

## January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Stark County Board Meeting Minutes

The Stark County Board met in the Stark County Courthouse for the January 13<sup>th</sup> board meeting at 6:30 pm. Chair Bush called the meeting to order. Roll call shows Howes, Schaffer, Loane, Wilson, Orwig, Shipp, Nowlan, and Bush present. A quorum was established, and Chair Bush led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Nowlan with a second from Shipp to approve the agenda, with all present voting aye, motion carried.

No public comment.

Motion made by Howes with a second from Nowlan to approve the minutes from the December 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting, with seven ayes and one abstention, motion carried.

Motion made by Loane with a second from Nowlan to approve the minutes from the December 13<sup>th</sup> special meeting, with five ayes and three abstentions, motion carried.

### **Committee Reports**

Police-Chair Schaffer reported on the police committee meeting that was held before tonight's board meeting. Items discussed were a revised budget plan and squad cars.

Legislative-None.

Economic Development-None.

Health Board-Chair Bush reported that influenza cases were on the rise, and to remember to wash hands and get a flu shot if they haven't already done so.

Road & Bridge-Chair Nowlan suggested forming a sub-committee to address the planned wind farm in the county. Chair Bush requested that any interested board members email her, and an appointment will be made next month.

County Highway/Administrative Offices Building-Chair Wilson reported that he met with the architect to design the office space at the new highway building.

Finance-The monthly bills were presented for approval. Engineer Giffin requested that the cost of pressure washing the new building be paid from the general fund rather than the highway fund. The board agreed to this change. After discussion, a motion was made by Orwig with a second by Loane to approve payment of the bills, with seven ayes and one abstention; motion carried.

### **Apex Update**

Shelley Schwab gave the board members an update on the status of the Goldrush Apple Energy wind farm. Due to high landowner participation in the county, we have been moved up to stage one on the project. She fielded questions and concerns from the board as well.

### **SCCI Update**

Jon Knoblauch and Brett Elliott addressed the board on behalf of the Stark County for Continuous Improvement organization. They presented a survey that was done on the need for housing in the community, among other things. They would like to see more involvement from the board at the

meetings held throughout the year. They are also requesting financial commitment from the county to address the housing shortage. At the conclusion of the meeting, board chair Bush indicated she would work with the County Treasurer to see if the county is in a financial position to help.

### **Highway Report**

Engineer Giffin asked Hutchinson Engineering to address the board on the services they could offer to assist the county in managing the impact the Goldrush Apple Energy solar farm would have on the roads in the county. Approval to enter into an agreement with Hutchison for these services will be on the February agenda.

### **Finance Report**

Treasurer Leezer gave her monthly report. Due to working holidays, the Sheriff's Office payroll was over budget. The animal control budget was not done correctly to reflect the changes in how animal control salaries are paid, causing it to be over budget. The Probation budget was entered incorrectly on the budget as well, causing it to appear over budget.

### **Sheriff's Report**

Sheriff Demetreon gave the sheriff's report. The longevity pay was figured incorrectly on the current budget. The new squad cars have been ordered and should be arriving soon. There is an issue with the new flock cameras. They were not installed in the correct locations. He is working with IDOT to resolve this issue.

### **New Business**

- 1) A resolution to appoint Charles Demetron to the ETSB board was presented for approval. Motion made by Nowlan with a second from Shipp to the appointment, with all present voting aye, motion carried.
- 2) A resolution to reappoint Pat Maher to the ETSB board was presented for approval. After discussion, it was decided to table this appointment so that the newly appointed Sheriff could have some input. All board members agreed to table until next month.
- 3) A motor fuel tax resolution was presented for approval. Motion made by Nowlan with a second from Howes to approve the resolution, with all present voting aye, motion carried.

### **Old Business**

- 1) Board Member Wilson gave an update on the progress of the new administrative building. He suggested that the building be constructed from wood rather than steel as a cost-saving measure. The board agreed with this plan. There was no action taken at this time.

At 8:25 pm, Shipp made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Howes, with all present voting aye, meeting **adjourned**.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather L. Hollis, County Clerk