

RESUME OF MINUTES OF STUDY SESSION OF THE
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
April 26, 2022

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Study Session, Tuesday, April 26, 2021, at 6:02 PM in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center, 1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois, with County Executive Darlene Kloeppel presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following members present: Carter, Loxsin, McGuire, Stohr, Straub, Summers, Thorsland, and Williams – 8; absent: Cowart, Esry, Fortado, Goss, Harper, King, Michaels, Passalacqua, Paul, Vanichtheeranont, Wolken, and Patterson – 12; late: Rodriguez (arrived shortly before 6:10) and Taylor (arrived at 6:06) – 2. County Executive Kloeppel noted a lack of quorum but the meeting continued as there were no items on which to vote. Williams, Rodriguez, and Thorsland departed early sometime before 8:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Due to the lack of quorum, no vote was taken on the Agenda and the meeting proceeded as delineated in the agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Marlon Mitchell (First Followers Executive Director) and Mark Pelmore (Business Elevator Chief Executive Officer) spoke asking for American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding for their Harm, Healing, and Hope community program that works to provide training, expertise, and microloans to minority-owned small businesses.

COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Williams noted the seating arrangement in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room did not allow for social distancing. County Executive Kloeppel responded that there was no assigned seating and with only ten members present there was ample room for social distancing.

PRESENTATION

City of Champaign Equity and Engagement Director Rachel Joy presented on the City of Champaign Diversity Advancement Program (CDAP) which facilitates and eases the burden of women and minority owned businesses access to government contracts. Director Joy asked for a partnership to create a county-wide business vendor certification that would certify vendors credentials for contracts with the county and all municipalities within the county, and hopefully, the state as well. Various board members asked questions of details and clarification.

Champaign County Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Carly McCrary-McKay brought three affiliated ARPA requests before the board: Justine Petersen, Visit Champaign County, and the New American Wellness Center. Justine Petersen Chief Operating Officer Sheri Flanigan-Vazquez and Chief Strategy Officer Galen Gondolfi gave a presentation on their small business microloan program for those without the credit to receive traditional bank loans. They asked for \$250,000 ARPA funds: \$200,000 for their loss reserve and \$50,000 for interest rate subsidies. Various Board members asked questions of details and clarification.

Director McCrary-McKay and Visit Champaign County Vice President of Marketing and Community Engagement Terri Reifsteck gave a presentation of Visit Champaign County's talent attraction program. They asked for \$150,000 ARPA funds to create a community job application program facilitate and ease employment hiring in the county, for branding and awareness campaigns, for community incentives, and for welcoming events and tours.

Director McCrary-McKay and New American Welcome Center Director Gloria Yen gave a presentation on the New American Welcome Center and asked for ARPA funds for immigrant entrepreneurship and small businesses to go toward interest rate subsidies, business association memberships, advertising mini-grants, and an immigrant business directory. Various Board members asked questions of details and clarification.

OTHER BUSINESS

Champaign County Chamber of Commerce President and Chief Executive Officer Laura Weis and Public Policy Director Madeline Herrman gave a presentation on the Chamber of Commerce's ARPA fund requests. They asked for \$114,000 to develop a community ecommerce platform to aid local small businesses and entrepreneurs in developing online sales presence; the funds would be used towards development, hosting, and advertising. They also asked for \$525,000 to establish their own microloan program: \$325,000 for loans, \$50,000 towards professional fees, \$66,000 for staffing, and \$84,000 towards marketing; the Chamber of Commerce would also commit an additional \$150,000 of their own funds. Various Board members asked questions of details and clarification.

ADJOURNMENT

County Executive Kloepfel adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.



Aaron Ammons, Champaign County Clerk
and ex-Officio Clerk of the Champaign County Board
Champaign County, Illinois