

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
September 21, 2023

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:36 PM in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center, 1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois, with County Board Chair Kyle Patterson presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following members present: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Wilson, Carter, Esry, Farney, Fortado, Hanauer-Friedman, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, and Patterson – 17; late: Vanichtheeranont (arrived at 7:10 PM and missed zero votes) – 1; absent: Stohr, Cowart, Goss, and Sexton – 4. Board Chair Patterson declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business.

PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

READ NOTICE OF MEETING

The Clerk read the Notice of the Meeting, said Notice having been published in the *News Gazette* on September 7, September 14, and September 20, 2023.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA

Board Member Esry offered a motion to approve the Agenda/Addenda; Board Member Lokshin seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Standing Committees:

- A. County Facilities Committee
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- B. Environment and Land Use Committee
Thursday, October 5, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- C. Highway and Transportation Committee
Friday, October 6, 2023 at 9:00 AM
1605 E Main Street, Urbana

Committee of the Whole:

A. Justice and Social Services; Policy, Personnel and Appointments; *and* Finance
Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

County Board:

A. Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chief Deputy County Clerk Angela Patton honored Clerk's staff members Kelly Fifer and Rita Carr for 18- and 20-years' service, respectively, to the county.

Brian Dolinar, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Lee Ann Kelly, of Champaign, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Sandra Ahten, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Tamika Davis, of Champaign, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Carol Spindel, of Champaign County American Civil Liberties Union, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract in opposition to voice print recording.

Randy Nelson, of Champaign, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Tesfaye Wolde-Medhin, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Dottie Vura-Weis, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract, supported free calls for inmates and opposed voice print recording.

Marina Manetti, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

Barbara Kessel, of Urbana, spoke on the pending jail telephone contract and supported free calls for inmates.

County Director of Administration Michelle Jett noted the legislative work of State

Representative Carol Ammons (103rd District) to restrain the cost of telephone calls for inmates, and she noted the work of Rep. Ammons and the late State Senator Scott Bennett (52nd District) to codify protections of the Mahomet Aquifer.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Member Farney offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Board Member Esry seconded. The motion comprising 18 resolutions (Nos. 2023-215, 2023-216, 2023-217, 2023-218, 2023-219, 2023-220, 2023-221, 2023-222, 2023-223, 2023-224, 2023-225, 2023-226, 2023-227, 2023-228, 2023-229, 2023-230, 2023-231, and 2023-232) carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Carter, Esry, Farney, Fortado, Hanauer-Friedman, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, and Patterson – 18

Nays: none

COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Fortado thanked Cunningham Township Supervisor Danielle Chynoweth for the research and insight she provided the Board on the new jail telephone contract and thanked County Sheriff Dustin Heuerman for creating two seats on the Request for Proposal review for herself and Board Member Straub. Board Member Fortado noted the current jail telephone contract from 2018 has had voice print capabilities and noted the importance of the civil liberty questions raised about it by public speakers.

Board Member Peugh noted the Pride Fest parade on Saturday, September 30, 2023, in Urbana.

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman spoke about September as Suicide Prevention Month and urged training on firearms restraining orders.

Board Member Esry urged rural drivers to be aware of farm equipment as the harvest season begins.

Board Member Ingram spoke about the CU 1 to 1 student mentorship program and encouraged volunteer participants.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont noted that updated COVID-19 vaccinations and the new RSV vaccine are now available and added that free government COVID-19 test are again available, limited to four per household.

PRESENTATION

Dr. Jason Thomason, Hydrogeologist at the Prairie Research Institute's Illinois State Geological Survey, presented preliminary data garnered from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded Mahomet Aquifer Mapping Project. Board Member Ingram spoke about absent Board Member Stohr's enthusiastic support for the project. Board Member Straub asked about practical applications of the research; Dr. Thomason stated it can be used in a wide variety of geologically-based work. Board Member Wilson asked about the depth of the aquifer; Dr. Thomason stated that the depth is approximately 300 feet but the mapping went to a maximum of 1,000 feet, showing the geological features underneath the aquifer. Board Member Wilson also asked about the total water volume of the aquifer; Dr. Thomason stated that the water contained within the aquifer is dynamic, always moving and changing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Carter offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board of August 24, 2023; Board Member Ingram seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Board Chair Patterson noted the Summaries of Action Taken for the Facilities Committee on September 5, 2023, the Environment and Land Use Committee on September 7, 2023, and the Highway and Transportation Committee on September 8, 2023, were received and placed on file.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Board Chair Patterson noted the Summaries of Action Taken for the Committee of the Whole (Justice and Social Services; Finance; Policy, Personnel, and Appointments) on September 12, 2023, were received and placed on file.

Board Member Carter offered a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2023-16 updating the Champaign County Clerk and Recorder's fees for Champaign County, Illinois; Board member Lokshin seconded. Board Member Ingram raised questions about those seeking notary service with limited funds and suggested adopting a fee only after a certain number of documents. Chief Deputy Patton was invited to join the discussion; she stated that the fees are statutorily limited as a flat fee of \$5 per transaction, past Champaign County Clerks have required a fee, the Clerk and Recorder's Office gets heavy use as a notary, averaging 25-30 per week, and the proposed \$3 fee would generate approximately \$4,000 in yearly revenue which would offset the \$6,000-\$10,000 lost per year when the Secretary of State took over notary certifications. Board

Member Taylor asked for clarification on the fee structure; Chief Deputy Patton stated it is a flat fee per transaction regardless of the number of documents to be notarized. Board Member Taylor asked if the office is required to have notaries; Chief Deputy Patton stated that they are not statutorily required but currently have three on staff. Board Member Michaels asked how many notaries are in the county; Chief Deputy Patton was unsure. Board Member Straub asked if the Clerk and Recorder's Office would have discretion in waiving the fee; Chief Deputy Patton stated they would accommodate needs. Board Member Rogers asked if the office would consider charging a fee only after reaching a certain number of documents; Chief Deputy Patton stated she will have the State's Attorney's Office investigate this idea. Board Member Farney asked if there were any documents the Clerk and Recorder's Office cannot or will not notarize; Chief Deputy Patton stated that there are some that are not allowed but the office also will not notarize election documents, as that presents a conflict of interest. Board Member Lokshin stated the ordinance appeared to need further review before Board Members would feel comfortable voting.

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to postpone the vote on the ordinance until the October County Board Meeting; Board Member Straub seconded. The Motion to postpone carried by unanimous voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Taylor offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-233 authorizing payment of claims; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Farney offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-234 purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Taylor seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice.

Board Member Michaels offered a motion to adopt resolution No. 2023-235 authorizing the Agreement Between Champaign County Board, the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Early Childhood Education Program (Head Start), and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Council 31 – March 1, 2023-February 28, 2026; Board Member Carter seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Ingram offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-236 appointing John Farney to the Labor Committee; Board Member Michaels seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Wilson offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-237 appointing John Farney to Vice Chair of the Finance Committee; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Board Member Thorsland offered an omnibus motion, following the State's Attorney's recommendation, to open the County Board closed session minutes of July 8, 2004, September 20, 2007, November 20, 2007, February 21, 2008, April 23, 2009, May 21, 2009, July 18, 2013, and February 18, 2016 and for all other closed session minutes of the County Board, County Administrator Search Committee, and Nursing Home Board of Directors to remain closed; Board Member Taylor seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

POST-ISSUANCE COMPLIANCE REPORTING FOR THE 20221 AND 2022B BONDS

No discussion.

PROPERTY TAX/LEVY/RATE PROJECTION FY2024

No discussion.

FY2024 BUDGET DECISIONS

Board Member Fortado raised the discussion of the upcoming Special Finance Committee of the Whole meeting on Thursday, September 28, 2023. Director Jett and Public Defender Elisabeth Pollock were invited to join the discussion. Board Member Fortado asked Board Members to note their budget priorities and to be cognizant of the budgetary constraints. Various Board Members along with Director Jett and Public Defender Pollock stated their priorities including the Public Defender's Office paralegal and mitigation specialist social worker, an additional Sheriff's deputy, a State's Attorney's Office civil attorney and victim witness advocate, a County human resources generalist and grant writing specialist, the Veterans' Assistance Commission. Public Defender Pollock expressed a willingness to use grants to fund the paralegal and mitigation specialist social worker, if needed. Director Jett reminded the Board that the County is facing a \$700,000 budget deficit.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

ARPA Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on ARPA projects and noted the memo in the Agenda Packet. Board Member Farney asked about the unspent \$9.8 million for the rural broadband project; Project Manager Larson stated that the work was in-progress and had not yet begun to incur costs but tangible, billable work was expected to begin shortly. Board Member Fortado noted the water projects that used their ARPA funds to leverage significant, additional grant funding.

Board Member Carter offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2022-238 authorizing an intergovernmental agreement with Cunningham Township; Board Member Locke seconded. Board Member Fortado noted that Cunningham Township was able to leverage \$300,000 in ARPA funds into an additional \$1 million in grant funding. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Fortado raised the discussion of the remaining \$83,418 of unallocated 2023 ARPA funds. Board Member Thorsland suggested putting \$50,000 toward the Clerk's 2024 purchase of a high-speed ballot scanner and the remaining \$33,418 towards Animal Control's Spay/Neuter program; Board Member Michaels offered a counter proposal to fully fund the Spay/Neuter program at \$75,000 and put the remaining \$8,418 toward the high-speed ballot scanner. Various Board Members debated these proposals with minimal support for the Clerk's election truck proposal. The Board came to a consensus to fully fund the Spay/Neuter program at \$75,000 and use the remaining \$8,418 toward the Clerk's 2024 purchases of a high-speed ballot scanner. Further, the Board decided to not consider any further non-emergency ARPA funding requests for the remainder of 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 9:18 PM.



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