-2024, focused on a single crossing and evaluated large-scale infrastructure solutions. This new study builds on that foundation by looking at all key crossings together, evaluating a wider range of options, and prioritizing solutions that balance safety, reliability, and community impact.

At this phase of the Rail Corridor Study, public input is a critical component of the process.

2. At the Redevelopment Commission meeting this morning, an unwinding grant was discussed. This is not easy, but we are unwinding the Capital Ave Railroad project. ("Unwinding" was the word Baxmeyer used twice. In this context, I think it means that SJC is backing out of an agreement made to allow expanded Railroad Company lines. There was a LOT of public comment on this, all AGAINST expanding railroad use in Mishawaka and Granger.)

3. The Microsoft Company Open house will be May 19 4-7 pm at the Century Center. The public is invited to come and to ask questions.

E: PUBLIC COMMENTS: (THREE MINUTE LIMIT):

Dan Caruso: There were inaccurate comments made last week by the BOC. The aquifer replenishes at 49 million gallons daily, not the 59 million gallons stated by the BOC. Dewatering permits in St. Joseph County allow use of 450,000 gallons per hour = 20 million gallons/ day in New Carlisle by Amazon. Private wells are going dry at 35 feet as a result of this dewatering.

Baxmeyer rebuttal: We had 3 wells at 12 feet deep go dry in a prior dewatering event, not 35 feet.