May 12th, 2026 Stark County Board Meeting Minutes

The Stark County Board met in the Stark County Courthouse for the May 12th board meeting at 6:30 pm. Chair Bush called the meeting to order. Roll call shows Howes, Schaffer, Loane, Wilson, Shipp, Nowlan, and Bush present. Absent was Orwig. 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 six ayes and one abstention; motion carried.

During public comment, Bryant Lowe addressed the board on behalf of his client, Phil St. John, regarding the county highway building located near his property. The building does not meet the county zoning ordinance of a 25-foot setback. The application for a variance was denied by the zoning board, and Mr. St. John would like a timeline for when this building will be relocated.

Motion made by Loane with a second from Howes to approve the minutes from the April 15th board meeting, with six ayes and one abstention, motion carried.

Committee Reports

Police-Chair Schaffer reported on the police committee meeting that was held before tonight's board meeting. Items discussed were mowing bids and potential grants.

Legislative-Board Member Loane reported he attended an online meeting on opportunity zones in Illinois. Board Chair Bush reported on the recent meeting she had with US Congressional Representative Darin LaHood.

Economic Development-Board member Schaffer reported that the new gas station in Bradford is open.

Health-Chair Bush is requesting approval to transfer funds from the reserves to the Health Department fund to cover shortages due to a decrease in the tax levy. After speaking with the treasurer, both felt comfortable with transferring $15,000 to the Health Department. Motion made by Shipp to approve the transfer of funds, with a second from Nowlan, with all present voting aye, motion carried.

Road & Bridge-None.

Wind Farm Road Preservation Subcommittee-There was a committee meeting on Monday, April 20th, to clear up some miscommunications with Apex regarding the different phases of their plan. They will be meeting at the end of May with a representative from Apex.

County Highway/Administrative Offices Building-The building layout is complete for the highway facility.

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

Illinois State Treasurer's Office Deputy Director of Outreach

Erin Slone from the Illinois State Treasurer's Office addressed the board and several representatives from the area banks on low-cost subsidy loans as part of the Invest in Illinois program. Invest in Illinois is a suite of programs offered by the Illinois State Treasurer's Office, designed to expand access to affordable financing and strengthen communities across the state.

Highway Report

Engineer Giffin addressed the public comment item regarding the relocation of the building to meet the setback requirements. He is waiting for a new slab to be poured, and then it will be moved. Work on the new highway building continues. All sealcoat bids have been awarded.

Finance Report

Treasurer Leezer gave her monthly report. Tax bills have been mailed, and over $800,000 has been collected to date. Departments over budget for the month were the sheriff's office and animal control salaries.

At 7:13 pm, board member Orwig entered the meeting.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Demetreon presented three mowing bids that he received. Bids were received from Paul Lantz for $700 per month, Joseph Harmon for a flat $6,000, and DeSmit Services LLC for a flat fee of $5000. The sheriff recommended accepting the bid from DeSmit Services LLC, as it was the most detailed and included landscaping services as well. Motion made by Howes to approve the bid from DeSmit Services LLC, with a second from Shipp, with six ayes and one abstention, motion carried.

New Business

There was no new business.

Before adjournment, Chair Bush notified the board that the Central Illinois Agency on Aging needs to fill a vacancy on its board. Any interested board member was asked to notify her before the next meeting.

A finance committee meeting for budget presentations has been scheduled prior to the June board meeting at 6 pm. The goal is to have the budget ready to be tentatively adopted at the October board meeting.

At 7:18 pm, Shipp made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Nowlan, with all present voting aye; the meeting **adjourned**.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather L. Hollis, County Clerk