

# Phelps County Commission Record

January 6, 2026 First Day of the January Term

Now at this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner

Deputy Clerk Lorraine Britt took minutes. Commissioner Stites was absent due to being out of country.

Also present were Local Residents James & Brenda Wagner, Katrina Curnutt and Mike Woessner. County Clerk Laura Johnson joined via Zoom.

In the Matter of  
Road Vacation - Jerome:

Wagner's were informed that this is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing and Commission cannot take action to vacate until the 3<sup>rd</sup> hearing which is set for April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026.

Wagner's left at 9:10 am.

Local Residents Jeff Roberson, Shary & George Macormic entered at 9:10 am.

In the Matter of  
Road Vacation - Section of CR 8500:

Macormic's were informed that this is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing and Commission cannot take action to vacate until the 3<sup>rd</sup> hearing which is set for April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026.

Roberson, Macormic's & Woessner left at 9:21 am.  
Support Services Sissy Shults entered at 9:20 am.

In the Matter of  
Support Services Budget hearing:

Shults presents commission with proposed 2026 budget to review. Discussion was had on Public Facilities fund 900 and fund 200-2003.

Shults left at 9:37 am and Local Resident Chester Kojro entered. Kojro & Cornutt left at 10:24 am.

Public Administrator Dana Sooter entered at 10:30 am.

In the Matter of  
Public Administrator Budget hearing:

Sooter presented commission with her proposed 2026 budgets forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 200-2028.

Circuit Clerk Marlaina Wallace entered at 10:36 am and Sooter left at 10:40 am.

In the Matter of  
Circuit Clerk Budget hearing:

Wallace presented commission with 2026 proposed budget forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 200-2008 and fund 200-2007.

Wallace left at 10:51 am and Collector Faith Barnes entered at 10:55 am.

In the matter of  
Ad in the Phelps County Focus:

Barnes discussed with the commission about them getting an ad in the Phelps Focus magazine "Welcome to Phelps County". Barnes said it costs approximately \$485.00 and another office can be included in the ad. Commissioner Hicks motioned to get an ad in the magazine and split with our esteemed County Clerk. Commissioner Auxier seconded. Barnes left at 11:00 am and Treasurer Cathy Tipton entered.

In the Matter of  
Treasurer Budget hearing:

Tipton presented commission with 2026 proposed budget forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 200-2005. Also discussed if Carol Green need to be bonded at a higher amount. Commission advised to see what she should be bonded at. Tipton will come back in on January 13<sup>th</sup> with the amount/cost. Tipton also presented a Sales and Use tax access form for commissioners to sign.

Coroner Ernie Coverdell entered at 11:15 am and Tipton left at 11:23 am.

In the Matter of  
Coroners Budget hearing:

Coverdell presented commission with 2026 proposed budget forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 200-2017.

Local Resident Dan Sutterfield entered at 11:37 am and Coverdell left at 11:42 am.

In the matter of  
Citizen Input:

Sutterfield discussed with the commission about the upcoming movie(s) and pot luck on Saturday in the multipurpose room in the courthouse.

Sutterfield left at 11:55 am.

In the matter of  
Review of Minutes:

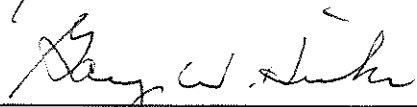
Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from 12/23/2025

Commission meeting.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Read and Approved:

  
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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner

  
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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner



**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 8, 2026 Second Day of the January Term**

Now at this 8<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner

Deputy Clerk Lorraine Britt took minutes. Commissioner Stites was absent due to being out of country.

Also present were Assessor Tim Kean. County Clerk Laura Johnson joined via Zoom.

In the Matter of  
Assessors Budget hearing:

Kean presented commission with his proposed 2026 budgets forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 800. Commissions signed an Assessment Fund Memorandum of Understanding.

Kean left at 9:21 am.

In the Matter of  
Senior Companions Budget hearing:

Commission was provided with proposed 2026 budget forms by the County Clerk due to Yvonne Leuthhauser's absence from illness. Discussions were had on fund 550.

Sheriff Kirn, Administrative Assistant Theresa Lasher and The Focus Reporter entered at 9:35 am.

In the Matter of  
Sheriff's Department budget hearing:

Kirn presented commission with Sheriff's Department proposed 2026 budget forms for review.  
Discussions were had on fund 400 Sheriff's Training fund.  
Discussions were had on fund 405 Sheriff's Drug Enforcement fund.  
Discussions were had on fund 407 Sheriff's Civil Fees fund.  
Discussions were had on fund 409 Sheriff's Revolving fund.  
Discussions were had on fund 415 Sheriff's Inmate Prisoner Detention Security fund. Sheriff stated that there are 7 pages of items available to the prisoners for purchase now compared to 1 page previously. Revenue will be going up substantially.  
Discussions were had on fund 420 Sheriff's Debt Service fund.  
Discussions were had on fund 410 Sheriff's LEST fund.  
Commission also discussed with Kirn that according to a legal opinion they have he can no longer be the Emergency Management Director; it cannot be a county employee or elected official. Kirn asked where the opinion came from and Commissioner Hicks gave him a copy of it. Kirn also discussed that he has ordered bunks to put in one of the rec rooms for more prisoners and keeping the other rec room open. Kirn may need to eventually open up the annex if the rec room becomes full.

Prosecutor Taylor Banholzer entered at 9:51 am followed by Local Resident Don Riley at 10:12 am.  
Kirn and Lasher left at 10:17 am.

In the Matter of  
Prosecutors Budget hearing:

Banholzer presented commission with her proposed 2026 budget forms for review.  
Discussions were had on fund 200-2014. Banholzer is needing to increase the Assistant PA salary line by \$20,000.00.  
Discussions were had on fund 440, fund 450, fund 460 and fund 480.

Riley left at 10:38 am followed by Banholzer at 10:43 am.

In the Matter of  
County Clerks Budget hearing:

County Clerk Laura Johnson provided commission with her proposed 2026 budget forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 300 and fund 325.

In the Matter of  
County Commission Budget hearing:

Commission presented their proposed 2026 budget forms.  
Discussions were had on fund 200-2000.

The Focus Reporter left at 11:01 am.

In the Matter of  
Accounts Payable:

Commission reviewed and approved invoices in the amount of \$21,732.74 for Senior Companions December Stipends.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Mark Case and Admin Assistant Michelle Bock entered at 11:32 am.

In the Matter of  
Road and Bridge Budget hearing:

Bock presented commission with proposed 2026 budget forms for review. Discussions were had on fund 100 and fund 102.  
Bock also presented the Missouri Department of Conservation fiscal year 2026 CART agreement for Little Prairie Conservation area. Commissioner Auxier motioned to go into agreement with the MO Department of Conservation CART program, Commissioner Hicks seconded, Motion carried.

Case and Bock left at 11:50 am.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Read and Approved:



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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner



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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner



**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 13, 2026 Third Day of the January Term**

Now at this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Also present were Treasurer Cathy Tipton.

In the matter of  
Sales and Use Tax:

Tipton advised commission the county has received \$113,105.84 in use tax funds this month.

In the matter of  
CD fund discussion:

Tipton advised we have unemployment funds sitting in a 6-month CD that is maturing this month. Discussions were had on the \$3,692 that need to be returned back to General Revenue. Discussions were had on keeping a balance of \$10,000 in the fund and then investing the remaining funds into another CD. Tipton advised she will start the bid process for the investment to be opened on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February @ 9:00 am.

In the matter of  
ARPA Funds remaining:

Discussions were had on the funds that the county received back from the Doolittle City allocations that were rescinded in the amount of \$149,000. Discussions were had on how MRPC advised the funds could be utilized by the end of the 2026 year.

In the matter of  
ADP Payroll Account:

Tipton advised since we are no longer utilizing ADP for payroll we need to do something with those funds and close that account. Commission advised we will transfer those funds back to General Revenue and close that account in February. Johnson advised she is planning on getting the 90 day notice to quit letter signed by commission and then submitted to ADP the last week of January. Johnson further advised she delayed the notice in order to make sure ADP fulfilled their contracted duties for the month of January that includes all the year end forms and reporting that are required by law.

Tipton left at 9:35 am.

In the matter of  
County Clerk budget hearing:

Johnson presented commission with budgets for fund 200-2001 and 200-2002.

In the matter of  
County Surveyor Budget hearing:

Johnson presented the budget for the County Surveyor to commission. Discussions were had on the budget reflecting the same expense and revenue from last year.

Collector Faith Barnes entered at 10:04 am.

In the matter of  
Collectors Office Budget hearing:

Barnes presented commission with budgets for fund 200-2006 and 850. Discussions were had on both funds. Barnes also advised she has one employee planning to retire this year so she will eventually need to bring in a new employee to start learning that position.

Barnes left at 10:24 am.

In the matter of  
Health Department budget hearing:

Johnson presented the Health department budget due to Director Berry being out for training. Discussions were had on creating a G/L line to reflect the vehicle purchase price clearly on the budget. Johnson advised she will rework the budget to include the line and present the updated forms on Thursday.

In the matter of  
Review of Minutes:

Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from the 12/30, 1/6 and 1/8 commission meetings.

Recorder Robin Kordes entered at 10:59 am.

In the matter of  
Recorder's Office Budget Hearing:

Kordes provided budgets for fund 200-2010 and 510. Discussions were had on Kordes hiring a part time employee that has prior experience with the same systems our county uses.

Road and Bridge Superintendent Mark Case and Admin Assistant Michelle Bock entered at 11:10 am.

Kordes left at 11:10 am.

In the matter of  
Road Department Funds revisited:

Discussions were had on the use tax and the concerns the road department has with it not being in a separate fund. Bock advised she really feels the use tax funds need to be in a separate fund so that the funds are not co-mingled.

Treasurer Tipton reentered at 11:15 am.

Tipton provided reports and a spreadsheet for tracking the expenses associated with the Use tax revenues. Discussions were had on leaving the revenue and expenses to 2 singular G/L lines for ease of tracking and to follow what the auditors advised.

Tipton left at 11:40 am.

Discussions were had on the revision of adding a transfer of \$35,000 from the Road debt service fund to accommodate the cola to the employees. Case advised he wants to know if we do a cola again next year where are these additional funds going to come from as the Debt service fund does not generate revenue. Discussions were had on using the funds from closing the railroad crossing in Rosati to asphalt that road for the citizens in that area. This will provide updated/improved road in that area by closing it and utilizing some of those funds back in that community.

AP Clerk Erica Bargerstock entered at 12:00 pm.

In the matter of  
2026 Per Diem and Mileage rates:

Bargerstock provided commission with a draft email explaining to all County Employees/Elected Officials that explains the per diem and mileage rates and sets a clear understanding of how and what will be reimbursed. See below for verbiage:

Hello Everyone,

Please note the following updates to reimbursement rates for the new year. I have attached the IRS PDF for you.

#### Reimbursement Updates

- **Mileage:** The IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2026 has increased. We will reimburse **\$0.725 per mile**, in accordance with the IRS rate.
- **Meals:** The GSA has **not** changed meal reimbursement rates for 2026. Our standard reimbursement rates remain:
  - **Breakfast:** \$16
  - **Lunch:** \$19
  - **Dinner:** \$28

Please update your spreadsheets accordingly.

#### Important Reminders

1. **Per Diems**  
County per diem rates are intended to supplement costs incurred while conducting county business. Reimbursement is limited to the designated amount per meal, not a total daily amount. To receive reimbursement, you must submit an itemized receipt that shows proof of payment.
2. **Mileage Reimbursement**  
Mileage for Employee's should be calculated from Point A: 200 N. Main St., Rolla, MO 65401 to Point B: your destination. (Note: The Point A mileage requirement does not apply to Elected Officials) Google Maps may be used to verify mileage.

3. **Sales Tax on Purchases**

When purchasing items for county business, ensure the vendor has the county's tax-exempt status on file. If a business does not have an exemption account set up, please see me to obtain the Missouri State Tax ID certificate.

No reimbursements will be issued for sales tax paid on county purchases, per the Commission's direction.


Thank you for your attention and cooperation. This email has been reviewed and approved by Commission on 01/13/2026.

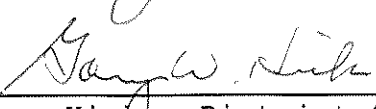
Bargerstock left at 12:05 pm.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Read and approved:

  
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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner

  
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Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner

  
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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner

**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 15, 2026 Fourth Day of the January Term**

Now at this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Also present were Local Resident Jim Fleming and Prosecuting Attorney Taylor Banholzer.

In the matter of  
Solid Waste management discussion:

Fleming advised commission he is wanting to get on the agenda Tuesday to discuss HB2761 that is looking to dissolved SWM districts.

In the matter of  
Use Tax fund discussions:

Commissioner Stites asked PA Banholzer if the county can use the USE Tax funds for the labor associated on the projects done by the county employees for the improvements. Banholzer read the Use Tax ballot language allowed to all in attendance. Discussions were had on as long as the projects are true repair and maintenance projects and the county is not planning to decrease GR funding in order to utilize the use tax funds then she does feel that labor can also be included in the improvement/repair projects for county employees. Banholzer reiterated that you cannot subrogate funding on these projects.

In the matter of  
Tax Exempt discussion:

Banholzer advised she has an APA that is going to attend a training for Drug court related matters in order to obtain additional opioid funds for the county. Her dilemma is that this training is over spring break and she can not find a reasonably priced hotel. Banholzer further advised she has found an Airbnb that would save the county \$1600 but the caveat is that she will have to spend \$88 in taxes. Commission advised that they will pay the taxes since that would be a huge savings for the county.

Banholzer left at 9:25 am.  
Kent Bagnel with the Morning Mayor Show entered at 9:26 am.

In the matter of  
Extension Council Budget hearing:

Johnson presented commission with Extension Council budget for the year. Discussions were had on Fund 200-2024.

In the matter of  
Courthouse Security Budget Hearing:

Johnson presents commission with Courthouse Security budget for the year. Discussions were had on the 2 part time employees that are now running the security entrance to the courthouse. Johnson advised these employees have been set up to be paid out of fund 410 but they need to be paid out of 200-2018 since that is the courthouse security fund where the revenues are sitting. Commissioner Stites moved to approve transferring the 2 employees from 410 into 200-2018, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried. Further discussions were had on moving the LACTF funds out of ARPA and into the Courthouse Security fund.

In the matter of  
Use Tax Fund Discussion:

Discussions were had on the need to place the Use Tax funds into the Use tax fund 205 for easy accounting and accuracy. Commissioner Stites moved to transfer all Use Tax funds into fund 205 instead of fund 100, Commissioner Hicks seconded, Motion carried.

In the matter of  
Health Department Budget revisited:

Johnson presented a revised budget for the Health Department that showed a clear line for Vehicle purchases. Discussions were had on fund 220.

In the matter of  
Review of Minutes:

Commission reviewed and approved minutes from the 12/23/25 and 1/13/26 commission meetings. Amendments were also made and approved on the 11/4/25 commission meeting minutes correcting a discrepancy.

In the matter of  
Accounts Payable:

Commission reviewed and approved invoices in the amount of \$20,191.99 for January contract pay.

Local resident Andy Davis entered at 10:17 am.  
Bagnel and Fleming left at 10:18 am.  
The Focus Reporter entered at 10:52 am.


AP Clerk Erica Bargerstock and Support Services Meredith Joyce entered at 11:21 am.

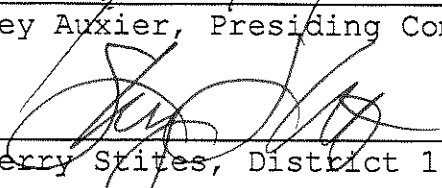
In the matter of  
Cyber security invoice:


Bargerstock advised the company we utilize for Cyber Security failed to submit invoices to us for a few months and now we have a \$9,000 bill. She asked commission if we could raise the limit on our county card to be able to pay this invoice? Commission advised yes go ahead and increase the limit then once its paid take the limit back down.

Bargerstock and Joyce left at 11:26 am.  
Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Read and approved:

  
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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner

  
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Sherry Stives, District 1 Commissioner

  
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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner



**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 20, 2026 Fifth Day of the January Term**

Now at this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Commissioner Stites was absent due to a prior commitment.

Also present was local resident Jim Fleming.

In the matter of  
County Budget Hearing:

County Clerk read the budget message to all present and then presented the proposed budget for 2026. Discussions were had on the low ending balance for General Revenue and that all office holders need to know we will not be able to assist with any shortfalls in departments.

Local Resident Chester Kojro entered at 9:35 am followed by Admin Assistant Michelle Bock at 9:48 am.

Further discussions were had on each fund and the ending balances being lower than years past due to inflation and the need to hire more employees with the increase in work in the county as it continues to grow. Commission approved budget numbers with one edit to the ARPA balance correcting a \$-9.00 and advised they will sign all 10 copies of the official recorded budget on Thursday.

MRPC Representative Jill Hollowell entered at 10:01 am.

In the matter of  
Solid Waste Management updates:

Jim Fleming provided commission with the annual report for the Ozark Rivers Solid Waste Management District.

Bock left at 10:08 am.

Further discussion was had on the projects the board worked on specifically with MS&T to try and create new ways to produce energy and cut waste. Discussions were had on the growing issues with plastics waste and the fact that the recycling centers only take #1 or #2. Fleming advised DNR wants statistics based on tonnage but the volume is much larger than the tonnage.

Kojro left at 10:26 am.

Discussions were had on MODOT suspending the adopt a highway program. Further discussions were had on the county getting "tough on trash" funding in the past to help with the cleanup. Hollowell advised they would supply a tub and vests along with a quick reference guide know what objects to avoid when picking

this up. Discussions were had on the county potentially storing the tub and creating a list to check it out for projects to any entity or group wanting to pick up trash along the roads. Commission advised the trash trucks that dump out at the dumpsite are constantly dropping trash along the road in that area and that DOT would be the ones to regulate the loads not being covered properly. Hollowell advised there are only two C&D landfills in the state of Missouri for construction debris. Further discussions were had on there being some potential for pilot studies to see how we can be more environmental with landfills. Discussions were had on the legislative bills the board has and is trying to pass in order to assist with making the landfills more environmentally friendly. There is a community round table coming up on March 20, 2026 @ noon located at MRPC to address the plastic waste issues and what we can do to cut down on the waste.

Fleming and Hollowell left at 11:10 am.  
Cathy Tipton entered at 11:47 am.

In the matter of  
Marijuana tax reimbursement appeals:


Tipton advised she has just received information from DNR that we will be having some invoices come in from appeals of the marijuana reimbursements. Discussions were had on these invoices and if we were going to cut checks to pay the invoices or if we were going to just have them cut costs from our incoming tax revenue. Further discussions were had on the time frame of how long these appeals could come in. Tipton advised she did ask that question and she was informed the appeals can happen for 10 years.

Tipton left at 12:05 pm.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:06 pm.

Read and approved:

  
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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner

  
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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner

**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 22, 2026 Sixth Day of the January Term**

Now at this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner  
Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Also present were Sheriff Mike Kirn and Admin Assistant Theresa Lasher.

In the matter of  
Discussions on 410 budget:

Sheriff advised he wants to include the COLA to the newer employees so he can raise the starting pay across the board. Discussions were had on the salary line and benefits section of the 410 budget. Lasher provided Johnson with a list of the employees that they would like to include in having a COLA. Johnson advised she will recalculate and provide updated numbers to commission for an amendment to fund 410 on Tuesday.

Representative Jason Smiths field representative Grant Wilson entered at 9:07 am followed by The Focus reporter at 9:10 am.

Kirn advised commission that he has been making a lot of changes in his department to include gaining the maximum amount of revenues that he possibly can. This includes offering more items in commissary which has already brought in \$8,000 more a month. He further advised he plans to hire 2 more road deputies and at the moment he is sitting well with corrections officers. Further discussions were had on him looking into the potential for creating a mental health program within the facility but that could take some time. Discussions were had on the fact that any medical company that offers a mental health program will cost \$1.5 million which is not sustainable at a county level.

Kirn and Lasher left at 9:22 am.

Deputy Clerk Lorraine Britt entered at 9:25 am to take minutes and Johnson left to assist another office holder with a report.

In the matter of  
Accounts Payable:

Commission reviewed and approved invoices in the amounts of \$195,781.76 for Sheriff Invoices, \$121,375.62 for December PC Self Insured UMR & KC Life, \$3,835.31 for December ADP Multi-vendor, \$5,900.63 for January PR Great West, \$63,578.66 for A - L and \$40,724.24 for M - Z.

Collector Faith Barnes entered at 9:25 am and exited at 9:30 am.

Local Resident Mike Schanta entered at 9:50 am.

In the matter of  
Citizen Input:

Schanta asked the commission about the status on the intersection of CR 1050 and Hwy 68 N. Schanta discussed issues including having a light installed, a turn lane put in and the speed limit. Commissioners let him know that MoDOT would be the one to install a light.

Road Dept Admin Assistant Michelle Bock entered at 10:02 am.

Commissioners reviewed and approved the Commission minutes from the January 20, 2026 meeting.

Wilson left at 10:30 am followed by Schanta at 10:36 am.

Mark Grimm entered at 10:53 am followed by Treasurer Cathy Tipton.

Bock left at 10:53 am.

County Clerk Johnson reentered at 10:58 am and Britt left at 10:59 am.

Sheriff Kirn and Admin Assistant Theresa Lasher reentered at 11:00 am followed by Ernie Kost and Ray Mowery with FSCB at 11:02 am.

In the matter of  
Jail Expansion loan refinance contract:

Grimm presented commission with documentation on the payment amortization schedule over the next 20 years. All in the room advised these payments look much more manageable and are happy with schedule. Commissioner Hicks moved to approve the amended refinanced contract with an order number of 20260122-1, Commissioner Stites seconded, motion carried.

Commissioner Hicks moved to approve the Payment Schedule contract, Commissioner Stites seconded, motion carried.

Kost advised commission that Treasurer Tipton has been a God send in this process and she has been on her game during the entire process. Commission advised that they agreed we are truly blessed to have her as our County Treasurer.

Lasher and Kirn left at 11:24 am followed by Grimm, Kost and Mowery at 11:29 am.

In the matter of  
Marijuana fund appeals:

Discussions were had on the potential appeals for reimbursements of the tax that the county may have to pay back. Stites advised we will have 3 options to pay this back; 1- pay by invoices as they come in 2- have DOR just remove the owed amount from our monthly sales tax distribution or 3- just pay back all of the revenue we received.

Commissioner Hicks asked who the refunds go back to as the only person that should be reimbursed is the consumer that made the purchase paying that additional tax. Tipton advised she would call DOR and find out the answer.

The Focus reporter left at 10:44 am.

Support Services Sissy Shults entered at 10:45 am.

In the matter of  
Wilson Elser Contract:

Shults provided commission with a contract for services rendered related to Cyber Security. Commissioner Stites moved to approve the contract, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried.

Shults left at 11:58 pm.

In the matter of  
Use Tax fund revisited:

Discussions were had on the recommendations of auditors and legal counsel on how to proceed with the Use tax funds. Commissioner Stites moved to retract the motion to place the use tax funds into a use tax stand-alone fund and keep it in fund 100, Commissioner Auxier also retracted this motion, motion carried the use tax stays in the road and bridge fund where it is already set up.

Deputy Treasurer Carol Green entered at 12:00 pm.

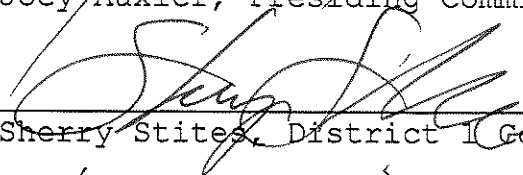
In the matter of  
MRPC Grant hours:

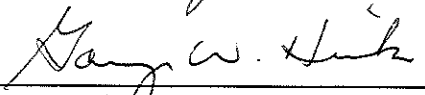
Green asked commission if they would be willing to share grant writing hours with Phelps Connections for Seniors again this year. Commission advised they would give PCS 9 hours of the counties grant writing time with MRPC.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Read and approved:

  
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Joey Auxier, Presiding Commissioner

  
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Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner

  
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Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner



**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 27, 2026 Seventh Day of the January Term**

Now at this 27<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Presiding Commissioner Auxier was absent due to unforeseen circumstances.

Commissioner Stites moved to appoint Commissioner Hicks as acting presiding commissioner, County Clerk Johnson seconded, motion carried.

In the matter of  
Real property court orders/abatements:

Commission reviewed and approved Real property abatements on certificate #'s 2025000016, 2025000018, 2025000019, 2025000020, 2025000021, 2025000022, 2025000023, 2025000024, 2025000025, 2025000026, 2025000027, 2025000028, 2025000029, 2025000030, 2025000031, 2025000032, 2025000033, 2025000034 and 2025000035.

In the matter of  
Review of minutes:

Commission reviewed and approved minutes from the 1/22 commission meeting.

In the matter of  
Crisis Intervention request:

Johnson provided commission with a request form for Crisis intervention funds to pay a utility bill for a citizen that is struggling. Commissioner Stites moved to approve the request in the amount of \$357.33 out of the crisis intervention fund to Missouri Department of Social Services on case #DCN17927172, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried.

In the matter of  
New Polling location Contract:

Johnson provided commission with a contract for a new polling location located in Doolittle. Discussions were had on the need to combine polls due to lack of Election Judges and Flooding that has happened twice in the last 2 years. Johnson advised this was something she has been reviewing for the past 3 years due to the repeated weather and staffing issues and the need to provide a better ADA compliant location for the voters. Commissioner Stites moved to approve the contract with the Red Shed, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried. Stites advised Johnson to have our insurance company prepare a

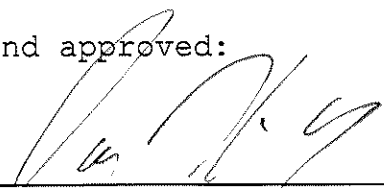
certificate of Insurance to provide to Mr. Roach for liability coverage of the election judges.


In the matter of  
Loan payment due from 420:

Johnson advised commission that she requested a payment card/invoice from the bank so that we could get the check cut Friday due to the predicted weather and the courthouse potentially not being open Monday. The invoice was not received until Monday at 8:54 am, which we were closed due to the hazardous road conditions, and the AP clerk is now out sick. Johnson further advised that she reached out to the treasurer to see what our options were to get this paid today as it is due. She further advised the Treasurer can go to the bank to have a cashiers check cut so that we can make this payment on time and avoid late fees. Commissioner Stites moved to approve a cashiers check be made out to First State Community bank in the amount of \$286,077.94 for interest and closing costs associated to the refinancing of the Jail Expansion loan, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 10:45 am.

Read and approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner

**Phelps County Commission Record**  
**January 29, 2026 Eighth Day of the January Term**

Now at this 29<sup>th</sup> day of January, Commission met pursuant to adjournment and a quorum was present of the following members:

Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner  
Laura Johnson, County Clerk

Presiding Commissioner Auxier was absent due to unforeseen circumstances.

County Clerk Johnson moved to appoint Commissioner Stites as acting presiding commissioner, Commissioner Hicks seconded, motion carried.

The Focus Reporter entered at 9:12 am.

In the matter of  
ADP cancelation letter:

County Clerk provided commission with a 90-day notice to quit letter to ADP. Commission reviewed and approved the letter to be sent.

Support Services Sissy Shults entered at 9:27 am.

In the matter of  
Conference room in Extension office:

Commission advised Shults the prosecutors office is needing to utilize the conference room in the Extension office and needs to know who they are supposed to contact to use it. Discussions were had on potentially changing the cores to the door so that the prosecutor can use the room whenever they need it for doing business related to court matters. Shults advised if she does not have the cores she will get them ordered so that the Prosecutors office can have access to that room whenever they need it.

Shults left at 9:40 am.

Collector Faith Barnes entered at 9:47 am and left at 9:55 am.

In the matter of  
Marijuana tax appeals:

Commission advised The Focus Reporter that the county has been informed of a few appeals that will be coming down that will require the county to repay the taxes that were collected from the marijuana fund. Discussions were had on the law makers penalizing not only the county from gaining the revenues but also the tax payers. Further discussions were had on the county not understanding why just marijuana taxes are deemed not stackable when there are stacked taxes on tobacco and alcohol in the county. Commissioner Hicks read 2 sections of the Missouri constitution that reference and contradict the ruling made that makes the counties pay the 3% back. Commissioner Hicks further advised that the counties should not have to pay this back as it

was taken to the vote of the citizens as the law advised and we utilized those funds in good faith as our ballot language specified. Commissioner Stites advised she just heard back from the Treasurer that found out the reimbursements for these appeals will go to the business if they have already asked for the total amount that could be refunded and then the taxpayer will need to go to the business to get the refund.

Local resident Chester Crider entered at 10:14 am and left at 10:15 am.

Road and Bridge Admin Assistant Michelle Bock entered at 10:19 am.

In the matter of  
SEMA/FEMA project updates:

Bock advised she has heard back from SEMA/FEMA and reported that our last 2 projects from the damages from the flooding in November 2024 have finally been obligated. This means we are closer to getting our reimbursements for this. Bock further advised this will replace roughly \$710,000 in revenue to the road department that we have been waiting for.


The Focus Reporter left at 11:08 am followed by bock at 11:33 am.


In the matter of  
Citizen input:

Local citizen Elmer Gregory called in to commission asking if he could get a private drive road sign placed for emergency services and postal carriers to be able to locate his residence. Commission advised the road department will get a sign put up for him to mark his residence properly.

Hearing no other business commission adjourned at 11:51 am.

Read and approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry Stites, District 1 Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Hicks, District 2 Commissioner