FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING
Apr 20, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the County Board was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Chairman Neil Hargis. This meeting was held in the Franklin County Courthouse, County Board Room 133, 100 Public Sq, Benton, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

Secretary, Paris Dunk, called the roll. Members in attendance were Dave Bartoni, John Gossett, J. Larry Miller, Ray Minor, Curtis Overton, Kevin Weston, and Neil Hargis. Angela Evans and Brad Wilson were absent.

Also in attendance were Matt Barnett, County Engineer; Amanda Kink, County Board office manager; Cindy Miklos, Supervisor of Assessments; Jim Muir, Circuit Clerk; Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer as well as other interested parties.

PLEDGE

Chairman Neil Hargis leads everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis asked if there was anyone who wants to make a public comment. No public comments were made at this time.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the minutes from the March 16, 2026 Regular County Board Meeting minutes and April 6, 2026 Special County Board Meeting minutes.

J. Larry Miller made a motion to approve those minutes. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

COUNTY CLAIMS

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the county claims.

Kevin Weston made a motion to approve the county claims. Curtis Overton second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

DELINQUENT TAX PROGRAM - RESOLUTIONS

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the Delinquent Tax Program resolutions regarding authorizing my signature (Neil Hargis) to execute deeds on the parcels sold thru the County's Delinquent Tax Program.

Ray Minor made a motion to approve the Delinquent Tax Program resolutions. Curtis Overton second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said resolutions are made a part of these minutes as Resolution No. 2026-54 and 2026-55.

RESIGNATION OF ANIMAL CONTROL SUPERVISOR - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the resignation of the Animal Control Supervisor. Chairman Neil Hargis states that Alexis St. George, the Current Animal Control Supervisor's last day is Wednesday, April 22, 2026. Chairman Neil Hargis also states that they will be conducting interviews soon and will be appointing a new Animal Control Supervisor at a Special County Board Meeting the first week in May.

Kevin Weston made a motion to approve the resignation of the Animal Control Supervisor. Dave Bartoni second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said resignation is made a part of these minutes.

NEPOTISM POLICY - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the Nepotism Policy.

John Gossett made a motion to approve the Nepotism Policy. Curtis Overton second that motion. Chairman Neil Hargis asks if there are any questions?

Dave Bartoni states that he has a problem with the policy as worded. He believes it's a knee jerk reaction to an isolated event. Mr. Bartoni addresses a problem specifically with section 2.2 of the policy, stating that the summary of the term "Relative" is a little over bearing. Specifically, in regards to the "any individual with whom an employee has a close personal relationship" in which he requested clarity on who that actually applies to. Mr. Bartoni also states he has issues with section 6, which outlines the ability for the board to terminate employees due to a conflict. Mr. Bartoni believes this policy will limit our employment process by making the pool of potential hiring smaller.

J. Larry Miller has a question about a potential conflict in regards to specifics listed on the policy about potential hiring affected. Curtis Overton states that the policy would affect them as well. J. Larry Miller also questions section 10 of the Nepotism Policy, questioning who is going to be in charge of distributing this policy and getting receipts of acknowledgement.

John Gossett explains that it's his understanding that the department heads would be in charge of distributing that.

Curtis Overton states that he supports the policy and believes we need a hiring policy, and also believes nepotism is something that should be addressed.

Cindy Miklos, Supervisor of Assessments: Asks if this would affect an employee employed in an office separate from the related individual. Kevin Weston explained the conflict would only be in same office. Kevin Weston also stated that this policy wouldn't affect current employees.

Jim Muir, Circuit Clerk: States that he believes the department heads should have been consulted prior to putting on the agenda considering they have to be the ones to enforce it.

On Roll call vote, John Gossett, J. Larry Miller, Ray Minor, Curtis Overton, Kevin Weston, and Neil Hargis voted Yes. Dave Bartoni voted No.

Said nepotism policy is made a part of these minutes as Policy No. 2026-01.

CIRCUIT CLERK AUDIT - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the Circuit Clerk Audit.

Curtis Overton made a motion to approve the Circuit Clerk Audit. Dave Bartoni second that motion. Chairman Neil Hargis asks if there are any questions or comments?

J. Larry Miller states that he wishes to see the audit ahead of approval.

Jim Muir, Circuit Clerk, responds that he had not seen the nepotism policy before it passed either.

On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said audit is made a part of these minutes.

FRANKLIN HOSPITAL BOARD - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda was the appointment of Mike Anderson to the Franklin Hospital Board. Gayla Kane & Ann Wilson submitted resignations and Mike Anderson is being appointed to fulfill Gayla Kane unexpired term ending on August 31, 2027.

John Gossett made a motion to appoint Mike Anderson to fulfill an unexpired term on Franklin Hospital Board ending on August 31, 2027. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

HILL CITY WATER DISTRICT - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda is the reappointment of April Tedrow to the Hill City Water District Board which ends on April 30, 2026.

Curtis Overton made a motion to reappoint April Tedrow to the Hill City Water District Board for another five year term ending April 30, 2031. Ray Minor second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

SESSER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda is the reappointment of Scott Ward to the Sesser Fire Protection District Board, whose term is ending on April 30, 2026.

J. Larry Miller made a motion to reappoint Scott Ward to the Sesser Fire Protection District Board for another three year term ending April 30, 2029. Curtis Overton second that motion. On Roll call vote, all vote yes.

COUNTY CLERK, SHERIFF, CORONER & ANIMAL CONTROL MONTHLY REPORTS

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that the next item on the agenda is the acceptance of the County Clerk, Sheriff, Coroner & Animal Control monthly reports.

Dave Bartoni made a motion to accept the monthly reports of the County Clerk, Sheriff, Coroner & Animal Control. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said reports except Animal Control are made a part of these minutes.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Neil Hargis stated that there would be no Closed Session for tonight's meeting.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis asked the Board if there were any questions. J. Larry Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave Bartoni second the motion. There being no further business Chairman Neil Hargis declared the meeting adjourned.

Neil Hargis
Franklin County Board Chairman

Paris Dunk
County Clerk and Recorde