

Vermillion County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

November 05th, 2025

Commissioner's Courtroom, 2nd Floor, Courthouse

- I. Call to order
- II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- III. Roll Call - **All Present**
- IV. Approval of Minutes Oct 07th, 2025
Peebles motions, Hess seconds
All in favor, motion carries.
- V. Approval of Claims from October 10th, 20th, 24th, and 31st, 2025
Hess motions, Peebles seconds
Peebles seconds
All in favor, motion carries
- VI. Approval of Payroll October 10th, 2025 and October 24th, 2025 and November 07th, 2025
Peebles motions, Hess seconds
All in favor, motion carries
- VII. Public Comments: No public comments
- VIII. Open Issues:
 - a. **Ordinance 2025-16** Adopting certain roads into the county road system
In your packet, you'll have ordinance 2025-16 adopting certain roads into the county road system.

In that you'll see that there are roads listed as Mockingbird Drive, Oak Ridge Drive, Redwood Drive, Beachwood Drive, Ashwood Court, Popeye's Lane, Crown Hill Boulevard, Donetta Drive, Robertson Drive, Tanya Drive, Zellwood Drive, Laura Lane, and Heatherwood Lane.

And I will preface this with that the county highway board of directors has recommended these roads to be added into the county road system. Now, I will say roads such as Beachwood Drive and Crown Hill Boulevard were adopted years ago into the county road system. However, uh due to failure of completing the correct ordinance and submitting the right documentation to the state of Indiana, uh Indiana has not recognized those as county roads. So that is the reason they are listed for a second time in this ordinance. **I entertain a motion to approve county ordinance number 2025-16 if there's support for that.**

Peebles- I will make that motion.
Dunavan- I have a motion on Mr. Peebles. Do I have a second?
Hess- Well, since my road's on here, I abstain from that. So, can I still like I mean I'll second it minus my road.

Dunavan- I'll second it. That way if you want to abstain from the whole thing that's we'll do that. I'll second that. Any further discussion?

Peebles- The only the only caveat I would have to it is that I know that the board of directors of the highway approved this and that at any point in time in the future, this is brought up for discussion again that the county it needs to be understood that the county will not take on any expense of adopting a road has to be to a certain standard before we adopt that road.

Dunavan- Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think we defer to, you know, the highway with that to, you know, have their judgment that we don't want to take over a dirt road.

Peebles- But I don't know if there is already a process in place for that, like a checklist or whatever, and maybe one needs to be developed.

Dunavan Sure. Absolutely. Good idea. All right. Any further discussion?

Hearing none, I'll **call for the vote. All in favor? Motion passes 2-0**

b. Schneider Geospatial Professional Service Agreement – **TABLED**

c. Courthouse Credit Card- Terry Carrera- requesting credit card for courthouse purchases.

Peebles motions to accept Terry Carrera getting a courthouse credit card

Hess seconds

All in favor, motion carries

IX. New Issues:

a. County Health Ins-

I know the insurance committee had met this week and has been meeting periodically over our uh insurance. James can speak a lot more to this, but we used to be on a 5/1 renewal and we're looking to switch to a 1/1 renewal, which will help the county. And I'll let James kind of lead into that.

James- We had been asked by the committee to uh engage Anthem on moving the uh new renewal date to 1/1 of 2026, away from 5/1. It was basically mainly to align budgets.

Anthem didn't wouldn't release a verbal agreement on what they would offer us until around the 15th of October, just based on normal procedure for 1/1 renewals. The original renewal came in at 10%. We had some leverage based on your past claims experience for the last 12 months, which actually has been really good. You might recall last year at 51 I wasn't the adviser, but you guys took on about an 18 to 20% increase, I recall.

10% wasn't a bad starting point. We were able to negotiate it down to 6%. Our hope was to get a rate hold for the next 12 months. We weren't able to get a rate hold, but we were able to get a 6% increase. I consulted with our actuary team uh at Epic just to kind of get their thoughts. I thought it seemed like a good move, but I wanted to make sure that they agreed that it was.

We could roll the dice and see how claims look for the next four to five months. And you know, honestly, if they continue to run well, we could probably end up right around that six percent, maybe even closer to a rate hold. But that's no guarantee. I mean, there's no, you know, don't know what's going to happen to the claims, the underwriters seem to indicate that there were some things going on that they were worried about over the next 5 months.

And so, if we were to cut into the current loss ratio anymore, then we could be looking at a double- digit increase come 5/1. So, my recommendation to the committee was to move to a 1/1 renewal. I think the last thing last two things that I'll add, there's still some discussion going on about um some potential plan design changes. Do we want to try to get that 6% increase down by making changes to the PPO deductible and the HSA deductible? Do we want to, the county's cost share is right now, 92 pays 92% of the premium; employees uh and actually throughout every tier play pays 8%. That's pretty rich as far as municipalities in the state of Indiana is concerned. So, we have talked about maybe 91 uh nine or a 9010 spread on that 6%, but we haven't really, I think reached an agreement yet. So, I think that's where we're at. if there's any questions you have, but I am recommending the 1/1 with a 6% increase.

Dunavan- So, commissioners, what we need tonight would be approval uh to go with EPIC's recommendation of a 1/1 renewal with a 6% increase and then the authority to let the committee uh it's a committee of five. I serve on it; the auditor serves on it, council. Was council president James, but Brenda Furry serves on that committee. Paige Kilgore does. With a 1/1 renewal, we will have open enrollment very quickly approaching here in December. So those plan changes will have to be negotiated here rather quickly. So, we would need to approve the 1/1 one and the 6% increase and then delegate to the

committee to be able to make that decision um with the blessing of the commissioners going forward here in the next 30 days if not sooner.

Hess- So, on the so that on the what's the average cost? So, what would that be like 6%.

James- So, the spread uh between on both plans varies just a little bit but not much. It is a technical increase on the PPO plan of 6.02. On the HSA plan it's 5.99. Again, we've looked at various plan options to get it down to 2% or get it down to around the HSA plan would take on like a 4% decrease and then the PPO plan would take on a 4% increase. We've even discussed an option of adding a third plan to where we didn't increase the deductible on either plan, employees could uh migrate over to the third HSA plan that we or the third overall plan, second HSA plan that we added if they didn't want to take on any of that increase if it's decided upon, you know, passing along the increase. So, there's just some decisions that, you know, I think still need to be made. uh we have had quite a bit of back and forth, but the 6% and the 1/1 right now in the health insurance market in Indiana, I don't know that I have a 1/1 renewal right now that's running at a much better rate than that. Like it's pretty good. It's pretty bad out there.

Peebles- What do we have a committee for this for? If they're bringing this to us without the committee without the committee agreeing to it.

Dunavan- the committee has agreed to the 1/1 and the 6% which is what's we're asking for approval from the board of commissioners tonight. The committee agreed to that.

Peebles- The committee the committee agreed where the salesman standing here.

Dunavan- Where the committee hasn't come to an agreement yet is on the plan changes on the 91/9 the 90/10 or the high deductible third plan or higher deductible same rate. That's where it's still being negotiated out because the committee's pretty split on that

James- There's just been a limited amount of time for them to honestly um take in all the information just because I mean we just got the actual decision from the committee to go ahead and have Anthem generate the renewal about a week and a half ago and so it took us you know a couple days to get those cost shares in front of people. I mean the information has got out gotten out as quickly as we could possibly get it. It's just they really haven't had a whole lot of time to decide in the best interest of all the employees.

Dunavan- Tonight we just we need to act on the one renewal and the 6% increase if there's a motion to approve that.

Hess- So, we have to approve this in order for you to do the other negotiations. That's what I'm hearing.

James- You if you didn't approve this, we would wait until 5/1 and see how it goes. If you do approve this, then I think what we're hoping for is that the committee can get the proper authority to be able to decide between that committee of five people of what they think is the best as far as how to handle the 6%. Do we do a plan change? Do we change our contribution structure? Simple as that.

Hess- Then if that's the committee's recommendation and that's what we need, I would make a motion to move forward with the 1/1 renewal and the 6%.

Dunavan- All right. I have a motion by Mrs. Hess. Do I have a second?

Peebles Seconds

Dunavan Second by Mr. Peoples. Do I have any further discussion? Hearing none. I'll call for the vote. All in favor, motion carries

b. Opening bids for the Dana Demolition

Bids opened by HWC Dustin Whalen

Division A is 2 building and Division B is one building.

1. McGuire Excavating Division B \$47,710
2. McGuire Excavating Division A \$47,710

3. Isel Excavating Division A \$100,000
4. Isel Excavating Division B \$45,700
5. MCOLA Excavating Division A \$104,000
6. MCOLA Excavating Division B \$52,400
7. SNG Excavating Division A \$99,000
8. SNG Excavating Division B \$40,000
9. Renaissant Demolition Division A \$96,000
10. Renaissant Demolition Division B \$76,000
11. Door and Assoc Division A \$38,700
12. Dorr and Assoc Division B \$38,700

HWC will take the bids under advisement for the Dana Demo project.

c. Vacating Alley **Ordinance 2025-21** Douglas Blue

Peebles motions to vacate alley

Hess seconds

All in Favor, motion carries

d. Assessor Paige Kilgore for Reassessment Contract with Nexus

We put out for bids for our cyclical reassessment work back in September, and I received three inquiries and I've gotten two bids. We opened them in the office and I have emailed you each a copy of the company to the Commissioners,

Dunavan- Any questions for Paige? Is there a reason this company over the other company? They have they done work in the county before or

Assessor My big reasoning was the ex the difference in the expense. So, it is going with a completely different company than what we've had in previous years, but it's at a savings of roughly \$84,000. So, my girls and I were going to pick up the residential and the a and exempt properties in house. So, with industrial properties that we have in the county, I still need help. A lot of that is complicated and changing.

Dunavan- So, with this Nexus Group, you're by going with them, you're saving the county \$84,000.

Assessor- Yes.

Dunavan- Awesome. There're no questions. I'll entertain a motion to approve the contract presented to us tonight by the assessor.

Hess- Agent does everything that you want to do with the \$84,000 savings? Like you've compared both.

Assessor I'm assuming they're identical. One of the bright sides to changing companies is that I'm going to have three attorneys at my back and call for any of the industrial and commercial appeals that we have. I don't know if anybody watched our appeals this last session, but we had one particular one in the south where the burden of proof shifted to me because the state updated the cost tables and we didn't have the resources at the time to back that up as far as sales go. So, they got to skirt us back to the 5% rule. So, I just think by having the attorneys on it. I do have the original copy here.

Dunavan- Is that the one you want signed?

Assessor- Yes, please.

Dunavan- All right. I entertain a motion.

Hess - I'll make a motion.

Dunavan- I have a motion. Mrs. Hess. Do I have a second?

Peebles- I'll second.

Dunavan- Second. Mr. Peoples. Any further discussion? Hearing none. Call for the vote. All in favor, Motion carries.

e. E-911 Jimmy Miller Jr- Tornado Sirens

I sent a letter a couple days ago to the council that the commissioners be referencing the remaining county tornado sirens. And give a brief little history on the tornado sirens if you guys would like. So, make a make a long story short, they weren't actually all intended to be tornado sirens. They're actually VX sirens from the Army Ammunition Plant. When they left and demilitarized and got rid of VX, they actually gave them to the county. So, they didn't cost the county anything initially.

We have we have put some money into them over the years. Again, I don't know the exact dollar amount because the former EMA director did a lot of the maintenance himself. As of this morning though, so every day they do a self-test. I have a I have a console with down my EOC and there's another one for Vermillion County Sheriff's Department where they can be activated from, but the reports come to the EOC. As of this morning, we had four that were nonoperational and that was before Mark retired. We went around uh tried to fix some things and ECS came out and also tried to fix some things sparingly because the contract we have with them is very sparing.

So, we have four currently non-working in the county. These tornado sirens when we inherited them, they were 10 plus, years old. As well as the equipment and the solar panels for them. Making them in excess of 20 plus years old now by the time we've inherited them.

They're outside 365 days. Hot, cold, rain, snow, doesn't really matter. They're out there. Um, I have I have a resolution. There's one on the east end of Newport that we're actually I've actually worked with Newport. They're going to allow us to hook it up for auxiliary power because it's in constant shade over there. So, a solar panel won't work there. But the radio systems within the tornado sirens, the solar panels, uh, even some of the batteries that I've been able to replace, I'm actually out of batteries now. The they're failing.

Everything in them is starting to fail. Uh, so in working with ECS, I in that letter I put a very rough quote together off of past invoices and stuff like that. I have not actually reached out to ECS. It could be more expensive, it could be less expensive. I don't really know the exact number yet. But just going off of past invoices, the rough number would be around \$315,000 to have everyone gone through. We have 27 sirens currently and the furthest north siren I have is in the town of Perrysville. So, that leaves Gessie, Rileysburg 63 and 74 that high travel area without the coverage of tornado sirens. Um as well as there's a trailer park in the north end of the county as well that's currently not under the coverage of a tornado siren. So, to have a new siren put up which Vermillion County Emergency Management does have a spare siren. At the pool barn in Cayuga. Um so it'll be less expensive to have one put up, but to purchase two more in my opinion, the north end of the county needs more tornado siren coverage. In talking with other counties, ones that don't have them, their ideology behind it is that there's no liability if you don't have it. So, there are options, but I'm in my recommendation, we currently have them. We should continue to employ and use those. And then also I would like to also get permission to talk to ECS about a legitimate maintenance contract from ECS to have them maintenance a couple times a year.

Dunavan-There's most of these, Jimmy, are what, 20 years old?

Jimmy- Uh 20 plus. Yep. And in former director O'Hare's defense, he with working with the money he had, he would try to scrape money together at the end of the year and purchase a solar panel to replace one. Um, but he in the time of doing that, two more may have may have failed.

So, he with working with the money he had and trying to do most of the work himself, it was kind of a never-ending loop. So, but I would like to try to do it. And to be completely honest, it will probably honestly be cheaper to do in one fell swoop instead of just doing it over time.

Dunavan- Sure. Commissioners, any questions for Director Miller

Peebles- At the estimated cost of the project; that's a uh definitely a project that needs to be bid out that we can't just take one company's word for. That price. Okay. Am I wrong in saying that?

Dunavan- No. No. Anything over a public works project, I believe it's \$150,000. But what you may run into, we still have to advertise. You may only have one company, you know, put in a bid because

Jimmy -Is that going to be an issue that I already have a contract with them for maintenance?

Dunavan- I don't think maintenance as long as it doesn't exceed 150,000. I don't think the maintenance contract. But I think like where Bill's saying the total cost at \$315,000, you'll have to create and that's rough.

Dunavan- We purchased an ambulance over \$ 200,000 and we should have said, "Hey, does anybody want to like, you know, sell us an ambulance instead of just going to one?" But no, I think yeah, I would definitely say you definitely need to solicit that. But you're going to have to put it out for bid to say, "Hey, we're looking to replace 20 solar panels."

Jimmy- And going off of the what I said in the email and the replies was to get on the commissioners and the council's agenda.

Do I need to stay on the council's agenda in your opinion or do I need to do a vote process?

Dunavan- I would say that the council, they're kind of, you know, the holders of the purse here. So, I think I would stay on the agenda would be my opinion and see if they're going to, you know, approve any type of funding and then you can go out for, you know, bid that way. I mean, the bids are always contingent on funding anyway. But, it would be nice to know if the council's in favor of, you know, say it's \$300,000 or say they're saying, "Hey, we'll give you 150, you know, replace a few of them for 150." I mean, commissioners, what do you think?

Hess- Yeah, I mean, after reading I mean, I read the email. I read the council's responses. I think that it's important that, you know, we I think everyone was in agreement. This impacts people's lives, so it's important for us to move forward.

Dunavan- So, yeah, I would I would say stay on the agenda, but definitely just look at I mean, I guess in theory, your batteries, I guess you could purchase, but if you're doing it as one project at \$315,000, you're going to have to because it's over one. It's over \$150,000. So, anything else, Commissioner?

Well, Jimmy, I was going to one last thing. I spoke to you briefly. There was an old truck up there in the shop you had mentioned. Do you have any use for that? Do you want to elaborate on what that is? Because, I don't actually know the truck per se. Is it an old army truck?

Jimmy - It's an e-motorized army truck from I believe the 70s. The truck does run. I wasn't able to get it started, but it does run. I was waiting, it's basically it's a utility truck. It's set up on a generator and hookups for welders and stuff like that to be put in it and settling tanks. The county highway kind of showed some interest in it. I was going to give them some time to go over it so we could just do a transfer if they wanted it. They're more than willing to have it.

If not, I would like to get permission to post on gov deals and see what kind of money we'd be able to get out of it so I could use some of that money for emergency management to try to get some other stuff.

Dunavan-I don't have any objection to that.

Jimmy- It sat there for at least a couple years. We didn't pay anything for it. It came from the United States government.

Dunavan- I would defer to your judgment. I guess if the highway department wants it and you want to transfer it and if they don't, you know, I don't know how you get a quote on that because on the gov deals you don't want to list it for \$100 bucks, you want to maybe start at a bare minimum. I don't know what that truck would be worth. I mean I'm in favor of that letting him have the discretion to do that.

Pebbles-I'm in favor of just by I don't know why we need to keep another piece of junk around if that's what it is. I mean, we're in the process of entering in a long-term deal with the enterprise and, you know, we're trying to get rid of the stuff we're spending all of our money on in the county to keep it on the road. So, sure, I say gov deals.

Dunavan-We'll defer to you, Jimmy, on that. So, and I think you've got an account with gov deals, right?

Jimmy - Yep.

Dunavan-Sounds good.

f. Bill Hartman- VTA about current projects

Well, thank you commissioners for having me this evening on the agenda. Bill Hartman with the Vermillion Trail Alliance. I just wanted to come forward this evening and just give you a brief summary of where we're at and some of our projects. We currently have our project plan on the BNO trail and that's the one Montezuma to Hillsdale and our project is from Hillsdale South to Alta to new trail head there and we do have our project plan now submitted by Roger Azar through Apex for the DNR and we're waiting on a reply so that we and proceed with that project.

The other part of that is that project basically has to be completed by the end of 2026 to comply with our grant application and such. We had a we got an extension on that. We're good through December 2026. And as you know that whole project so anytime you're in the creek or the flood plain which that whole corridor along there is considered in the flood plain you know we have to go through DNR for approval and permission to proceed.

So that's where we're at on that particular project and corridor currently. So any additional questions there I'd be happy to address them.

Peebles- What's your status on your bridge over the creek?

Hartman- Well so we have the bridge design. It's going to be a two-part structure. We determined that we could not get 125 ft stretched beam structure in there. So, our bridge engineer, which is Michael Amens with E3 bridge. He designed the two structure and then we've had another engineer, you know, look at it. And so, our biggest thing right now is getting the approvals through, DNR to approve it. So, we've submitted that plan for the two-part bridge, the structures on each end, substructures, and the piling and such as that within the flood plain. So that's, you know, we're waiting for the blessing of DNR right now to proceed with placing that bridge structure in that location and then proceeding on south to the new trail head.

Any question? Any other questions, Bill?

Peebles- No, Les, you did a good job narrating the video of the bridge from nowhere to the trail to somewhere. I did watch it in its entirety.

Hartman- Yeah, we thank you for that. We've tried to be more proactive in our social media with promoting our trails within the county. We did also have a video out there; Tom Milligan done one just prior to our "over the river and through the woods" event and was able to post that so people could actually see the trail online. We had our north of me and cross country girls cross country team that has used the trail there at Newport and they created a video and it's out there and so you know we've taken steps to try to promote these things within our county.

So, the next one to make you aware of is you know well basically the new at Newport the Newport trail has a Hillsdale address but it is just south of Newport. Currently it's just trail head park but we have come up with the name of "OPD Trail Head Park" and how we come up with that it's the OPD trail but that's based upon historical Oliver P. Davis. He's buried in the Rise Cemetery. He's has one of the largest markers there. He was a former state representative and senator in the state of Indiana. Farmer back in the day. He had a ferry on the Wash River. There's just a lot of historical relevance to name it. So, with that and with your blessings, if you have no objections to that, we'd like to proceed with the OPD name and then contact INDOT to get permission to have signage out on 63 to show and promote Trail Head Park and our trail.

Also, we're we plan on if we have your blessings with that as well. We also would like to create and put a historical marker on the back of the park sign there just kind of giving everybody some historical information on the historical relevance of the name. Why it's named that. But we think it's a very good, it's a sound name and with the historical significance and such. So, it gives us an opportunity to come up with a name other than just Trail Head Park. We can put it out on 63, have directional signs, and so forth.

Along with that, I want to let you know we're proceeding with our project on the additional 2-acre parcel that you allowed VTA and the county, we set aside county property for that and we've had it sprayed uh the next part of that project and we visited with the gentleman tonight; we're going to have burn down, burn it, and then till it. And that's just part of the proceeding project with promoting and continuing on with the pollinator prairie restoration of that 2-acre plot. So, it's been sprayed, it's been fenced off.

So that pretty much I think covers everything. Oh no, I forgot one thing. I just uh did get a text and if you'd like to see it, I can pull it up on my phone, but one of our members come up with mileage signage markers on the BNO there at Hillsdale, the same as we have on the OPD. And so, we have some mileage markers that have now been placed. Bill, you can each look at it, but it just very quickly, it gives you an idea of the mileage markers we placed. On there for the BNO trail, which is nice because going into the future, we're going to as we expand our trail plan, we're going to continue to place those. And so, it just gives us an additional safety factor if any individuals out there and would be injured and they call into the 911 process or the 911 which I think Jimmy's (E-911) program; then we have a mileage marker so that 911 knows where to go to to assist those individuals. So, it's a safety factor.

So, other than that's my presentation and update for the evening unless you have any additional questions.

Dunavan- Commissioners any questions?

Hess- No, you had asked us for our support. So, or anything on the signage.

Dunavan- On the signage you requested that it's to change the name of the park, right?

Hartman- Yes.

Dunavan- Commissioner is there any objections to changing that?

Peebles- I don't

Hess- I don't have no objection.

Dunavan- So, by agreement we support that.

Hartman- Excellent. Okay. Thank you.

Dunavan- And the historical marker, same deal. Any objections to the historical marker on the back side of the....

By agreement, we support that as well.

Hartman- And I think it's just an actual thing we can get with INDOT and I think applying and they will assist us with getting the proper signage up there to recognize that. And anytime you can get additional recognition out, highway uh directional signage, it's a good thing.

Dunavan- Les, did you have something?

Les- (From audience) When you were talking about 911, it occurred to me that with this new bridge that we're going to build across Little Raccoon Creek, we've asked for them to design that to support a truck, ambulance, whatever they need to use to get across that. So, it's going to be beefy enough and it's going to be just 10 foot wide. So, you be able to pass through there with a truck.

Dunavan- And I and I would like to say a special thanks to not only the VTA but Ellis Farms with this pollinator area that's two acres. I know you guys worked very hard together to come up with a compromise on that and I think we the county and the citizens. I think the county wins out on that. You know, we get a little bit of pollinator here and then the farm lease still works out for the county as well. So, I just like to commend both groups on coming to a resolution and working together on that. So, thank you.

Hartman-Well, and the great thing about that is I'll just throw it out there as that's developed, we're going to attach that to our main trail. So, for those individuals that may not be able to walk a two-mile trail, we're going to put a trail through that which will also provide our fire breaks, but it'll, it'll give our opportunity for our schools and our students to come up and learn about nature. It'll give some of our older individuals that may can't walk that two miles. It gives them another alternative to a smaller opportunity to still get out and enjoy nature in its best form and glory.

g. Veterans Affairs Inee Mayhan Proclamation Operation Green Light for Veterans 2025

I just wanted to put this out there that I currently have 103 active sites. And so, I just need to stress the importance and emphasize of how important it is to schedule an appointment because I am the only one and I don't have any other support staff.

So, I want to make sure that the time I am providing to these veterans is good quality time but I also need to make sure I spend good quality time preparing their claims. I have some claims that have taken me upwards of three months to complete. My case load of first-time Vietnam filer vets is where a lot of my bulk is and that entails I have one veteran who has 30 different claims for agent orange exposure.

So, I have hundreds and hundreds of pages of medical files, but also service treatment records that I have to be able to sit there for hours and hours and go through all of these pages by pages. So, I will not turn a vet veteran away that walks, through that door because when I got out, I was turned away at that door. And being as young as I was, I didn't know that there were other avenues I could go when I was turned away. So, that is one thing I will put. I will not ever turn a veteran away. I don't care where they're from. Even out of county and out of state.

But, also, I wanted to talk about the importance Senate Bill one is a state bill and that is in regards to property taxes and so they there is a chance that they could possibly phase out the homestead tax credit. None of this is written in stone yet, but the one thing I need to emphasize is the veterans, they have three different tiers. And so, if they are rated 10% to 30%, it is a \$14,000 property tax deduction. If they are tier 2, it is 40% to 70% if they are rated and it is \$24,960. And if they are tier three, which is 80% or more, it is an additional \$10,000 on top of the \$24,960.

That veterans' stuff was not touched. So, if you are a veteran and you were told you didn't qualify, I don't care; come into the office, call me, schedule an appointment because we need to be proactive as much as we can instead of reactive because this is going to hurt a lot of our elderly people in our community. So, I just want to, get that out there.

Also, Senate Bill 433 is another state bill that is raising the standards for CVSOs throughout Indiana. And so that is more training for us and just it's raising the standard of care that veterans receive across the state of Indiana. So, we are going to be getting more comprehensive education training and then we have to do community outreach also to better serve the veteran population.

So, us being more rural than like Marian County, Brownsburg and such that is more hours out there on the road to make sure that these veterans feel like they are still part of our community. And that is one of the things I have really been trying to emphasize and with that the VA they provide a GDX and the fiscal year is July 1st of 2024 through June 30th of 2025. I currently have 891 veterans in Vermillion County and that is about roughly 40% that we know about. So, there's another probably 60% roughly that we don't know about and do not obtain any veteran benefits.

For the fiscal year of 2024, Vermillion County took on 34 new veterans, 25 of those veterans was from February until June of this year. So far, this first quarter of fiscal year 2025, Vermillion County, we have taken on 27 new veterans. So, that is why I cannot stress

enough of please schedule an appointment.

Also, I was gone two days to the battle line to home summit. And there I learned so much new information that I we currently have lost six Vietnam veterans so far this year. And so, with that, some of those men did not have a service connected rating. Well, I've had three of those widows come to me that are on the verge of losing their homes.

So, one of the things I was able to find out is if a veteran passed away and they did not have a service connected rating when they passed away, if on that death certificate it says like a stroke and they had agent orange exposure that they could qualify for a DIC claim which will give them, you know, a possible \$1,500 to \$1,600 income. Every month from being a dependent and losing their loved one.

And with that I we are starting a support group. I have a meeting next week with a couple of the widows and it'll be at a church in Clinton and I'm just going to kind of let those ladies head it up. They're all in various stages of grieving at this moment, but the one thing they all wanted was a support group. So, we are getting that going and we will have our first meeting before Thanksgiving.

And I will post all of this on Facebook to let everybody know, but it's not also for widows. It's also for those caretakers that are taking care of the veterans at home right now.

And other than that, that is the gist of it. And I'll post all of this information on Facebook also on the VSO site.

Dunavan- Thank you for the update. As always, you impress us every time you come to a meeting. I think with something new, and I just couldn't express my gratitude for all the hard work, you do for the veterans of this county. I mean, it's just phenomenal what you do. So, I just want to say thanks for that. Commissioner, any other comments before one of us read this proclamation?

Hess- No, I would just say you're doing a great job. I think every time you come, you bring a new you have something. So, you're I love the fact that you go, you do and you serve the community. So, great job.

Operation Green Light for Veterans 2025 Proclamation

Whereas, the residents of Vermillion County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly serviced our country and this community in the Armed Forces and

Whereas, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

Whereas, Vermillion County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

Whereas, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 Billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

Whereas, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

Whereas, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

Whereas, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk of suicide during their first year after military service; and

Whereas, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

Whereas, Vermillion County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted;

Now, therefore, be it resolved with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Vermillion County, hereby declares November 4-11, 2025, as a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of those transitioning from active service; and

Be it further resolved, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Vermillion County will have the courthouse lit up with green and

Be it further resolved, Vermillion County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 4-11, 2025.

Read by RJ Dunavan.

h. Sparklight- Upgrading products

Spark Light is upgrading products in your packet. Spark Light had sent us an email stating that we are eligible for some other services. EAS had looked at this and said this is something we should do. It's no cost to the county, but it does need a signature from the commissioners.

So, if there is no objection to that, I'll entertain a motion to approve the upgrading of services from Spark Live Business. No additional expenses.

Peebles- I make the motion. I have a motion by Mr. Peebles.

Do I have a second?

Hess- I'll second it.

Dunavan- Second by Mrs. Hess. Any further discussion? Hearing none, call for vote.

All in favor, motion carries.

Added items to the agenda:

- i. We added to the agenda real quickly. Our next commissioners meeting falls during the Indiana Association of County Commissioners Conference, which would be on Tuesday. With the commissioners attending that, I'd like to recommend pushing the meeting to December 9th at 6 p.m. If there's no objections from either commissioner.

No objections

Auditor's office will amend next Commissioners meeting to Dec 09th, 2025 at 6 P.M.

- j. And then we also will need to advertise a **special meeting for Monday, December the 1st, 2025 at 8:30.** And the only item on that agenda will be to open bids received from the highway department.

- k. Last thing that I had on here, when we were talking to Jimmy about the old truck up there, there is an old Jeep that the commissioners have possession of, it was former Sheriff. It was an investigator Jeep. They transferred it to the surveyor, Ron Mack. He drove it for a year, 6 months. It has not been in operation now for probably close to a year. It's been parked. We're paying insurance on it. I'd recommend that we list that on gov deals and get rid of it and get it off the insurance. I'd just like permission from the commissioners to have the highway department do that or somebody list that for us.

No problem. Okay. All right. That's all I have on my notes. Is there anything else from the board of commissioners tonight?

Bill, nothing. **I will entertain a motion to adjourn.**

X. Adjourn

Dunavan- I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

Hess I'll make the motion. Peebles Second.

All in favor, Meeting adjourned

AYE:

RJ Dunavan

RJ Dunavan

Misty Hess

William Peebles

William Peebles

NYE:

ATTEST:

Ron Dunavan, Auditor