

# DEKALB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

PLANNING • BUILDING • GIS

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## AGENDA

### DeKalb County Plan Commission

Commissioners Court – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor DeKalb County Court House

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

7:00 PM

To view the livestream, click here: <https://tinyurl.com/YouTubeDCPC>

1. Roll call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Prayer
4. Approval of Minutes: February 18, 2026
5. Consideration of Claims: February/March 2026

Payroll	\$53,492.54
Amazon	\$243.09
APA Spring Conference – Registration Only	\$165.00
APA Membership – Chris Gaumer	\$448.00
CDW-G – AutoCAD Renewal	\$556.00
HWC Consultant Fees	\$7,661.20
IABO Membership – Jeff Martin	\$65.00
ICC Membership – Jeff Martin	\$170.00
Inspection Fees - City of Auburn	\$45.00
Lassus	\$305.49
Legal Ad – KPC Newspaper	\$60.00
Verizon	\$166.98
WestWood Car Wash	\$36.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$63,414.30</b>

6. Old Business: None
7. New Business:

Petition #26-11– During this hearing, the Plan Commission will consider a Moratorium for Data Centers & the accessory facilities within the zoning jurisdiction of DeKalb County, Indiana. The purpose is for the Plan Commission & County Commissioners to gather facts & information regarding the planning & zoning, site development, potential environmental concerns and other items not yet known, as well as gather input from DeKalb County residents. After gathering information, the Plan Commission will write an Ordinance for Data Centers.

8. Reports from Officers, Committees, Staff or Town/City Liaisons
9. Comments from Public in Attendance
10. Adjournment

Next Meeting: May 20, 2026

**If you cannot attend, please contact Meredith Reith  
[mreith@co.dekalb.in.us](mailto:mreith@co.dekalb.in.us) | (260) 925-1923**

**\*PLEASE ENTER THROUGH THE NORTH DOOR OF  
COURTHOUSE LOCATED ON SEVENTH STREET.**

**\*\*No cellphones, tablets, laptops, or weapons are permitted.**

**MINUTES**  
**DEKALB COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday February 18, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of the DeKalb County Plan Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Commissioner’s Courtroom by Plan Commission President, Jason Carnahan.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Jason Carnahan, William Van Wye, Kellen Dooley, Suzanne Davis, Angie Holt, Jerry Yoder, and Tyler Lanning.

Members Absent: Sandra Harrison, Frank Pulver, and Elysia Rodgers.

Staff Present: Plan Commission Attorney Andrew Kruse, Director/Zoning Administrator Chris Gaumer, and Secretary Meredith Reith

Community Representatives Present: Mike Makarewich

Public in Attendance: Tanya Young, Jared Malcolm, Jessica Harty, Andrew Provines, Amy Prosser, Rachel Christenson, and Jen Barclay.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Jason Carnahan led The Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRAYER:**

Jerry Yoder led in prayer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motioned by Angie Holt to approve the January 21, 2026 meeting minutes. Seconded by Suzanne Davis. None opposed. Motion carried.

**CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS:**

Jason Carnahan inquired about any comments, questions, or motions to approve January 2026 claims, totaling \$54,505.13

William Van Wye motioned to approve claims seconded by Kellen Dooley. None opposed. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Petition #26-04 – During this hearing, the Plan Commission will review the DeKalb 2040 Comprehensive Plan. This plan is a rewrite of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission shall give a favorable, unfavorable or no recommendation to the County Commissioners.

Mr. Gaumer stated that the last meeting was the public presentation for the DeKalb 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In your packets was the adoption draft of that plan. He addressed that HWC is here Jen and Rachel, to give a brief presentation of the adoption draft and hopefully receive an adoption recommendation from the Plan Commission to the County Commissioners. A copy of the presentation has been placed at everyone’s seats to follow along in the packet if preferred.

Rachel Christenson with HWC Engineering approached the podium and introduced herself and Jen Barclay. She thanked everyone for having them back, noting that they truly enjoyed their previous visit, both the presentation and the conversations downstairs. She explained that tonight’s presentation would be very brief. They did not want to repeat the level of detail shared during their last appearance unless the board had additional questions and wanted to go deeper. She emphasized that this would be a high-level overview of county planning and comprehensive planning in general. The comprehensive plan serves as a guide for long-term community investment and is used by boards and commissions such as this one,

county commissioners, and other elected and appointed officials when making decisions about the future of DeKalb County. It will also inform updates to the zoning ordinance, which is a major component of comprehensive planning. She noted that the future land use map included in the plan is not the same as the zoning map, but it helps lay the groundwork for any future zoning changes. She summarized the four-phase planning process, which began in December 2024. The first phase focused heavily on public engagement. This was followed by the drafting phase, where the detailed work occurred behind the scenes. They are now in the fourth and final phase practical adoption steps. As Chris mentioned earlier, the hope is that this group will make a recommendation to the county commissioners on whether to adopt the plan, with the commissioners then providing final approval. As with the earlier stages, community engagement played a major role. A 22-member steering committee participated throughout the process, and multiple opportunities were provided for the public to share feedback. This input, along with research on DeKalb County's existing conditions, formed the basis of the plan. From the engagement process, several key themes emerged that helped shape the vision for DeKalb County. The vision focuses on intentionally guiding strategic growth to strengthen the community, create long-term opportunities, and celebrate the county's unique heritage including farming, classic car culture, and the people who make DeKalb County distinctive. The county aims to be a place of opportunity where education, workforce development, and local businesses support success at every stage of life. It strives to be a steward of land and water through thoughtful development that respects farmland and natural systems. And it seeks to be a home where families and employers can flourish, with quality housing, amenities, and a strong sense of place. Rachel noted that a variety of goals were built around this vision as part of the comprehensive plan. She then turned the presentation over to Jen Barclay, who provided additional detail on the structure of the plan.

Jen Barclay approached the podium thanking everyone for letting us attend again tonight. She explained that, as Rachel mentioned, the presentation is intended to provide a brief overview of how the comprehensive plan is organized. If you want to get an overall feel of what the document is leading towards you can read those few pages instead of 100 plus pages. The document begins with an introduction covering existing conditions and a detailed summary of the public participation process Rachel described. It then moves into the main subject-matter chapters, which address topics such as land use, transportation, housing, trails and open space, arts and culture, and placemaking. There is also a dedicated chapter for the Town of Corunna, since the Plan Commission oversees planning and zoning for that community. The plan concludes with an implementation chapter. Each subject-matter chapter includes goals, strategies, and objectives. The goals outline what the county aims to achieve, while the strategies and objectives describe how to accomplish those goals. Jen noted that, just as Chris prepares thorough staff reports for each application, he will likely reference the comprehensive plan when explaining how proposals align with the county's long-term vision. This is where the Plan Commission can clearly see how the plan guides decision-making. She then reviewed the current future land use map, which includes categories for agricultural, commercial, and industrial areas. The proposed updated map streamlines these categories but maintains similar overall growth strategies, focusing development around municipalities, key corridors, and existing infrastructure. Residential areas appear in yellow, commercial in red, and industrial in purple. While the format is refined, the general direction remains consistent with the current plan. For the Town of Corunna, the plan provides demographic information, details about community engagement, and specific recommendations. This section can help guide the Commission when evaluating future projects in Corunna. She explained that the implementation chapter outlines initial action steps. The plan is not intended to be a rigid, step-by-step guide for the next decade, but rather a set of strategies to begin moving the county forward. These strategies include modernizing the UDO, updating the transportation plan, evaluating the use of TIF districts, expanding trail connections throughout DeKalb County, and developing a "Made in DeKalb County" brand to support economic development and placemaking. She reminded attendees that the full document is available on the project website, [dekalb2040.com](http://dekalb2040.com). The team is requesting a favorable recommendation to the County

Commissioners, who are responsible for approving and implementing the plan. They plan to meet with the Commissioners on March 6. Jen then opened the floor for questions.

Jason Carnahan asked if there were any more questions amongst the board.

Mr. Gaumer stated that the plan has been available to the public for about a month. Since the public presentation, only two or three people have submitted comments. Most of the feedback focused on strategies and what has already been done, and none of them were substantial enough to warrant changes to the comprehensive plan. Once the plan is adopted, the focus will shift to several implementation items outlined at the back of the document. We will discuss this later, but one key step will be to form a committee to review ordinance updates that have been discussed over the past few years, particularly updates needed for the UDO. As everyone knows, the comprehensive plan is not law; it serves as a guide for making recommendations to the commissioners regarding ordinance changes, including text amendments and rezonings. We anticipate using it extensively, and it is also a resource for the broader community. There are items in the plan that may raise questions about how the county could implement them. While the county can offer support financial or otherwise some initiatives may ultimately be carried out by other community partners.

Mrs. Christenson added that this document serves as a guide. As Chris mentioned, it is not law, but rather a tool used to help inform and support decision making within the county. She noted that some parts of the plan extend beyond what the county itself can implement and instead look to other community members, organizations, and entities that may help advance the broader vision for DeKalb County. She explained that a comprehensive plan is required to address certain core components such as land use, transportation, and public lands and all these elements are included in the updated plan. The remaining sections are based on input received from community members and the steering committee, which is why some topics extend beyond the basic required categories. She also commented on the public presentation held during the last meeting, noting that many productive discussions took place with community members and board members in the rotunda area. She said she left the meeting feeling very positive and expressed appreciation for the time and effort everyone has put into the process.

Mr. Carnahan asked if there were any further questions or comments from the board. Hearing none. He opened the public portion of the hearing up to any comments for or against this petition.

Jessica Harty approached the podium and stated that the comprehensive plan has been very important to her over the years. She explained that it has helped her, as a community member, contribute to shaping the direction of the county. She emphasized that while the plan is a tool, it must be used responsibly. Although it is not law, it can still influence decisions and actions, both positively and negatively. She noted that she submitted written comments expressing concerns about TIFs and ETJs, which she believes are often misused in the community and require stronger oversight. She urged the board to use the comprehensive plan in a way that protects community members. She shared that she has relied on the plan in the past to protect her interests and hopes it will continue to serve that purpose moving forward.

Mike Makarewich stated that he wanted to highlight the importance of trails and open spaces. Using page 85 in the comprehensive plan as an example, he noted that the City of Auburn is currently developing a 2040 Parks and Recreation Plan and is undergoing a strategic and tactical planning process like the county's recent efforts. He stated that he is encouraged by the plan's reference in item 2B on page 85, which calls for supporting and coordinating with the City of Auburn to complete the Cedar Creek activation plan. He clarified that the activation plan has not yet been fully defined and its final form is still unknown. However, he acknowledged the successful partnership between the county and the city on the previous Cedar Creek bank restoration phase. If the city chooses to move forward with additional Cedar Creek improvements such as adding a canoe launch, he expressed hope that the county would be willing to lend its support again, just as it did before. He emphasized that he wanted everyone to be aware of Auburn's ongoing planning efforts and asked that the board and county commissioners keep the city in

mind throughout this process. He added that enhancing Auburn’s park system ultimately benefits residents across the county, as the improved amenities will be enjoyed by the broader community.

Mr. Carnahan asked if anyone else wished to speak. Hearing None. He closed the public portion of the hearing. He asked if the board had any more questions.

William Van Wye asked regarding what this plan will do for zoning.

Mr. Gaumer stated that this will help guide what the zoning could be but doesn’t change what the zoning currently is.

Mr. Van Wye questioned that we have been changing over the last five to ten years some industrial zoning over to agricultural. This map will take care of all the problems.

Mr. Gaumer stated that no, this will help support those changes in zoning. This doesn’t change our zoning at all. We’ll have to then go through our zoning ordinance and zoning map to update those things. The future land use map can help support those zoning changes where it didn’t before. Especially that corridor along SDI that we’ve changed from I2 to A2 to allow people to build homes.

Mr. Van Wye asked if this would allow us to do it without someone having to come in for a hearing.

Mr. Gaumer stated no, they would still have to come in for a hearing, but it helps support the Plan Commission’s recommendation to the County Commissioner’s to allow it. Now, we could do a big commission-initiated zone map amendment where we take care of bearing those costs and going through the process for people. This future land use map doesn’t change their zoning.

Mr. Van Wye added that the new zoning has more agricultural ground over the old land use map.

Mr. Gaumer stated that when we look at the old zoning map versus the new there was a conservation agricultural and an agricultural district. We condensed this agricultural zoning into one, because it was cumbersome and confusing. This is what it did for the future land use map but, it doesn’t change the zoning. He addressed that what we need today is a recommendation to approve or not approve the plan to certify that to the commissioners.

Mr. Carnahan questioned if you wanted a favorable, unfavorable, or no recommendation vote.

Mr. Gaumer stated that technically, isn’t it in the Indiana Code to approve or not approve.

Andrew Kruse added that the statute says after a public hearing or hearing has been held, the plan commission may approve the comprehensive plan. So, he believed that if you put the word approve in there somewhere it’s helpful.

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE DECISION OF THE PLAN COMMISSION TO RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF, PETITION #26-04 DEKALB COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CERTIFYING AN APPROVAL VOTE TO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON THIS 18<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026.

Motion made by: Suzanne Davis

Seconded by: Angie Holt

Vote tally: Yes: 7

No: 0

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Carnahan

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William Van Wye

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kellen Dooley

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tyler Lanning

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Suzanne Davis

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Angie Holt

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Jerry Yoder

**REPORTS FROM OFFICERS, COMMITTEES, STAFF OR TOWN/CITY LIAINSONS:**

Suzanne Davis informed the board that there was no meeting for the City of Auburn in January. At the February meeting the officers were chosen along with the liaisons and committees. There was one item that was tabled until March this is for a new commercial business on Shook Drive next to the new Sonic.

Angie Holt informed the board that there was no meeting for the City of Waterloo in January. At the February meeting they elected officers. We had a public hearing with no public input on the strategic plan because they didn't get the funding for the full comprehensive plan. The Council decided to make it a recommendation to amend the plan. The Plan Commission voted to make the strategic plan an amendment to the comprehensive plan. So, they can be used in conjunction with one another for decisions going forward.

Jerry Yoder informed the board that he attended St. Joe with them having two meetings a month. They are working on getting their board together. They've got everybody, but they can't find a Democrat. As soon as they find that person, they will be ready.

Mr. Gaumer stated that if there is an Independent available, the board could include two Republicans, one Democrat, and one Independent. The same composition could also apply to the ETJ members.

He then noted that he would like to form a committee consisting of four members of the Plan Commission and one County Commissioner. The purpose of this committee would be to review ordinances and soon begin gathering information and holding public discussions on data centers, carbon capture, and nuclear power. He explained that these topics are likely to become increasingly relevant, noting recent activity in Fort Wayne and other parts of the state, as well as Governor Braun's push for these industries. Because these projects could eventually come to DeKalb County, he emphasized the importance of being prepared rather than reactive, like what happened with the solar issue. He wants the county to take a more proactive approach by discussing these matters early and seeking public input. He hopes to bring something forward to the Plan Commission by June, July, or August. He noted that the committee cannot include a quorum of the Plan Commission and suggested appointing four Plan Commission members. He also requested that Mr. Kruse participate, as well as a member of the County Commissioners. He asked everyone to watch for an email from him after March 2nd regarding scheduling the committee's first meeting. He stated that Elysia, as a non-voting member, should also be included, provided she is able to utilize local or state resources to assist. He then asked Mr. Kruse whether her attendance would present any issues.

Mr. Kruse stated that he wouldn't believe so since she's not a part of the quorum.

Angie Holt, Jason Carnahan, William Van Wye, and Tyler Lanning would like to participate.

Kellen Dooley stated that he will see what the Commissioners would like to do before assigning someone.

Mr. Van Wye stated that there was no meeting for Ashley or Corunna.

Mr. Yoder added that he wanted to go back to the permit fees for agricultural buildings. He wanted to make some suggestions that maybe the Commissioners could look at. He stated that Allen County, did raise their fees this year, and they went to \$0.03 a square foot and they're straight across the board. He

stated that it's \$0.03 for the builder, electrician, plumber, and he knows that we're all together. But on an agricultural building if the guy's just putting up storage and not going to put lights, water, or septic in there. He believed that they should be charged accordingly if they're not going to use any mechanicals and you're not going to have any mechanical inspections, it should be just a flat fee.

Mr. Carnahan asked how this would work if you're your own independent contractor and you do it all yourself.

Mr. Yoder stated that if you would like to get your own permit then yes.

Mr. Gaumer stated that these fees are up to the commissioners as he's said. The fees are currently \$0.10 per square foot.

Mr. Yoder added that if the building was just for storage, it would be a flat 3 cents. If they're putting some heat in, then you'd add another 3 cents. If another inspection would be added like electrical then another 3 cents. We would be at \$0.09 but it wouldn't be the flat \$0.15 no matter what.

Mr. Gaumer stated that if you come in and build a building on your property for your own personal use, it's \$0.10 a square foot for a residential ag building like a pole barn.

Mr. Yoder thought it was being treated like a commercial building.

Mr. Gaumer stated that not if it's a commercial ag building, then yes, it falls into a different category based off the number of animals that are going to be within that building. But if it's a storage building for your farm equipment, then it's going to be \$0.10 a square foot.

Mr. Yoder addressed that this is just a little high for ag storage.

Mr. Carnahan asked if there was a cap amount on the total fee cost.

Mr. Gaumer stated that there's no cap for these fees. He addressed how the fees are broken down. The residential new is \$0.10, Steuben is \$0.14, LaGrange is \$0.15, Noble \$0.08, Wells \$0.06, and Allen is \$0.03. He's always going to be on the fence about this because he does believe that the fees should be paying for the service that's being provided. Our inspector still must go out, and gas, insurance, and liability are still getting paid. He feels though the residents should be paying for the service that's provided.

Mr. Yoder believed that ag should get a little bit of a discount on their fees. For example, if you're putting in a large chicken barn or calf barn, you start paying. He addressed that building that went in next to him was 100 x 300 and his permit was like \$5,000. How do you have \$5,000 worth of gas money running out there for inspections.

Mr. Gaumer explained that several reviews and approvals are required for these projects. After an application is submitted, our office often keeps it for four to five weeks while we work with the project engineer or whoever is responsible for the drainage design. We handle daily phone calls, questions, and document reviews to move these projects through the approval process. It's not only the inspection fee that matters, the fees also help cover the cost of the staff time and resources needed to perform a thorough review. Previously, the fee was set at \$0.10, but part of the issue was that our office was *not* conducting detailed reviews. We treated these structures as if they were simple agricultural barns. Only later would we discover that a building housed 27,000 chickens or nearly 300 head of cattle, which then led to complaints from neighboring property owners. This is why the Commissioners determined that the fee needed to be adjusted so our office could thoroughly review these types of projects. In addition to planning and zoning, the drainage board is heavily involved, often even more than we are. Projects may also require a soil and water permit, and the health department may be involved if a bathroom is included. The highway department is typically involved as well, because many applicants disturb more than an acre of land without realizing it. They often overlook the impact of driveways, laydown areas, and storage yards, which all factor into the total disturbed area. This is why we now require engineered drawings that

show exactly what will be built and the full scope of the project. Previously, applicants provided only a simple aerial map with a building sketched in, and we would later discover that the actual developed area was six times larger.

Mr. Yoder questioned whether the structure was initially being treated as an accessory building when it should not have been. He emphasized that this is an agricultural production facility with livestock, and he understands that such operations naturally generate more complaints and issues that must be addressed. However, he feels that agriculture deserves some consideration because it produces food, unlike other types of operations that are not food related. Since the use is agriculture-based, he is asking the commissioners to review the situation and determine whether anything can be done to better support the agricultural industry.

Mr. Gaumer added that he would defer that to Kellen to bring up the Commissioners.

Mr. Dooley addressed that he could talk this over with the other Commissioners.

**COMMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Jason Carnahan adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

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President – Jason Carnahan

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Secretary – Meredith Reith

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-\_\_\_\_\_**

**DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A DEVELOPMENT MORATORIUM ON  
DATA CENTERS**

WHEREAS, the Local Planning and Development Law of the State of Indiana (LC. 36-7-4, et seq.) empowers the DeKalb County Plan Commission ("Plan Commission") to make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana concerning the land use, zoning, or districting of lands within the unincorporated areas of DeKalb County, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Unified Zoning Ordinance, as adopted in 2008 and effective as of January 1, 2009, and amended over time, did not contemplate or consider Data Center projects and their impacts on unincorporated DeKalb County; and

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of regulating land use and development to protect public health, safety, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, on \_\_\_\_\_, the DeKalb County Plan Commission as part of its regular meeting, received comments from the public regarding a moratorium on the development of data centers and this matter was properly advertised and published; and

WHEREAS, on \_\_\_\_\_, the DeKalb County Plan Commission, board members properly moved and passed a recommendation to be submitted to the Board of Commissioners to adopt a development moratorium on data centers in unincorporated DeKalb County, where DeKalb County Plan commission and/or County Commissioners have jurisdiction, for a period of six (6) months for the specific purpose of updating the DeKalb County Unified Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners believe that a moratorium on the acceptance, processing, and approval of all applications, permits, and approvals related to the development, construction, or operation of data centers, for a period of six (6) months is in the best interests of the citizens of DeKalb County, is necessary to allow adequate time to study and address the potential impacts of data centers and to develop appropriate regulations to ensure their responsible development and operation. It will also provide sufficient time for such considerations to be incorporated into revisions to the DeKalb County Unified Zoning Ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that, pursuant to IC 36-7-4, et seq., The Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana, hereby state as follows:

1. A moratorium shall be enacted within DeKalb County, commencing on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026, for the acceptance, processing, and approval of all applications, permits, and approvals related to the development, construction, or operation of data centers; and

2. Said strategic moratorium shall remain in place for six (6) months, up to and including \_\_\_\_\_, 2026, or until the DeKalb County Unified Zoning Ordinance are amended and adopted to reflect the aforementioned considerations, whichever occurs first; and
3. Any prior Ordinances that conflict with this Ordinance and its incorporated Exhibits are hereby ineffective during the period of the moratorium;
4. If any portion of this Ordinance determined to be unconstitutional or in violation of state law by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining portions of the Ordinance shall continue in full force and effect; and
5. This Ordinance shall become effective in accordance with state law.

All of which is Ordained and Adopted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

**DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
James Miller– President

\_\_\_\_\_  
William L. Hartman – Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kellen Dooley – Vice President

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Sleeper, Auditor

I affirm, under the penalties for perjury, that I have taken reasonable care to redact each Social Security number in this document, unless required by law. Andrew D. Kruse

PREPARED BY: Andrew D. Kruse, #23555-17, KRUSE & KRUSE, P.C., 143 East Ninth Street, Auburn, Indiana 46706, Phone: 260-925-0200, Attorney for DeKalb County. 26-001. RC