

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
February 22, 2024

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 6:30 PM in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center, 1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois, with County Executive Steve Summers presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following members present: Cowart, Esry, Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, and Carter – 21; absent: none. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business.

PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

County Executive Summers read a prayer, and 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 February 5, February 15, and February 21, 2024.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to approve the Agenda/Addenda; Board Member Sexton seconded.

Board Member Locke offered an amendment to move up items XVIII. A. 1. and 2. (Update from the ARPA Project Manager *and* Request for ARPA Funds – Board of Review) to be placed between XIII. (Selection of Vice-Chair) and XIV. (Approval of Minutes); Board Member Farney seconded. The amendment carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2024-36

Board Member Carter offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-36 appointing Donald Owen as a County Board Member in District 7 to fill Kyle Patterson's unexpired term ending November 30, 2024; Board Member Lokshin seconded. The motion carried

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by unanimous voice vote. County Clerk Aaron Ammons administered the oath of office to Board Member Owen.

DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Standing Committees:

A. County Facilities Committee

Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Shields-Carter Meeting Room

B. Environment & Land Use Committee

Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Shields-Carter Meeting Room

C. Highway & Transportation Committee

Friday, March 8, 2024 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, March 12, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Shields-Carter Meeting Room

County Board:

A. Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Shields-Carter Meeting Room

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Phil Fiscella, of Urbana Township, spoke in favor of the Bondville solar farm Ordinance No. 2024-1, noting difficulties he has had working with the Village of Bondville's planning and zoning.

Tony Grilo, on behalf of Donato Solar, spoke in favor of the Bondville solar farm Ordinance No. 2024-1, noting the local economic impact and local employment of the project.

W. Tyler Evans, of Thomasboro, spoke in favor of the Bondville solar farm Ordinance No. 2024-1 and lauded the work of Tony Grilo.

John Garth, Mayor of Bondville, spoke against the Bondville solar farm Ordinance No. 2024-1, noting that any connection to Bondville utilities would result in the annexation of the property by the village, and he asked the Board to force Donato Solar to resume negotiations with the Village of Bondville.

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Norman Davis, Champaign Township Supervisor, spoke in favor the rooster ban in public nuisance Ordinance No. 2024-2.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Member Esry offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Board Member Smith seconded. The motion comprising 23 resolutions (Nos. 2024-13, 2024-14, 2024-15, 2024-16, 2024-17, 2024-18, 2024-19, 2024-20, 2024-21, 2024-22, 2024-23, 2024-24, 2024-25, 2024-26, 2024-27, 2024-28, 2024-29, 2024-30, 2024-31, 2024-32, 2024-33, 2024-34, and 2024-35) carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Cowart, Esry, Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Owen, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, and Carter – 22

Nays: none

COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Farney noted that six of the last seven of the *News-Gazette's* annual Farm Leaders of the Year have come from County Board District 3, including the recently announced 2023 recipient, Steve Hettinger. He also recognized Unity High School alumna Elyce Knudsen, who recently broke Millikin University Women's Basketball career points leader.

Board Member Wilson noted the recent opening for an administrative assistant for the Veterans' Assistance Commission, adding that applicants must be a veteran themselves. He also noted that the Royal School of Cosmetology in Champaign offers free haircuts for veterans.

Board Member Thorsland spoke about recent gun violence, both locally and nationally, and implored owners to safely secure their firearms.

Board Member Stohr noted the recent passing of local environmentalist Bruce Hannon.

SELECTION OF CHAIR

County Executive Summers opened the floor for nominations for the County Board Chair. Board Member Peugh nominated Board Member Carter and Board Member Farney nominated Board Member Michaels; no other nominations were made, and County Executive Summers closed the nominations. Each nominee was allowed two minutes to speak. Board Member Michaels spoke on her nomination, citing her experience and knowledge of both the Board and other county offices. Board Member Carter spoke on her nomination, citing her community work and experiences on the Board. Board Member Carter was appointed Board Chair by roll-call vote.

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Carter: Cowart, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Owen, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, and Carter – 16

Michaels: Esry, Farney, Michaels, Sexton, Smith, and Wilson – 6

SELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

County Executive Summers opened the floor for nominations for the County Board Vice-Chair. Board Member Straub nominated Board Member Locke and Board Member Esry nominated Board Member Wilson; no other nominations were made, and County Executive Summers closed the nominations. Each nominee was allowed two minutes to speak: Board Member Locke spoke on her nomination and her view of the Vice-Chair as a supporting roll for the Board Chair and Board Member Wilson spoke on his nomination, noting his background and his view of the Vice-Chair as a supporting roll for the Board Chair. Board Member Locke was appointed Board Vice-Chair by roll-call vote.

Locke: Cowart, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Owen, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, and Carter – 16

Wilson: Esry, Farney, Michaels, Sexton, Smith, and Wilson – 6

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Manager Kathy Larson was invited to join the discussion and provided brief updates on various ARPA projects. Board Member Michaels asked about the rural water projects; Project Manager Larson stated that four projects are complete, one is near completion, and a few are currently slow but are expected to complete within their timeframe. Board Members Michaels and Fortado both asked about future water projects; Project Manager Larson stated there is potentially \$114,000 that could still be allocated to water projects. County Director of Administration Michelle Jett was invited to join the discussion; she stated that several currently projects may want more funding, if available. Board Members Fortado and Thorsland spoke about potential funding for safe firearm storage distribution; Board Member Fortado added that there may be state grant funds available in addition to using the ARPA Community Violence Prevention funding. Board Chair Carter spoke about various non-profit organizations that might be interested in ARPA funding for transportation; Director Jett noted that funds must be allocated by year's end and reopening the application process would be difficult at present, and Board Member Michaels added that some projects were not approved at full funding and those would likely be interested in receiving any surplus funds. Board Member Stohr asked about the small business assistance projects; Project Manager Larson stated that all are on track to complete. Board Member Lokshin suggested surplus funds could be used for internal county projects, noting the need to repaint the interior of the Juvenile Detention Center; Director Jett stated that County Administration already has a list of potential internal

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county projects. Board Member Farney asked about delays with the Rural Broadband project; Board Member Fortado, Project Manager Larson, and Director Jett all stated the county is committed to the success of the Rural Broadband project and are prepared to explore other vendors if the current vendors are not able to fulfill their contracts. Board Member Wilson asked about the allocation of interest accrued on the ARPA funds; Director Jett stated that current ARPA rules do not pertain to interest earned. Board Member Stohr asked about the Community Violence SLEEP Program; Project Manager Larson stated that the Regional Planning Commission is ready to start work; Board Member Fortado and Board Chair added details, noting that the Rantoul portion is holding up the project as the Village of Rantoul debates streetlights versus Ring cameras.

Board of Review Chair John Bergee and Member Chris Diana presented their request for ARPA funds for a CoStar software subscription; they explained that CoStar offered analytical data for commercial real estate, and the Board of Review does not currently have any tools for commercial real estate evaluation. Board Member Fortado stated that this was the first ARPA funding request by the Board of Review and recommend the Board fund a one-year subscription and re-evaluate the expense the following year. Board Member Farney concurred with Board Member Fortado and added that the CoStar software would help level the field when addressing commercial property valuations. Board Member Lokshin stated her desire for reports on all ARPA-funded software subscriptions. By a showing of thumbs, the Board approved ARPA funding for a one-year subscription to the CoStar software program.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Locke offered an omnibus motion to approve the minutes of the Jail Facilities Committee Final Meeting of November 3, 2023, the Regular Meeting of the County Board of January 18, 2024, and the Special Meeting of the County Board of January 31, 2024; Board Member Taylor seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

County Executive Summers noted that the Summaries of Action Taken for the County Facilities Committee on February 6, 2024, and the Environment and Land Use Committee on February 8, 2024, were received and placed on file.

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 204-1 amending zoning Ordinance for A Zoning Map amendment on certain property, Zoning Case 109-AM-23; Board Member Michaels seconded. Board Member Thorsland noted the Zoning Board split on the recommendation 4-3, with the dissenting votes being due to the Village of Bondville's protest. Planning and Zoning Director John Hall was invited to join the discussion; he addressed the comments of Bondville Mayor John Garth during

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Public Participation, stating that since the data center of the solar farm would be unmanned the vast majority of the time, there would be no requirements for restroom facilities.

Board Members Michaels and Lokshin requested that the Bondville Donato Solar work out their differences and come to an amicable solution. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Cowart, Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Owen, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, and Carter – 20

Nays: Esry and Sexton – 2

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2024-2 amending the Public Nuisance Ordinance of Champaign County; Board Member Taylor seconded. Board Member Thorsland explained the background of the need for the ordinance revision, citing a specific property in the residential portion of Champaign Township that borders the City of Champaign, but he did note other instances with roosters in the county. Board Members Thorsland, Rodriguez, and Esry stated a willingness to, in the future, expand the rooster restriction to include a buffer from all residences. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Cowart, Esry, Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Owen, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, and Carter – 21

Nays: Straub – 1

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

County Executive Summers noted that the Summary of action from the Committee of the Whole (Justice and Social Services; Finance; Policy, Personnel, and Appointments) on February 9, 2024, was received and placed on file.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Straub offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-37 authorizing payments of claims; Board Member Locke seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-38 opposing proposed changes to Champaign Processing and Distribution Center; Board Member Thorsland seconded. Board Member Hanauer-Friedman noted that approval would only be a symbolic vote of disapproval to the proposed changes. County Executive Summers recommended that the resolution, if adopted, be sent to Congressional Representative with districts in Champaign County. Board Member Fortado spoke about the potential job losses for the community and the postal delays were mail to go to Chicago for distribution. Board Member Vanichtheeranont added that the *News-Gazette* has turned to the postal surface for newspaper delivery and a delivery delay could be detrimental to

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newspaper subscription. Board Member Straub noted that mail delays can have a significant impact on vulnerable housing situation and would result in increased evictions in the county. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Straub offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-39 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2024/02/195 to purchase a new vehicle for the State's Attorney's Investigator; Board Member Rogers seconded. Board Members Peugh and Carter object to the purchase of a Subaru, preferring a Honda or Toyota. Board Members Farney and Taylor both noted the vehicle to be purchases us under warrant and lauded the State's Attorney's Office for getting three quotes on three different vehicles. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Esry, Farney, Fortado, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Owen, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, and Wilson – 18

Nays: Cowart, Greer, Peugh, and Carter – 4

OTHER BUSINESS

DECENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS TO THE COUNTY BOARD

County Executive Summers noted the Decennial Committee Reports of the Sidney Fire Protection District, Homer Fire Protection District, Tolono Public Library, Joint Champaign Township and Champaign Township Road District, Joint Scott Township and Scott Township Road District, Champaign Park District, and Parkland Community College were received and placed on file. Board Member Michaels noted that she served on the Parkland Community College report committee and requested Board Members read the full reports. Board Member Locke noted that the 5 percent cap on revenue is limiting to the districts. Board Member Wilson also encouraged Board Members read the full reports, and he asked about the process of the County's response to the reports; County Executive Summers stated that the reports have a legislative mandate but no process for response; Board Member Wilson stated the Board should develop a process to address the decennial committee reports.

ADJOURN

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.



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