

**NOTES FROM THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

First Reading of Bill No 87-25 Pertaining to a deduction for transferees of land bank real property.
Petitioner: Bryan Tanner. Assigned to Land Use Planning Committee

Bill No. 89-25: Regarding the future of Portage Manor, Petitioner: Joe Thomas.

This bill would recommend the Board of Commissioners award Portage Manor to St. Thomas More Academy, while preserving part of the surrounding land “for public enjoyment.”

Opinions of the Bill, were generally positive, with some constraints. Deb DuRall, Kevin Connory, Dan Caruso, Kevin Powers (Head of School STMA), Tom St. George, and Ryan Krieger spoke in favor of “what we’ve heard so far” pertaining to preservation of both the building and the land. Jan Seveli (?) and Charlotte Wolf (online) spoke positively but emphasized urging the BoC to consider all proposals. Seveli recommended establishment of a Commission comprised of community members, family members of former PM residents and friends to develop requirements and selection criteria for all proposals. Wolf offered to serve on the commission.

Mike McManus spoke in Opposing Views, and cautioned against selling PM to the STMA for \$1, as had been suggested. He argued that the building should be objectively appraised and sold at fair market value.

Councilmembers Hess, Tanner and Catanzarite spoke after the public, supporting the spirit of the Bill but concurring with concerns for procedure.

Bill passed 6-3, Hess, Shabbazz and Catanzarite voting no.

Bills No. 85-25 (Petitioner: Prosecutor) and 86-25 (Petitioner: Probate Court) amending ordinance 76-24, establishing salaries and fixing the numbers of employees of SJC for 2025. Both passed. Catanzarite the sole opposing vote (85-25).

Bill No. 81-25 SJC Massage Establishments/Therapy Ordinance (but I think “Hoochie Bill” would be a better name) Petitioner: Health Dept. Carried 9-0.

Bill No. 60-25: Community First Investment Ordinance, Petitioners: Schaetzle, Tanner, Catanzarite, Hess, and Shabazz. This is the latest revision of the ordinance changing affirmative action requirements for tax abatements. Amended by unanimous vote to change the source of wage data from US Census Bureau to Bureau of Labor Statistics (as recommended by Chamber of Commerce). Public speaking in favor: Mike McManus, Ben Dallas, Charlotte Wolf.

Public speaking in opposition: Steve Francis, Jeff Rhea, Joseph Cooper. Online: Marty Wolfson(?)

Issues addressed by speakers included potential for abatements to last up to 20 years, impact on small businesses, use of average wage data and salary requirements, (lack of) community benefit requirements, confusion on contractor selection requirements. Bill Schalliol answered questions on how

AWS benefitted from abatements starting at about the 1:22:00 mark on the meeting recording. Everyone who wasn't a petitioner opposed it; it carried 5-4.

New Business

Catanzarite sought information from Bill Schalliol on his request for \$80,000 to cover expenses to end of year (2025) for road work and public safety at roads and intersections around AWS. Drake and Schaetzle bickered about items being postponed/removed from the agenda. Thomas commented that funding from Redevelopment to support police presence on Rt. 2 near AWS should be continued.

Privilege of the Floor: 45 minutes of the 2:52 meeting was devoted to PoF.

It was all about the rezoning bill 42-25 (postponed from this month to next) that would permit another data center.

Opposition to the bill centered on 1) conflict with the Comprehensive Plan, 2) water and energy consumption, 3) light and noise pollution, 4) impact on traffic, accidents, and traffic stops,

An interesting water-related issue has to do with the potential for using closed water systems for cooling the data systems. It was suggested that our aquifer water is too hard for a closed system to be feasible. If that's true, the data centers should not be even considered until that problem is resolved. Chemicals in closed system are toxic. Water requirements are likely only to increase until there is a significant change in the fundamental technology.

Marcie Kauffman, New Carlisle Town Council President

New Carlisle residents: Carol Bonsignore, Marcia Kern

John Hamilton Extra points for quoting Father of AI, Geoffrey Hinton

Steve Francis month (negative) history of 42-65; environmental commitments should be in writing

Haley Nice, Electrical Engineer

Emily Goldman, Mechanical Engineer

Joseph Cooper, Mike McManus, Dan Caruso

Mark Enella: Residents of La Porte county are already paying higher utility bills thanks to data centers.

Me: County should demand that data centers use their engineering innovative talent to protect our resources by setting limits on the resources they can expect to use in the county.

Richard Hall: Data centers put a burden on infrastructure as SEA is cutting infrastructure funds to counties. Could prove problematic.

Online:

Brian Will

Mary Countryman-(?) Owner of land requesting rezoning claims the soil is poor quality, and this is demonstrably false. It's excellent farmland. Rezoning for industry is not responsible management of the land.

Ben Dallas: Called on Andy Rutten to resign for misleading voters by using the name "Andy" rather than his given name, "Anthony." Long list of financial and employment issues.