

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 15, 2009**

**Lyle Shields Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana**

5:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Betz, Brendan McGinty, Steve Moser

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Carol Ammons (County Board Member), Steve Beckett (County Board Member), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Lloyd Carter (County Board Member), Matthew Gladney (County Board Member), Alan Nudo (County Board Member), Amanda Tucker (HR Generalist), C. Pius Weibel (County Board Chair), Barbara Wysocki (County Board Member)

**CALL TO ORDER**

McGinty called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Betz, McGinty, and Moser were present, establishing the presence of a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM**

**MOTION** by Moser to approve the agenda; seconded by Betz. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Betz to approve the February 17, 2009 open session minutes; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

**MOTION** by Betz to approve the February 17, 2009 closed session minutes; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

**MOTION** by Betz to approve the April 1, 2009 minutes; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

## **CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Structure of Committees**

The revised version of Steve Beckett's proposal regarding the structure of committees was distributed.

**MOTION** by Betz to forward the proposal to change the County Board Rules to a committee structure of four standing committees with thirteen members on two committees and fourteen members on two committees; seconded by Moser.

Betz spoke about the proposal before the committee. Though it was stated the financial aspects are not significant in terms of per diem savings, it is thought there might be some administrative savings. The proposal moves the County Board in a direction where Board members will have to focus more on the committee work. While Betz has advocated on the side of having a large County Board and diversity it provides, in viewing the Board meetings on television he has seen the disengagement of some Board members. This committee restructuring may be a way to focus Board members on their committees and may be a precursor to meeting as a committee of the whole, which Betz supports. He indicated it is worth giving the proposal a shot and if it does not work out then the Board can always change to a different committee system. He wanted vigorous debate amongst the County Board on this issue.

Moser reported that the Republican Caucus met this morning and 80% of the caucus was in favor. The proposed committee restructuring could be helpful with important ELUC issues that many people have difficulty understanding. One question he has heard was why the Justice, Policy, & Appointments Committee and the Finance Committee will be the 14-member committees instead of one of others.

Beckett gave an overview of his revised proposal. He incorporated changes based on the feedback and concerns raised by Board members concerning his first proposal. Increasing the number of Board members on each committee would address concerns that the committee size was too small. The structure of having 4 committees with 13 or 14 members each would enable a Board member to be knowledgeable about 50% of business when it comes to the full County Board meetings. Because a 27-member County Board could not be divided into 4 committees of 13 members each, Beckett suggested assigning the County Board Chair to the Justice, Policy, & Appointments Committee and the Finance Committee as those are the two primary standing committees in terms of priorities. This brings the membership of 2 committees to 14 members. There could be tie votes with even-numbered committees; therefore, he proposed a rules change that votes ending on a tie at the committee level would be reported to the County Board for action, but with no recommendation from the committee. This approach would ensure a tie vote would not kill an item from going to the full County Board. In response to the notion that his first proposal was trying to eliminate the Justice & Social Services Committee, Beckett changed the committee's name and language to reflect that the Justice and Policy Committees were being consolidated, which his intention was all along. He wanted to make it clear

that he never intended to suggest eliminating the Justice Committee. Otherwise the duties of committees were not much changed. Due to the statements made that scheduling the Highway & Transportation Committee or the potential County Transportation & Facilities Committee meetings at 9:00 a.m. on a Friday was not friendly to the media or Board members, Beckett conferred with County Engineer Jeff Blue about changing the meeting time. Blue was agreeable to scheduling the meeting at 8:00 a.m. on a Friday. This change would enable Board members to attend the committee meeting before the typical workday, thereby being friendlier to Board members. Beckett altered the pertinent language under 2G at Blue's request. Blue informed Beckett that the Highway Committee never approves plans. The plans are approved by Blue as the County Engineer, sent out, and then bids are received. The committee approves the bids. Beckett confirmed there would be no per diem savings under this structure. Busey has indicated holding all four committee meetings during a single week would result in savings of \$35,000. Beckett stated Busey would have to provide an explanation about the \$35,000 savings calculation because she arrived at this number.

Carter stated the County Board had the same thing on the 2001 ballot and it was voted down. He said it was getting personal from his point of view. Regarding Beckett's suggestions about the meeting time of the Highway Committee, Carter stated Blue works for the County Board and it was not right for Blue to tell the committee how to structure the meetings. Carter was bothered by what he saw as a little group drawing up this stuff without input from anyone else and expecting the Board to take it. McGinty expressed the purpose of this meeting was to gather input from Board members. He pointed out the original proposal had been amended to incorporate suggestions from various Board members and the issue had not been forwarded to the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee. Carter claimed it was trying to get rid of the County Board. McGinty explained the proposal has changed since it was presented to the caucuses and the changes reflect the major concerns about issues like oversight.

Betz noted the Administrative Structure Special Committee has held a number of meetings over the past couple years and solicited all sorts of ideas, beginning with McGinty and Knott's ten point plan. The ten point plan was distributed to all the Board members and others to solicit even more proposals and advice. There has been an ongoing open door to submit ideas to the special committee, an avenue that has been used by Board members to suggest ideas. Betz stated Beckett made a proposal, which is what any Board member has the absolute right to do. Beckett's proposal was considered by the Policy Committee and referred to the Administrative Structure Special Committee. There has been extensive discussion about the proposal, which is reflected in the meeting's minutes. As result of the comments from the meeting, Beckett drafted a second proposal to increase the size of the committees and consolidate a couple of committees. Each Board member would serve on two committees. He clarified that Beckett's proposal had nothing to do with the 2001 ballot issue that Carter mentioned. In 2001, there was a proposition about single member districts on the ballot and that that is not currently before this committee. Betz pointed out the proposal increases the committees' size; it does not impact the size of the County Board. He continued to speak about how only the County Board can structure the County Board. The public can only advise and has no binding authority regarding the structure of the County Board. He thought the Board structure and related issues should be discussed every 10 years. The County Board has voted to move from a dual Administrator to a single County Administrator system and is in an ongoing process of restructuring/reforming the County Board, elected offices, appointed offices, etc. In Betz's opinion, this is what the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee and Administrative Structure Special

Committee were appointed to do, so they are simply fulfilling their functions. He encouraged open discussion and not remaining frozen in place without any consideration of change.

Ammons stated she would not support the proposed change to Rule 6 about allowing issues that end in a tie vote moving to the County Board with no recommendation. She saw the purpose of committees as reviewing issues and voting as to whether items should go to the County Board. She stated this would lead to political maneuvering and using one person to break a tie was not democratic. She did not understand the correction of the form under 12.F.3.b. Busey explained the language in item 3.b under Rule 12 this language currently in the County Board Rules. There is no proposed change to this language. Ammons asked for an explanation of this language. Beckett said if the wording of a resolution was ambiguous or technically incorrect, then somebody needs to call it to the Board's attention and it has to go through a process to achieve the correct result. The per diem resolution was a good example.

Betz spoke about the possibility of tie votes at the 14-person committees. The proposed change would send such matters to the County Board without recommendation instead of simply killing the issue. The County Board is not compelled to take action on any issue. He would love to see a rules change that would prevent a defeated issue from being placed on an agenda for 6 months unless a certain number of members request it. He may propose this change in the future. Beckett explained his concern was an important issue could be killed in committee due to a particular committee's makeup. It does not make sense to have a tie vote result in the Board being prohibited from taking any action. An even number of committee members increases the probability of tie votes and his proposal would enable the County Board to have the final say on the issue. He noted the County Board acts as 27 separate voting members of a body politic. Nudo supported that issues ending in tie votes be forwarded to the Board as a way to offset to the fact that 2 committees would have an 8-6 political balance. Weibel pointed out that items have advanced to the County Board without going through a committee first because of deadlines and, as County Board Chair; he has made use of placing items directly on the Board agenda. Regarding the idea of committee meetings being media friendly, Weibel pointed out the media can listen to the audio recording of the meetings on the County's website. From quotes in recent newspaper articles Weibel has surmised the media is listening to the audio recordings instead of attending the meetings.

Gladney indicated he was pleasantly surprised with the amended proposal. He appreciated that Board members would serve on 2 committees and saw where Justice Committee matters were included in the consolidation. He supported the proposal moving forward to the Policy Committee.

Carter opposed the proposal because he thought it would mean Board members being kicked off the County Board. Betz and McGinty pointed out the proposal concerned the size of committees and no change to the size of the County Board was being proposed. Carter said the proposal was only being made in the interest of an elite few. Moser stated the size of the County Board would be up to the County Board in place after the 2010 election. Whichever party controlled the Board following the election will draw the map and make the decision about how large the Board will be. Carter thought the proposal would lump all the committees together and direct everything to the full Board without any issue going through committees first. Carter claimed sending issues to the full Board would cut out the input from anyone but a few elite people. Moser said he thought the proposed structure would generate more input because each committee would have 13 or 14 members instead of 9 members.

Moser sees larger committees as advantageous with ELUC issues because he has seen many County Board meetings where most Board members are ignorant about the ELUC issues they are voting on. The County Board will be facing major ELUC issues concerning wind farms and land use in the coming months. The restructuring proposal would result in at least 13 knowledgeable members about ELUC projects at each County Board meeting. This would benefit the County Board when it is voting on ELUC issues. The larger committees will be a good way to educate half of the Board at each committee meeting, so Board members are well-informed on issues prior to the Board meetings were they are voting on said issues. He described the waste of resources that has occurred when a zoning ordinance was voted down based the majority of the Board was uninformed. Moser stated all 27 Board members needed to be cognizant of how their actions affect all areas of the large and diverse county.

Discussion continued over the proposal to restructure the committees. Betz would like to see every County Board member invested on every issue and supported the County Board operating every meeting as a committee of the whole. He thought the proposal would have a positive outcome and the system could always be changed if it did not. McGinty thought the greatest benefits of the restructuring would be greater involvement, focus, and oversight of issues at the committee level. Bigger committees could lead to better, more efficient full County Board meetings. Having more members understand what is being presented to the Board is beneficial to all. The challenges with the committees meetings would be to drive business and stay focused. Nudo suggested that longer discussions at the committee level could lead to shorter discussions at the County Board because the members would be better educated. As seen by the participation of non-committee members at this meeting, larger committees can lead to more discussion on issues and more Board members being involved. Betz asked for a roll call vote.

A person from the public interrupted the discussion to ask to make some comments to the committee. McGinty stated public participation was held earlier in the meeting and inquired if any member wanted to make a motion to suspend the rules. There was no motion made by a member.

**Motion carried with a vote of 3 to 0.** Betz, McGinty, and Moser voted in favor of the motion.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

McGinty suggested having another Administrative Structure Special Committee meeting to work through fleshing out the ten point plan and any other items on the table related to the reform of government. Betz wanted a consolidated list at the May 6<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee meeting to plan the agenda issues for the next 6 months. The committee agreed to schedule a meeting Wednesday, April 22nd at 5:00 p.m.

Nudo encouraged the County Board members to keep reminding themselves of the County's financial situation and develop ideas to streamline and make the County government more productive. He suggested the Board restrict itself to focusing on 4 selected issues in the 6-month time period for better planning. The issues could be any 4 chosen by the members. The Board could then focus on another set of issues in the following 6 months.

Ammons asked what the process would be for determining the top 4 issues. She was concerned about the low participation of minority contractors and wanted to know how to get this issue addressed

in real terms by the County Board even if it is not important to the majority of the Board. Betz said he would honor any requests by members to place items on the Policy Committee agenda if they are made to him.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork  
Administrative Secretary

*Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.*