

## April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Stark County Board Meeting Minutes

The Stark County Board met in the Stark County Courthouse for the April 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting at 6:30 pm. Chair Bush called the meeting to order. Roll call shows Howes, Schaffer, Loane, Wilson, Orwig, Nowlan, and Bush present. Absent was Shipp. A quorum was established, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

During public comment, Jenny Garner from the U of I Extension office gave her yearly report to the board. She highlighted the various programs held in the past year and talked about upcoming programs.

Motion made by Loane with a second from Nowlan to approve the minutes from the March 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting, with six ayes and one abstention, motion carried.

Motion made by Nowlan with a second from Loane to approve the minutes from the March 19<sup>th</sup> special meeting, with five ayes and two abstentions, motion carried.

### **Committee Reports**

Police-Chair Schaffer reported on the police committee meeting that was held before tonight's board meeting.

Legislative-Board Member Wilson reported on the recent Lincoln Day Dinner held on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Board member Howes reported on the recent legislative drop-in day he attended. Board Chair Bush reported that she will be meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup> with 16<sup>th</sup> US Congressional Representative, Darin LaHood, to discuss the needs of the county.

Economic Development-Board member Schaffer reported on two new businesses in Bradford.

Health Board-Chair Bush reported that changes to the tax levy amount for the Health Department have affected their funding. She will be looking at some options with the treasurer to help replace the missing funds.

Road & Bridge-None.

Wind Farm Road Preservation Subcommittee-There will be a committee meeting on Monday, the 20<sup>th</sup> with Hutchison Engineering.

County Highway/Administrative Offices Building-Chair Wilson reported that the work on the new highway building is progressing. He informed the board that the county was chosen for a grant through Congressman LaHood's office for the construction of a new administrative building. Once funding is approved by Congress, construction can begin. A tentative start date will be the spring of 2027.

Finance-The monthly bills were presented for approval. After discussion, a motion was made by Nowlan and seconded by Howes to approve payment of the bills, with all present voting aye; motion carried.

### **Illinois State University Broadband Study**

Cat Johns from Illinois State University addressed the board regarding the Broadband Ready Program. A study was done to determine how many vertical assets were in the county for broadband device placements. The program is designed to identify current digital inequities as well as next steps in creating a digital inclusion ecosystem through regional collaboration, and it seeks to provide scalable solutions for broadband utilization across all 10 Illinois economic development regions. Stark County is in the North Central Region.

### Highway Report

Engineer Giffin reported that MFT packages have been opened and awarded. The issue with the license plate for the new truck has been resolved. The construction of a new trench drain is complete. Progress continues on moving items to the new building.

### Finance Report

Treasurer Leezer gave her monthly report. For the first time in many months, the Sheriff's Department salaries were not over budget.

### Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Demetreon gave the sheriff's report. A new deputy and a new part-time dispatcher have been hired. Most of the new Axon cameras have been installed in the vehicles. The new e-ticket program is going well.

### Consent Agenda

The following appointments were on the consent agenda:

- Fire Department Trustee Appointments**
- a. Leslie Fehr-Bradford Fire District
- b. Ross Walker-Lafayette Fire District
- c. John Boarman-Toulon Fire District
- d. Keith Knobloch-Wyoming Fire District
- Planning Commission Reappointments**
- e. Steve Winslow
- f. Noah Forlines
- Board of Appeals Reappointments**
- g. Duane Daum
- h. Robert Mueller
- Human Services Transportation Plan (HTSP) Committee Appointment**
- i. Sunny Pearson

Motion made by Loane to approve all the appointments and seconded by Nowlan, with all present voting aye, motion carried.

### New Business

- 1) The annual University of Illinois Extension agreement was presented for approval. Motion made by Howes to approve the yearly agreement for \$26,750.00, with a second from Nowlan, with all present voting aye, motion carried.
- 2) At the request of the lender, a revision was needed to the original resolution for the purpose of acquiring a loan for improvements to the new county highway building. Motion made by Nowlan to approve the revised resolution, with a second from Wilson, with all present voting aye, motion carried.

At 7:36 pm, Nowlan made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Howes, with all present voting aye, the meeting **adjourned**.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather L. Hollis, County Clerk