

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
August 24, 2023

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 6:34 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: Sexton, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Carter, Cowart, Esry, Fortado, Goss, Hanauer-Friedman, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Peugh, Rogers, Patterson – 17; absent: Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Michaels, Rodriguez – 4. 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 August 10, August 17, and August 23, 2023.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA**

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

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2023-212**

Board Member Esry offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-212 appointing John Farney as County Board Member in District 3 to fill Stan Harper's unexpired term ending November 30, 2024; Board Member Sexton seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE BY CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK**

Chief Deputy County Clerk, Angela Patton swore-in newly appointed County Board Member John Farney. Both signed an official oath.

## **DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

### **Standing Committees:**

- A. County Facilities Committee  
Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- B. Environment and Land Use Committee  
Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- C. Highway and Transportation Committee  
Friday, September 8, 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, September 12, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- B. *Special Finance*  
Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

### **County Board:**

- A. Regular Meeting  
Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ted Myhre urged the County Board to support American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience of loss related to military service.

Timothy Willis urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans Program; represented Benevolent Elks Lodge 27.

Jeffrey Pribble urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared information about the Elks veterans' organization.

Bruce Povalish urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; represented Benevolent Elks as trustee.

David Wilson urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as U.S. Navy veteran.

Mike Luth urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as U.S. Marine Corps. veteran and his own personal health issues.

Stanley Harper urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; thanked all veterans speaking at County Board public participation; notes that a school district disbursement issue appears to have been addressed.

E. Charles Hoskins Jr. urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as veteran and UIUC police officer.

Terry Boyer provided update on behalf of Donahue and Associates regarding the Sangamon Valley Public Water District project, noted that design is complete, permitting and funding are in progress.

Jim McGuire urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as a veteran; thanked County Board for appointing John Farney to the County Board

Lester Potts urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as U.S. Marine Corp. veteran and personal health issues.

Cheryl Walker urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as a veteran and personal health issues.

Martell Miller urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience of family members' health issues.

Mike Cervantes urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; shared personal experience as disabled veteran and City of Urbana police officer.

Tracy Parsons urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program; notes his work as community coalition facilitator.

Nicholas Dale discussed his concerns regarding law enforcement officer misconduct and described various statutorily defined reprimands, noted importance of personal privacy and departmental recordkeeping.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Board Member Locke offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Board Member Esry seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Board Member Carter thanked all who spoke at County Board public participation; urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program.

Board Member Fortado offered a unanimous consent motion to amend the agenda to consider Veterans program ARPA funding proposal prior to entering Closed Session; Board Member Farney seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Ingram thanked all who spoke at County Board public participation; urged the County Board to support ARPA funding for Veterans program.

Board Member Straub thanked all who spoke at County Board public participation; encourages water donation amid excessively warm weather; acknowledged lack of affordable transportation.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Member Carter offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board of July 20, 2023; Board Member Locke seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **ARPA COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FUNDING**

Board Member Fortado expressed County Board's consistent interest in supporting veterans' services, suggested that those who spoke at Public Participation assist the County Board assess veterans' needs. Board Member Esry thanked Board Member Fortado for reemphasizing support for veterans, expresses support for ARPA funding of the proposed veterans program. Board Member Carter asked if there was a needs assessment in progress. County Executive Summers invited Robbie Walker from VA to address the question. Robbie Walker explained that needs assessment is a programmatic goal, introduces other members of his team: Bishop Byron Smith, Grace Weltman, Nicole Massey, Grace Weltman expressed readiness to implement program. Nicole Massey clarified that this program does not compete with VAC; organizations work jointly to serve veterans. VAC not financially capable of supporting program alone. Bishop Byron Smith noted lack of mental health resources for veterans. County Executive Summers asked why there was no line-item for needs assessment funding, asked if program would be amenable to adding such line-item. Grace Weltman: indicated amenability. Board Member Fortado asks County Board members if they are opposed to the program; members appear interested in program. Board Member Carter asked if there have been applications made in the Champaign-Urbana area, Bishop Byron Smith explained that the organization is waiting potential engagement from County Board. Board Member Ingram encouraged continued work from VAC, County Executive Summers confirmed he's spoken to VAC Administrator and encouraged coordination. Board Member Farney thanked veterans who spoke during Public Participation; advised program leaders to collect and supply County Board and other government bodies with data substantiating results of programmatic efforts. County Executive Summers told program representatives to speak to Kathy Larson; County Board will approve funding.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-213 authorizing payment of claims; Board Member Straub seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Sexton offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-214 appointing Jeff Wilson as the Vice-Chair of the Facilities Committee; Board Member Esry seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Veterans' Assistance Commission funding request**

Director of Administration Michelle Jett informed that the previously discussed \$40k proposed increase was increased to an amount ranging somewhere between \$50k and \$100k; unsure of outstanding cost of VAC. County Executive Summers informed that despite attempts to reach VAC administrator by phone; has not reached him as the administrator is at a training. Noted that Finance Director Tami Ogden projects \$600k over budget, no further information yet. Board Member Fortado VAC unilaterally approved a pay raise for administrator, funded new staff, among other expenses. Noted that the County Board Member liaison to the VAC encouraged this without first consulting the County Board; the County Board is potentially liable for these funds despite issues with over-budget spending. County Executive Summers noted his communication with some Board Members about the issue and former VAC leader about the issue. Board Member Goss emphasized unacceptability of this process, noted the work of rebuilding county finances in prior years; discussion needed before spending. Director Jett also noted that VAC does not have the infrastructure necessary to allocate large sums; collaboration is needed. Also reminded that APRA funding is ending; financial options will become limited.

### **Collector – Property tax distributions**

County Treasurer Johnson acknowledged communication on distribution-related matters could have been better; emphasized that best decision was made. Board Member Goss questioned the Treasurer's blaming of the issue on commercial accounts, asserted that commercial accounts do not bounce. Treasurer Johnson objected to that assessment, offered to present Board Member Goss with redacted checks to substantiate her explanation. Board Member Goss asked how the Collector's account and why money isn't being distributed, particularly to schools. Treasurer Johnson explained that these are determinations made amid a higher number of chargebacks; invites Board Member Goss to treasurer's office to see process. Board Member Goss asked how it can be determined and if these were not collected; Treasurer Johnson explains manual adjustments are required, getting funds allocated was priority. Treasurer Johnson and Board Member Goss engaged in the discussion further by exchanging hypothetical questions and answers related to the subject.

Board Member Farney asked about the unusual timing of payments to the treasurer's office. Treasurer Johnson noted late payments from accounts. Board Member Farney asked if there is pre-reconciliation pre-distribution; Treasurer Johnson informed there is. Board Member Farney expressed an interest in seeing checks; Treasurer Johnson agreed to do so after appropriate redactions are made. Board Member Farney noted the surprising nature of this problem. Board Member Fortado acknowledged the need for an increased understanding of treasurer's office functions; requested advance notice if such problem were to occur in the future. Board Member Lokshin expressed an interest in visiting the treasurer's office; emphasized value of enhancing understanding of the office's functions. Treasurer Johnson noted that timeline decisions have been made to prevent such problem from happening again in the future. Board Member Carter noted that this has happened before; thanked treasurer's office for their work; emphasized value of advance notice in the future.

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

ARPA Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on ARPA projects and offered to answer questions. Board Member Stohr asked about chamber of commerce microloan program; Larson confirmed awareness of that program. Board Member Stohr asked if e-commerce is working; Larson confirmed at least one is. Board Member Lokshin asked if any funds are coming back; Larson confirmed that no other funds are likely. Director Jett added that the county is already studying reallocations. Board Member Fortado asked if funding allocated to three sewer districts were spent; Director Jett explained that follow up would be necessary. Board Member Fortado emphasized an interest in finding that information; Larson committed to asking again. Board Member Fortado requests cover-crop update at County Board in upcoming meetings; Director Jett informed that others are updating then. Board Member Goss added that demos have been planted successfully. Board Member Esry recalled that applications are due September 1<sup>st</sup>. Board Member Stohr asked about \$400k in small business assistance; Larson informed that an agreement is not in place.

County Executive Summers requested that Board Member Fortado lead the County Board in further discussion about ARPA; Board Member Fortado invited Circuit Clerk McGrath to speak about e-citation funding request; noted any financial assistance possible would help, emphasized program utility for smaller departments, issues with hand-written citations. Board Member Fortado noted more ARPA funding will be available in 2024; asked if larger departments are paying for their systems. Circuit Clerk McGrath explained that funds are being sought from various sources. Board Member Fortado asked if \$134k requested covers all departments. Circuit Clerk McGrath informed that the figure pertains mostly to smaller department needs. Board Member Fortado asked if waiting until 2024 to fund would harm the office; Circuit Clerk McGrath confirms that waiting would not be harmful.

Board Member Esry expressed concern about election truck proposal, citing unreliability and underuse. Board Member Hanauer-Friedman asked that if proposals A and B are funded, what could be done with remaining \$8k? Board Member Fortado informed that

there are various options. Board Member Hanauer-Friedman asked without funding the election trucks, could remaining \$8k be allocated to the county clerk and recorder's office directly? Director Jett objected to that idea, cited potential subsequent requests. Board Member Taylor expressed support for proposals A and B. Board Member Straub expressed interest in partially funding B to allocate remainder to C. Board Member Fortado informally gauges the County Board's interest in either splitting the funding between B and C as Board Member Straub proposed or fully funding both A and B alone. Director Jett asserted that the County Board should fund A, wait on funding decision for B and C. The County Board did not reach a conclusion.

County Board Member Goss informed that the September 2023 Regular County Board Meeting will be his last before vacating his seat due to professional commitments.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 9:52 PM.



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