

Dodge County Board of Commissioners
Wednesday, August 05, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.
Work Session Minutes



Commissioners Present: Chairman Dan McCranie, Sharon Cobb Flanagan – District 1, Leigh Ann Greene – District 2, Vice-Chair Brian Watkins - District 3, Jeffrey Jones – District 4

Also Present: Attorney Ron Daniels, Manager Conner Bearden, Clerk Kimberly Smith-Parkerson

Call to Order

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held a work session at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex Wednesday, August 05, 2026, with Chairman McCranie presiding. He called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and Commissioner Watkins led a prayer.

Attorney Daniels introduced Attorney Kindall Browning-Rickle to the board.

A. Data Center Ordinance

The board reviewed a draft ordinance for data centers, noting additional revisions, as detailed:

- Definitions: the definition of data center, data center building, and data center campus for clarity
- Base application fee set to \$10,000.
- Setting a 200-foot setback from property lines and a minimum 20-foot high vegetative buffer.
- A noise baseline study shall be established at the expense of the applicant by a qualified acoustic consultant. Also, sound levels shall not exceed 10 decibels above the established baseline.
- Generator testing logs should be submitted to the governing authority annually.
- EPD standards should be followed in regard to water usage requirements, in addition to pulling several specific water usage guidelines from Crawford County's ordinance. Also, water usage shall be reported annually.
- The board discussed that the environmental and ecological impact assessment is a required component of the site plan, which must be submitted to EPD and the county.
- The board confirmed that specialized emergency training must be coordinated with Dodge County EMA at least once annually.
- One community meeting is required to discuss the project and to be advertised one week in advance by the data center applicant.
- A fire suppression system plan, including onsite water storage, shall be submitted for approval.

B. Budget/Tax Digest Comparison

- Manager Bearden discussed the Freeport Exemption and submitted a county comparison map for review, stating that current exemptions are in line with most other counties.
- Manager Bearden reviewed the tax digest, noting that the appeals window closed on Monday and the current figures are approximately two weeks old with a 75% confidence level. Inflationary growth in property values is calculated at 40%, amounting to \$31,234,495 for the county.
- The current gross taxable value of the digest for the county is \$768,314,815, and after accounting for \$191,225,099 in total exemptions, the net digest is \$577,089. Manager Bearden stated the city's net digest is \$753,948,659, which makes the numbers appear to be skewed.
- Manager Bearden discussed the PT32.1, incorporating \$59 million in improvement values and

applying an 85% collection factor for current appeals. These calculations resulted in a projected net digest of \$617,453,001. Based on these figures, the potential growth would equal a millage of 0.544, or 10.211 mills if a rollback rate is applied.

- Manager Bearden stated department heads submitted budget requests totaling \$17,965,913.87. He noted that balancing the budget using these requests would require 14 mills, which is considered unrealistic.
- Manager Bearden requested that officials review the submitted budget requests. The plan is to meet with department heads in October to refine the budgets before presenting them to the commission in November.
- Manager Bearden stated that the governor did not authorize a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for the upcoming year; consequently, no COLA will be provided to county employees. Structural salary adjustments may occur in specific departments, such as EMS, based on previous restructurings and merit.
- Manager Bearden stated the county has approximately \$1.3 million to \$1.4 million in cash reserves, representing about 36 days of operations.

Adjourn

With no other business to come before the board, the work session ended at 11:06 a.m.

Attested:

Approved:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Dan McCranie, Chairman