

MARION COUNTY FULL BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

6:30 P.M.

Marion County Courthouse, Court Room 302

Meeting convened at 6:30 P.M. with Steve Whritenour, Marion County Board Chairman, leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Invocation presented by Marion County Coroner Claude Howell.

Roll Call taken by Lori Linder, Marion County Board Secretary. Present were Tracy Murray, Sharon Woodward, Dr. Mike Douglas, Jack Riley, Deb Reed, Tim McCance, Steven Whritenour, Judith Meeks-Hakim, Chris Krupp, Adam Smith, Debbie Smith, and David Iossi. Absent were Brock Waggoner (arrived late), Josh Dunahee, and Cody Rose.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST: See attached list.

THOSE WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Marion County Treasurer Gary Purcell reviewed the Amendments to the Property Tax Code re: Delinquent Property with the Board Members. A copy of the amendments was included in the Full Board Meeting Packet and can be seen in the Marion County Courthouse, Room 201 (Marion County Board Secretary's Office). A thorough presentation was given, and all questions and concerns were addressed. Mr. Purcell stated that he is not asking for any action be taken at this time. He only wanted to inform the Board of what is taking place.

MARION COUNTY BOARD CHAIRMAN STEVE WHRITENOUR

Marion County Board Chairman Steve Whritenour began by verifying that Mark Miller, Marion County Supervisor of Assessment received the Response to Informal Request correspondence from Gary Twist, Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors, LLC. A copy was included in the Full Board Meeting Packet (see attachment). Chairman Mr. Whritenour addressed the recommendation from Mr. Twist regarding the formation of a Supervisor of Assessments Sub-Committee for the County & Community Committee. He assigned Marion County Board Vice Chairman Tracy Murray, Josh Dunahee, and Jack Riley to the Sub-Committee. They will be working with Mr. Miller during the transition period of finding a replacement for him after his retirement. Following, Chairman Mr. Whritenour expressed that he will have information of 3 additional consultants for consideration at the next Committee Meeting in March, 2026 if the Board wishes to not utilize the services of Mr. Twist.

Next, a copy of the Marion County Animal Control Memorandum of Understanding between Marion County, Illinois and City of Centralia, Illinois drafted by Marion State's Attorney Tim Hudspeth was provided to each Board Member in this evening's Meeting Packet, and was briefly examined. Board Chairman Steve Whritenour conveyed that the draft of the Purchase Agreement was just completed over the past weekend. A copy was forwarded, along with a copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement to the City of Centralia for review. A brief discussion transpired.

Continuing with the items on the Agenda, Chairman Mr. Whritenour announced the Illinois Department of Revenue figures.

Illinois Department of Revenue:

	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
¼%	\$98,939.99	\$91,357.89
1%	\$66,675.69	\$54,309.76

Prior to addressing the Veterans Assistance Commission, Board Member Brock Waggoner made comments with respect to the possibility of Marion County taking control of the City of Salem Animal Shelter during the next year.

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

Marion County Board Member Chris Krupp announced that a Combined Finance and Personnel/Labor Relations Committees Meeting was conducted prior to the Full Board Meeting this evening. No action from the Full Board is required at this time. Additional Committee Meetings will be conducted in the near future to address the questions and concerns expressed earlier in the evening.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to be approved at this time.

Marion County Board Member Debbie Smith made a recommendation to research for a simpler method for the Board Secretary to transcribe Meeting minutes. Board Chairman Steve Whritenour concurred.

Marion County Board Member Brock Waggoner voiced comments regarding Closed Meeting Minutes.

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REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

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FINANCE COMMITTEE: CHAIRMAN CHRISTOPHER KRUPP:

Finance Committee Chairman Christopher Krupp began by allowing Marion County Treasurer Gary Purcell provide information regarding the transfer from Marion County General Funds to the Marion County Self-Funded Health Insurance. He requested official approval from the Board. A brief discussion occurred. Marion County Insurance Committee Chairman David Iossi indicated that this item needs to be addressed at a Committee Meeting prior to Full Board approval. Ultimately, it will be forwarded to the Committee at their March, 2026 Meeting.

Financial Committee – Continued:

Lastly, Committee Chairman Mr. Krupp presented an update on the FY 2025 Audit. Additionally, he stated that WIPFLI will be sending a notice to each Department Head that a new system has been implemented to return requested documents to them.

BUDGET COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN BROCK WAGGONER:

Budget Committee Chairman Brock Waggoner stated that the requested quarterly report from Bellwether will be available in the near future.

INSURANCE COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN DAVID IOSSI:

Insurance Committee Chairman David Iossi relayed that the next Committee Meeting will be conducted in March, 2026. Board Member Adam Smith expressed concerns regarding the Employee Self Insured Insurance Plan for the Marion County Employees.

BUILDING & HISTORICAL COMMITTEE – CHAIRWOMAN DEBORAH REED:

Building & Historical Committee Chairwoman Deb Reed began by allowing Marion County Sheriff Kevin Cripps to provide an update on the renovation of the old Law Library in the Courthouse. He communicated that the issues that occurred during the demolition of the wall with glass on top have been rectified. Completion of the remodel is anticipated to be in 1-2 weeks.

Following, Chairwoman Mrs. Reed conveyed that Marion County Circuit Clerk Tiffany Schicker has received sound dampening panels through a Grant for the area. Additionally, Sheriff Cripps shared that the furniture for the rooms will also be funded by the Grant monies. Circuit Clerk Mrs. Schicker was present and relayed that she is also utilizing these funds for new entryway mats, a new oxygen tank and wheelchair holder for the Courthouse. In addition, the Jury Room will soon be updated, and she will be purchasing new tables and chairs for this renovation also. Lastly, Committee Chairwoman Mrs. Reed communicated that the Dispositional Policy allows the tables and chairs to be offered to County Departments, and if no one is interested they can be offered to a non-for-profit within the County. The Salem Library has shown interest, but others may be considered by contacting Board Chairman Steve Whritenour, Committee Chairwoman Deb Reed, or Circuit Clerk Tiffany Schicker.

ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE: CHAIRWOMAN SHARON WOODWARD:

Law Enforcement Committee Chairwoman Sharon Woodward allowed Marion County Sheriff Kevin Cripps to present information with respect to his Federal Inmate Contract with the US Marshalls and Grant that he has received. He stated that renegotiations were conducted, and the results included an increase of the Federal Inmate charge of \$65.00/day and the \$25.00/guard hours for transport. The new fees will be \$85.00/day per Federal Inmate and \$39.00/hour for the guards starting February 1, 2026. Sheriff Cripps reviewed his written report that was included in the Meeting's Packet.

Next, Marion County Coroner Claude Howell presented his report. He began by sharing that the Coroner's office has been very busy during the month of January and February thus far. He communicated that during the month of January, 2026, there were 40 deaths (all Coroner cases); 39 natural deaths with 7 related to cancer and 1 accidental death. The County had 1 autopsy and 22 cremations. In closing, Coroner Howell relayed that the FY 2026 Coroner's Budget remains on course.

Following, Marion County Probation Director Renee Pride reviewed the January, 2026 Monthly Statistics that she had provided prior to the Full Board Meeting. She announced that Drug Court graduation for 2 individuals will be conducted on Friday, February 27, 2026. Everyone was invited to attend. Questions from Marion County Board Member Brock Waggoner regarding the Probation fees ordered and fees collected were responded to.

Prior to addressing Sub-Committee 911/ESDA, Marion County Circuit Clerk Tiffany Schicker relayed that the Land of Lincoln Legal Aid will have 2 attorneys available at the Marion County Courthouse on Thursday, February 26, 2026 from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. They will be available to work with people that are needing legal advice; income limits apply. A second date is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2026 with the same time. The work location will be outside of the Courthouse in their Mobile Justice Van.

Continuing, 911/ESDA Liaison Cody Rose was absent; therefore, Board Chairman Steve Whritenour addressed items for the Sub-Committee. He began by introducing Andrew Strong, new ESDA Coordinator and Shane Mansker, new Assistant ESDA Coordinator. Following, the benefits of the Marion County Everbridge emergency notification system was briefly discussed. Mr. Strong shared support and encouraged the Board to renew the Everbridge contract. An abbreviated debate with respect to a 1-year or 3-year renewal of the contract occurred. Jack Riley made a Motion to approve the Everbridge 1-year contract and was seconded by Sharon Woodward. Roll Call Vote: 11 ayes – 1 nay (Brock Waggoner). Chris Krupp left the Meeting prior to the Roll Call Vote being taken. Motion passed. Subsequently, Mr. Strong announced that a Storm Spotter Class will be conducted from 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M. at the Salem Community Activity Center on Wednesday, February 25, 2026.

Next, Board Chairman Mr. Whritenour provided information regarding Resolution 2026-14: Authorizing Participation as a Member in the Illinois Emergency Management Mutual Aid System Response Pursuant to an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Establishment of a Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Service Agreement. He entertained a Motion to approve Resolution 2026-14. Tracy Murray made the Motion and was seconded by Deb Reed. Voice Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

#### COUNTY & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE: CHAIRMAN TRACY MURRAY:

County & Community Committee Chairman Tracy Murray opened the floor to Whitney Purcell, Marion County Animal Control Administrator to present her monthly report. She began by expressing that the report was generated from the new software that was purchased for Animal Control. Ms. Purcell disclosed that during the month of February, 2026, 24 dogs have been brought into the facility and 21 out. The dogs that left the facility included 3 adoptions, 3 fostered, 11 taken to No Kill Rescue Shelters, and 4 returned to owner. Board Member Brock Waggoner commended Administrator Ms. Purcell. She continued by communicating the benefits of taking a dog to a rescue establishment and the transportation procedure of the animals. Efforts for resolving the heating issues in the kennel remain ongoing.

County & Community Committee – Continued:

Next, Committee Chairman Mr. Murray addressed the Discover Downstate Illinois correspondence. Debbie Smith made a Motion to recognize and send a letter of recognition to Discover Downstate Illinois Tourism and was seconded by Sharon Woodward. Voice Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

Following, Alvaro Armaza, Summit Ridge Energy Project Development Associate was present to respond to any questions or concerns regarding the Decommissioning Plan for the Swamp Fox Solar Project. A brief discussion transpired. Debbie Smith made a Motion for approval of the Decommissioning Plan for the Swamp Tail Solar Project and was seconded by Judith Meeks- Hakim. Voice Vote: 10 ayes – 2 nays (Brock Waggoner and Sharon Woodward). Motion passed.

Sub-Committee Codification: Brock Waggoner

Sub Committee Chairman Brock Waggoner stated that the project is still in the document review process. The next phase may begin in May or June, 2026.

Sub-Committee Broadband:

The Broadband Sub-Committee will remain active.

ROAD & BRIDGE COMMITTEE: CO-CHAIRMEN: ADAM SMITH & TIMOTHY MCCANCE

Road & Bridge Committee Co-Chairman Adam Smith began by opening the floor to Highway Engineer Alex Kreke. Engineer Kreke shared information regarding an incident that occurred involving one of his crew members, and reported that he is currently doing well.

Next, Engineer Kreke conveyed the details regarding Resolution 2026-11: Engineering Agreement with Gonzalez Companies, LLC for Preliminary Engineering Services of Replacement of Structure #061-3011 (Skillet Fork Bridge). Committee Co-Chairman Adam Smith entertained a Motion to approve Resolution 2026-11. Jack Riley made the Motion and was seconded by Tracy Murray. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

Following, Engineer Kreke provided information regarding Resolution 2026-12: County 2026 Aggregate Bid Approval 26-00000-00-GM and Resolution 2026-13: Township 2026 Aggregate Bid Approval 26(01-17)000-00-GM. Committee Co-Chairman Adam Smith entertained a Motion to approve Resolution 2026-12. Tim McCance made the Motion and was seconded by Sharon Woodward. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed. Continuing, Committee Co-Chairman Adam Smith entertained a Motion to approve Resolution 2026-13. Tracy Murray made the Motion and was seconded by Judith Meeks-Hakim. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

An update on the roof repairs/renovation at the Highway Department facility was given. The roof warranty inspection has been completed and passed with a few minor repairs being done. Engineer Mr. Kreke stated that he will be addressing the guttering with the Building & Historical Committee at their Meeting in March, 2026.

In conclusion, Engineer Kreke announced that Board Member Cody Rose has been in contact with him regarding a preliminary grant application for the purchase of a new building for the Highway Department.

PERSONNEL/LABOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE: CHAIRMAN: ADAM SMITH

Personnel/Labor Relations Committee Chairman Adam Smith conveyed that a Combined Finance and Personnel/Labor Relations Committees Meeting was conducted prior to this evening's Full Board Meeting. There is no action needed at this time.

LIQUOR LICENSE COMMITTEE – STEVE WHRITENOUR

Liquor Committee Chairman Steve Whritenour relayed that the new owner of Rambo's Lucky Day Slots, LLC. was issued a new Liquor License.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

911

Marion County Board Representative Steven Whritenour stated that Marion County 911 Coordinator position interviews will be occurring over the next couple of weeks. There are 8 applicants.

708 MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Marion County Board Representative Judith Meeks-Hakim stated that the next Meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2026 at the Community Resource Center in Centralia at 5:30 P.M.

MARION COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Marion County Board Representative Dr. Mike Douglas stated that there has not been a Meeting.

SCIRPD

Marion County Board Representative Debbie Smith stated that there is nothing new to report.

MARION COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Marion County Board Representative Judith Meeks-Hakim stated that there was a Meeting conducted on February 19, 2026. The next Meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2026 at the Centralia Chamber of Commerce at 12:00 P.M.

WIB (WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD)

Marion County Board Representative Debbie Smith had nothing new to report.

ENTERPRISE ZONE

Marion County Board Representatives Adam Smith stated that a meeting may have been conducted, but he was unable to attend.

BCMW

Marion County Board Representative Adam Smith stated that a Meeting was conducted, but he was unable to attend.

Reports from Special Committees – Continued:

SIEDA

Marion County Board Representative Dr. Mike Douglas stated a Meeting was conducted on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 in Effingham, Illinois. The next Meeting is scheduled for mid-March. He provided a brief overview of the Agency.

Marion County Board Chairman Steve Whritenour entertained a Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss Marion County ESDA Personnel. Debbie Smith made the Motion and was seconded by Judith Meeks-Hakim. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

A 5-minute break took place.

Marion County Board Chairman Steve Whritenour entertained a Motion to open into Closed Session. Brock Waggoner made the Motion and was seconded by David Iossi. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

Closed Session began at 8:12 P.M.

Tracy Murray made a Motion to come out of Closed Session and was seconded by Deb Reed. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

Came out of Closed Session at 8:25 P.M.

No action was taken after the Closed Session.

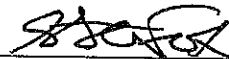
Nothing further to come before the Board, Tracy Murray made a Motion to adjourn with mileage and per diem and was seconded by Debbie Smith. Roll Call Vote: All ayes – No nays. Motion passed.

The next Full Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.

Time: 8:27 P.M.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ ✓

Date: 3/24/26

  
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Steve Fox, Marion County Clerk

2-24-26

# Full Board Meeting

## Guests

~~Chris - Stewart~~

Robert Ill

Jammy Guidice

Weg 10th

Kari Dondko

Tim 125

Emma & Sigrid Bumgarner

Alvaro Aronza

See Huelstoecker

Matt Huelstoecker

Jarrod Bunn

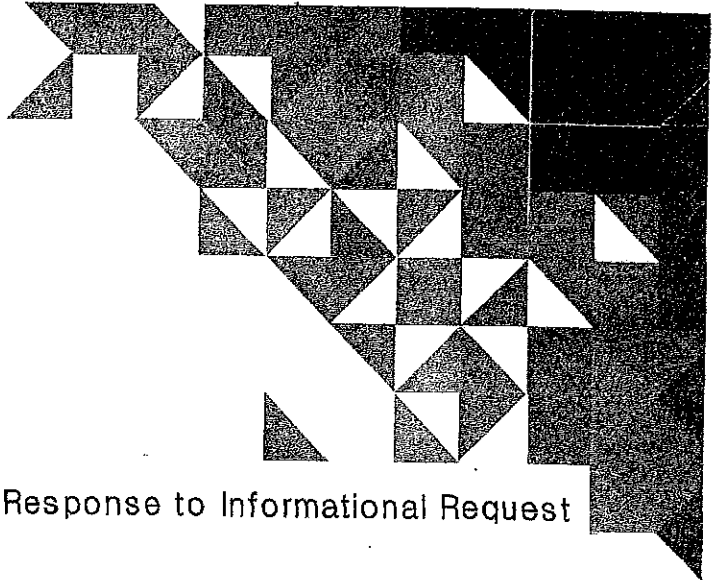
Andre Spray

~~L. M. F.~~

Steven Bunn

**PROPERTY EVALUATION  
& TAX ADVISORS LLC.**

Mr Steven Whritenour, Chairman  
Marion County Board  
100 E Main Street  
Salem, IL 62881



February 12, 2026

re: Response to Informational Request

Dear Mr. Whritenour,

In approximately 10 months, Marion County will complete a transitional period of leadership, as your long-serving Supervisor of Assessments retires. This transitional period will be important and will go by quickly. I have several recommendations which may be beneficial to Marion County. These are the same recommendations that I would provide to any Illinois County in a similar transitional period.

Recommendation #1: Appoint a sub-committee to research the advantages and disadvantages of having an appointed Supervisor of Assessments vs an elected Supervisor of Assessments. If there ever was a time to give this consideration, it is now. The committee should also familiarize itself with the procedures required for any change, should that be your decision.

Recommendation #2: Form a sub-committee tasked with drafting a comprehensive job description for the next Supervisor of Assessments. This description will provide guidance for the future and gain importance if an appointed model is adopted.

Recommendation #3: Constitute a Search Committee to identify candidates for the next Supervisor of Assessments, ensuring a thorough evaluation and selection process to fill the unexpired term.

Recommendation #4: Arrange for the Illinois Department of Revenue to conduct a State-wide Supervisor of Assessments examination in Marion County in June, 2026.

Recommendation #5: Support the outgoing Supervisor of Assessments in implementing his reassessment proposal during the final months in office. Any progress made in reassessment would be beneficial and could facilitate a positive conclusion to this tenure.

Recommendation #6: Schedule Devnet to bring to Marion County a CAMA training program to be provided to the entire County Assessment staff and willing Township Assessors. There can be exponential benefits for this training.

Recommendation #7: Develop a plan or select a committee to oversee procurement of contractual reassessment services for the future. Consider preparing "Requests for Proposal" or "Request for Qualifications" documentation to attract capable providers, which will serve Marion County well as it looks ahead.

Recommendation #8: Aim to select the new Supervisor of Assessments by October, allowing sufficient time for knowledge transfer before December 31, to ensure a smooth transition.

It is my hope that these recommendations will assist you in successfully navigating the transitional period in 2026.

Best regards,

Gary Twist

*Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors LLC*

*540 N May, #2079, Mesa, AZ 85201*

*Gary\_twist@hotmail.com 217/778-5950*