FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING
May 18, 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, Angela Evans, John Gossett, J. Larry Miller, Ray Minor, Curtis Overton, Kevin Weston, and Neil Hargis. Brad Wilson was absent. Also in attendance were Matt Barnett, County Engineer; Amanda Kink, County Board office Manager; Marty Leffler, County Coroner; 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 states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes from the April 20, 2026 Regular County Board Meeting, and the May 4, 2026 Special County Board Meeting Minutes. J. Larry Miller made a motion to approve those minutes. Ray Minor 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.

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

Said resolutions are made a part of these minutes as Resolution No. 2026-56 thru 2026-58.

ELECTED OFFICIAL SALARIES / STIPENDS - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis Stated that the next item on the agenda is the approval for the Elected Officials Salaries. The Elected officials covered by this would be the County Clerk, County Treasurer and Circuit Clerk. Chairman Neil Hargis states that the proposed salaries would reward a 3% raise every year for the next four years.

Angela Evans made a motion to approve the salaries for the County Clerk, County Treasurer, and Circuit Clerk. Ray Minor Second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

TRI-COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN - RESOLUTION

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the to approve a resolution for Tri-County Solid Waste Management Plan.

John Gossett made a motion to approve the resolution for the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Plan. Curtis Overton second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said resolution is made a part of these minutes as Resolution No. 2026-59.

EASEMENT FROM BUNTIN BROTHERS FARMS LLC FOR ACCESS TO TOM NEWBURY'S EWING FARM LLC - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of easement from Buntin Brothers Farms LLC for access to the land of Tom Newburys Ewing Farm LLC.

Kevin Weston made a motion to approve the easement from Buntin Brothers Farms LLC for access to the land of Tom Newburys Ewing Farm LLC. Ray Minor second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY ENGINEERING SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH HLR ENGINEERING ON NORTH THOMPSONVILLE ROAD - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis states the next item on the agenda is the approval of the Local Public Agency Engineering Services Agreement for Section 25-00201-00-RS with HLR engineering for North Thompsonville Rd from State Highway 34 to Akin Blacktop.

Kevin Weston made a motion to approve the Local Public Agency Engineering Services Agreement with HLR Engineering for North Thompsonville Rd. Curtis Overton second that motion. On Roll Call vote, all vote yes.

Said agreement is made a part of these minutes as Agreement No. 2026-08.

INCREASE OF SERVICE FEES FOR ANIMAL CONTROL - APPROVAL

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the increase of service fees for Animal Control. Chairman Neil Hargis states that increase to the service fees to the individual municipalities will reflect the cost study performed by Bellweather LLC. The rate is being increased from $2.38 per resident to $3.35 per resident.

John Gossett states that he believes the department will always operate at a deficit because it's a service provided to the residents, however he believes that the increase in service fees will help offset the cost encumbered.

Angela Evans also states that there are at least three municipalities that aren't paying the service fees and when collected will also help offset the cost to the county.

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the new service fees charged to the municipalities will go into effect on December 1, 2026.

Dave Bartoni made a motion to approve the increase of service fees to $3.35 per resident. J. Larry Miller second that motion.

J. Larry Miller also stated that he believes that an increase is necessary and that the cost study analysis reflects that. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

BOARD OF REVIEW - 2 APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the appointment of two members to the Board of Review. The two re-appointments being made are Leon McClerren & Ron Sink, whose terms are ending on June 1, 2026.

J. Larry Miller made a motion to re-appoint Leon McClerren & Ron Sink to new two year terms ending on June 1, 2028. Angela Evans second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

FRANKLIN WILLIAMSON BI-COUNTY HEALTH - 2 APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is two appointments made to the Franklin Williamson Bi-County Public Health Board. Dennon Davis three year term and Curtis Overton one year term are both ending on June 30, 2026.

Ray Minor made a motion to re-appoint Dennon Davis to the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Public Health Board for another three year term ending June 30, 2029 and Curtis Overton for a one year term ending June 30, 2027. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, the voting was as follows: Dave Bartoni, Angela Evans, John Gossett, J. Larry Miller, Ray Minor, Kevin Weston, and Neil Hargis voted yes. Curtis Overton abstained.

CAVE EASTERN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the appointment to the Cave Eastern Fire Protection District Board. Randall Hargett whose three year term ended on May 4, 2026, is being re-appointed to a new term ending on May 7, 2029.

Curtis Overton made a motion to re-appoint Randall Hargett to the Cave Eastern Fire Protection District Board to a new three year term ending on May 7, 2029. Dave Bartoni second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

EWING NORTHERN FIRE PROTECTION BOARD - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the re-appointment of Mitch Bennett to the Ewing Northern Fire Protection District Board, whose three year term ended on May 4, 2026.

Ray Minor made a motion to re-appoint Mitch Bennett to the Ewing Northern Fire Protection District Board to a new three year term ending on May 7, 2029. J. Larry Miller second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

FRANKLIN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the re-appointment of Charles Mercer to the Franklin County Housing Authority, whose term is ending on June 18, 2026.

Curtis Overton made a motion to re-appoint Charles Mercer to the Franklin County Housing Authority on a new five year term ending on June 18, 2031. Angela Evans second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

PLUMFIELD WATER DISTRICT - 2 APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the next item on the agenda is the re-appointment of two members to the Plumfield Water District. Debbie & Joe Jackanicz for a four year terms ended on May 1, 2026.

Ray Minor made a motion to re-appoint Debbie and Joe Jackanicz to the Plumfield Water District on new four year terms ending on May 1, 2030. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

SOUTH CENTRAL II MASS TRANSIT - 1 APPOINTMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis states that the appointment to the South-Central Mass Transit will be tabled.

COUNTY CLERK, SHERIFF, CORONER & ANIMAL CONTROL - MONTHLY REPORTS

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

J. Larry Miller made a motion to accept the monthly reports for the County Clerk, Sheriff, Coroner, and Animal Control. Kevin Weston second that motion. On roll call vote, all vote yes.

Said reports 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 this Regular Meeting of the County board on May 18, 2026. Curtis Overton 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