



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

PERSONNEL & FINANCE

DECEMBER 8, 2025, 5:30 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Sheila Niezgodski, Karen L. White, Rachel Tomas Morgan, Dr. Oliver Davis

Committee Members Absent:

None

Councilmembers Present:

Canneth Lee, Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers, Troy Warner, Sherry Bolden-Simpson

Others Present:

Bianca Tirado, Matthew Neal, Jasmine Jackson, Bob Palmer

Presenters:

Kyle Willis, Katrina Lee, Bianca Tirado, Dr. Oliver Davis, Sherry Bolden-Simpson

Agenda:

Bill No. 75-25 - Q4 2025 Additional Appropriations Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 76-25 - Q4 2025 Budget Transfer Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 77-25 - Amending the 2026 Non-Bargaining Salary Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 79-25 - Amending City Clerk Staff Non-Bargaining Salary Ordinance No. 11237-25 (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 25-44 - Resolution Calling for Relief from the Devastating Impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 on the City of South Bend and Other Local Governmental Entities Within the State of Indiana

Bill No. 25-47 - Resolution Acknowledging the Impact of the Federal Government

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CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK / CHIEF OF STAFF

Matthew Neal
DEPUTY CITY CLERK / DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Margaret Gotsch
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

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Shutdown on SNAP Recipients and Calling
for a Public Hearing to Consider Emergency
Measures to Support Residents
Experiencing Food Insecurity

Members marked with an asterisk (*) are in virtual attendance.

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=402355>

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting at 5:49 P.M.

Bill No. 75-25 - Q4 2025 Additional Appropriations Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis moved to accept the substitute bill, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White and carried via a vote by voice.

Kyle Willis, City Controller, with offices on the second (2nd) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, presented the bill. He explained key appropriations in the bill, including overtime expenses for the South Bend Fire Department (SBFD). SBFD has been understaffed this year due to a record number of retirements in Q1.

Committee Vice Chair White thanked Kyle Willis for explaining the SBFD overtime expenses.

Committee Member Dr. Davis asked about the projected number of SBFD retirements in 2026.

Kyle Willis spoke about the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) program and the difficulty of predicting retirements. He said there are four (4) or five (5) retirements in a typical year.

Committee Member Rachel Tomas Morgan asked about the appropriations for parking garages.

Kyle Willis said these are related to improvements and maintenance in the new City Hall parking garage.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked about future garage maintenance expenses.

Kyle Willis said these expenses will be built into the budgets of all City departments that use the garage.

Councilmember Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers said the City should review the number of SBFD personnel who are eligible for retirement.

Council President Canneth Lee asked about reducing overtime expenses.

Kyle Willis said having a fully staffed department is the easiest way to reduce overtime.

Committee Chair Niezgodski held the public hearing, and nobody spoke.



Committee Vice Chair White moved to send Substitute Bill No. 75-25 to the Committee of the Whole with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Tomas Morgan and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 76-25 - Q4 2025 Budget Transfer Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Committee Member Dr. Davis moved to accept the substitute bill, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White and carried via a vote by voice.

Kyle Willis presented the bill. He explained that Q4 budget transfers are typically used to cover year-end expenses.

Committee Chair Niezgodski held the public hearing, and nobody spoke.

Committee Vice Chair White asked about the Century Center's new management.

Kyle Willis said the Century Center will be managed by Visit South Bend, but funds will still come from the City.

Committee Vice Chair White moved to send Substitute Bill No. 76-25 to the Committee of the Whole with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Tomas Morgan and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 77-25 - Amending the 2026 Non-Bargaining Salary Ordinance (*Substitute*)

Committee Member Dr. Davis moved to accept the substitute bill, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White and carried via a vote by voice.

Kyle Willis presented the bill. He said the bill removes eliminated Venues Parks and Arts (VPA) positions from the salary ordinance and adds Public Works positions that were accidentally omitted. The bill also creates a new Human Rights Commission (HRC) position.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked about the previously omitted Assistance City Engineer position.

Kyle Willis said the position was in the budget, but it was not in the salary ordinance.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked if that position was created outside of the budget cycle. She asked about amending the salary ordinance when new positions are created mid-year.

Kyle Willis said he was unsure if the Assistant City Engineer position was created mid-year. He confirmed that the salary ordinance should be amended and reapproved whenever a new position is created.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked about the new HRC position.



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Katrina Lee, Executive Director of HRC, 202 South Michigan Street, South Bend, IN 46601, spoke about the needs and duties of the department. She said the new position was created to promote the current Housing Manager to Deputy.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers asked about the HRC phone system.

Katrina Lee said there are two (2) intake coordinators answering phone calls Monday through Friday. She advised Councilmembers to contact her if their constituents are having difficulties reaching HRC via phone.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked about the Manager of Operations role.

Kyle Willis said this position was added for the Morris Performing Arts Center.

Committee Chair Niezgodski held the public hearing, and nobody spoke.

Committee Chair Niezgodski moved to send Substitute Bill No. 77-25 to the Committee of the Whole with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Dr. Davis and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 79-25 - Amending City Clerk Staff Non-Bargaining Salary Ordinance No. 11237-25 **(Substitute)**

Committee Member Dr. Davis moved to accept the substitute bill, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White and carried via a vote by voice.

Bianca Tirado, City Clerk, with offices on the third (3rd) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, presented the bill. She said the bill removes the part-time Administrative Assistant role from the Common Council and adds a full-time Executive Assistant role to the Office of the City Clerk. She spoke about the needs of the department and the duties of the role. The change does not come with a salary increase, just added benefits.

Committee Member Dr. Davis expressed support for the bill.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan thanked Clerk Tirado for explaining the position. She asked about social media management.

Clerk Tirado said social media management will be part of the Executive Assistant's job description. She spoke about their previous work in the Administrative Assistant role and said she wants to collaborate with Council to define the new role further.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan asked about pay scaling with other positions in the Office of the City Clerk.

Clerk Tirado said she plans to return to Council to address Clerk's staff salaries, since some are disproportionate.



Committee Chair Niezgodski expressed support for the bill. She spoke about her appreciation for the work of the City Clerk's Office and the importance of providing employees with healthcare.

Committee Vice Chair White expressed support for the bill. She spoke about equity and ensuring City employees have access to benefits. She acknowledged the Clerk's staff's hard work.

Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Jorden Giger, 302 South Falcon Street, South Bend, IN 46619, spoke in favor of the bill. He expressed support for increasing the capacity of the City Clerk's Office. He asked about the role's compensation compared to that of a previous contractor employed by the Common Council.

Committee Chair Niezgodski clarified that the Administrative Assistant role does not have the same duties and responsibilities as the referenced contractor position.

Clerk Tirado said the part-time Administrative Assistant role was vacant until 2025. She said the position needs to move from the Common Council to the City Clerk's Office to become full-time with benefits.

Committee Member Dr. Davis moved to send Substitute Bill *No. 79-25* to the Committee of the Whole with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Tomas Morgan and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 25-44 - Resolution Calling for Relief from the Devastating Impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 on the City of South Bend and Other Local Governmental Entities Within the State of Indiana

Committee Member Dr. Davis requested to table the bill until January 26, 2026.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan moved to table Bill *No. 25-44* until January 26, 2026, which was seconded by Committee Member Dr. Davis and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 25-47 - Resolution Acknowledging the Impact of the Federal Government Shutdown on SNAP Recipients and Calling for a Public Hearing to Consider Emergency Measures to Support Residents Experiencing Food Insecurity

Committee Member Dr. Davis, 1801 Nash Street, South Bend, IN 46613, and Councilmember Sherry Bolden-Simpson, 6216 Exeter Court, South Bend, IN 46614, presented the bill.

Committee Member Dr. Davis explained that the resolution was created to address the disruption in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits during the federal government shutdown. He acknowledged the City's actions to suspend utility shutoffs and donate to the Food



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Bank of Northern Indiana. He said the bill calls for a public meeting to discuss the lessons learned during the crisis and create a plan for future crisis.

Councilmember Bolden-Simpson acknowledged Director of Public Works Eric Horvath for presenting to the Utilities Committee and helping educate residents about the City's Utilities Assistance Program (UAP).

Committee Chair Niezgodski asked about the crisis language in the bill.

Committee Member Dr. Davis said the bill refers to the SNAP crisis but could apply to any future crisis. He spoke about uncertainty regarding federal funding of social services and the importance of being prepared.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan commented on the importance of the bill's language. She spoke about the procedure for Committee Chairs to call meetings and asked why the bill is needed with this procedure in place.

Committee Member Dr. Davis said the bill was written to formally address the issue with legislation instead of waiting for the new Chair to call a Committee meeting in January. He said the administration should summarize the actions taken.

Committee Member Tomas Morgan said the administration can deliver that information in an update to the Council.

Committee Chair Niezgodski said the language of the bill focuses on addressing the federal government shutdown and SNAP. She spoke about the bipartisan agreement to protect SNAP during future federal shutdowns and stated that the crisis has ended. She asked for clarity regarding what the bill is asking for.

Committee Member Dr. Davis expressed uncertainty regarding the future actions of the federal government. He said a public meeting is needed to discuss the issue and bring forward legislation to prepare for future crisis. He said other cities planned for the benefit disruption earlier, and the City's response was reactionary.

Committee Chair Niezgodski stated that the intention of the bill does not match the language of the bill. Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Jorden Giger spoke in favor of the bill. He expressed concern about funding being withdrawn at the federal level and said preparing for future crisis is necessary.

Committee Chair Niezgodski closed the public hearing.

Committee Chair Niezgodski acknowledged the concerns expressed during the public hearing and reiterated that SNAP funding was reinstated through bipartisan action. She stated that the Common Council does not have the authority to create accounts and fund programs. She asked the bill's sponsors to clarify the purpose of the resolution.



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Councilmember Bolden-Simpson said rising health insurance costs could create another crisis in the community. She said the bill calls for a conversation, and this action from the Council can positively impact the City's crisis planning approach.

Committee Vice Chair White asked if the bill is calling for a meeting, and if any further policy action would come out of that meeting.

Committee Member Dr. Davis confirmed that is correct.

Committee Member Dr. Davis moved to send Bill No. 25-47 to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White. The vote was tied by a vote of two (2) ayes and two (2) nays.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Nay</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Nay</i>

Committee Chair Niezgodski asked Attorney Palmer how to proceed.

Bob Palmer, Council Attorney, with offices on the third (3rd) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, said Council President Canneth Lee would cast the tie-breaking vote.

Council President Lee asked the bill's sponsors if calling for a meeting without passing the resolution would be sufficient.

Committee Member Dr. Davis said the bill is only asking for a meeting, and is not asking for the appropriation of funds.

Committee Member Dr. Davis's motion to send Bill No. 25-47 to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White, was defeated by a vote of two (2) ayes and three (3) nays.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Nay</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Nay</i>
Council President Canneth Lee – <i>Nay</i>	

Attorney Palmer said the remaining two (2) possibilities are to move the bill with an unfavorable recommendation or no recommendation. He said if the Committee does not reach a consensus, the bill goes nowhere.

Committee Chair Niezgodski moved to send Bill No. 25-47 to the Full Council with no recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Dr. Davis and carried by a vote of three (3) ayes with one (1) nay.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Rachel Tomas-Morgan – <i>Nay</i>

With no further business, Committee Chair Niezgodski adjourned the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting at 7:02 P.M.



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Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sheila Niezgodski".

Sheila Niezgodski, Committee Chair

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