

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
April 24, 2025

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 6:32 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: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 17; late: Vanichtheeranont (arrived at 6:52, during Public Input) – 1; absent: Lokshin, Carter, Esry, and Fortado – 2. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business. Board Member Stohr was temporarily absent during the roll-call vote of Resolution No. 2025-145.

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

County Executive Summers recited 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 April 10, April 17, and April 23, 2025.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA**

Board Member Sexton offered a motion to adopt the Agenda; Board Chair Locke seconded.

Board Chair Locke offered a motion to amend the Agenda to move up item XVI. A. 1. (ARPA Update) to follow item X. B. (Update from the Coroner); Board Member Farney seconded. The motion to amend the Agenda carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

County Executive Summers noted that the Study Session scheduled for April 29, 2025, had been cancelled.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. County Facilities Committee  
Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- B. Environment and Land Use Committee  
Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- C. Highway and Transportation Committee  
Friday, May 9, 2025 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, May 13, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

**County Board:**

- A. Regular Meeting  
Thursday, May 25, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Board Chair Locke offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-134 honoring county employees for years of service; Board Member Stohr seconded. Board Member Stohr read the entire text of the resolution. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Chair Locke offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-135 honoring retiring county employees; Board Member Stohr seconded. Board Member Stohr read the entire text of the resolution. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Chelsea Peterson, of Urbana, spoke in support of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Jason Elliot Benda, Champaign County Physical Plant employee, spoke about the ongoing American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) contract negotiations and urged the County to increase the pay rate to employees. He noted those at the bottom of the pay scale are not paid a living wage by the County Board's own definition.

Andrew Graumlich, of Champaign, spoke in support of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Joyce Mast, of Champaign, spoke in support of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Jacob Romme and David Holly, both of Bay Wa r.e.Projects LLC, made the Board aware that they were present and available to answer questions during the discussion of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Stuart Levy, of Champaign, spoke in support of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Paul Mwebesa, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign economist, spoke in support of the Little Prairie Solar project, Ordinance 2025-7.

Natalie Nagel, AFSCME Council 31 Local 900, spoke about the ongoing AFSCME contract negotiations and urged the County to support their employees.

Cece Phillips, Circuit Clerk' Office AFSCME employee, spoke about the ongoing AFSCME contract negotiations and urged the County to support their employees.

Janae Wisheart, State's Attorney's Office AFSCME employee, spoke about the ongoing AFSCME contract negotiations and urged the County to support their employees.

Bobbi Johnson, Public Defender's Office AFSCME employee, spoke about the ongoing AFSCME contract negotiations and urged the County to support their employees.

County Auditor George Danos spoke about his refusal to move the Auditor's Office to the Bennett Administrative Building due to the reallocation of the space originally designated for the Auditor's Office to the County Emergency Management Agency, noting the disparate sizes and needs of the two offices.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Board Member Farney offered a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda; Board Member Sexton seconded. The motion consisting of 36 resolutions (Nos. 2025-95, 2025-99, 2025-100, 2025-101, 2025-102, 2025-103, 2025-104, 2025-105, 2025-106, 2025-107, 2025-108, 2025-109, 2025-110, 2025-111, 2025-112, 2025-113, 2025-114, 2025-115, 2025-116, 2025-117, 2025-118, 2025-119, 2025-120, 2025-121, 2025-122, 2025-123, 2025-124, 2025-125, 2025-126, 2025-127, 2025-128, 2025-129, 2025-130, 2025-131, 2025-132, and 2025-131)) carried by unanimous roll-call vote:

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 18

Nays: none

## **PRESENTATION**

Probation and Court Services Director Shannon Siders, Juvenile Detention Center Supervisor Patricia Allah, and muralist Leslie Kimble gave a presentation on the recent murals painted in the Juvenile Detention Center, detailing the various murals, the creative process, and the involvement of the Juvenile Detention Center residents. They thanked Grant Coordinator Kait Kuzio for her work to get the grant funding for the project.

County Coroner Laurie Brauer presented an update on the Coroner's Office; she also distributed memorandum at the meeting. Coroner Brauer thanked her staff for their hard work and dedication while the office had been understaffed. She noted that since taking office in December 2024, she had improved and streamlined the tissue donation process and completed the unclaimed property; she noted the increased demand for the office. Board Chair Locke asked about death certificate processing; Coroner Brauer stated the process has been greatly improved and now has the lowest ever open death certificate rate. Board Member Crane asked why the Champaign County death rate is higher than other counties; Coroner Brauer stated that the rate is inflated due to Carle Hospital's reputation for trauma care which results in high number of patient transfers from other counties. Board Member Farney asked about potential legislation to allow revenue generation through the office; Coroner Brauer stated that she was unaware of any pending legislation but noted that the office does charge fees for storage and removal. Board Member Farney asked about the likelihood of the office hiring their own pathologist; Coroner Brauer stated that the search efforts have been unsuccessful, but she is having conversations with both Carle Hospital and the University of Illinois Carle College of Medicine about hiring a pathologist to be shared between the institutions. Board Member Stohr stated that he appreciated his recent tour of the Coroner's Office, and he asked about soft tissue storage; Coroner Brauer spoke in detail about the cost of soft tissue storage and disposal, particularly the chemicals used to preserve the samples.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on various ARPA-funded projects, noting the Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) small business grant program is soliciting now and will launch on May 5, 2025. Board Member Stohr asked about the other EDC programs; Project Manager Larson stated that the microloan program has disbursed approximately \$130,000 across 8-10 loans and the e-commerce website has 8 businesses listed. Board Member Stohr also asked for updates on the Sangamon Valley Water District and the Rural Broadband projects; Project Manager Larson stated that the Sangamon Valley Water District project has \$115,000 remaining funds and all funds have been spent on engineering plans, and that Volo estimates five months to complete the project once construction begins. Board Member Wilson asked about if the low-hurdle load program has a minimum threshold; Project Manager Larson confirmed there is a minimum requirement but was unaware of the exact number.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Board Member Rodriguez spoke about the AFSCME contract negotiations as the Labor Committee Chair. The Labor Committee recently proposed increasing the County's contribution to employee premiums for dependent health insurance coverage—from \$90 to \$200 for spouses, \$95 to \$250 for children and \$100 to \$300 for families—a 5% decrease on health insurance premiums for employees, adding a floating holiday, increasing the AFSCME salary wage scale \$0.20 to both the minimums and maximums for 2025 and \$0.10 to both for 2026 and 2027, a 3% retroactive cost of living adjustment to January 2025 and 2% or matching non-bargaining employees (whichever is higher) for 2026 and 2027, a scaling one-time bonus between \$500 and \$1,500 based on years of service, and expanding the paid parental leave from 2 weeks to 12 weeks. She stated that she looks forward to continuing positive bargaining sessions with AFSCME.

Board Member Farney recognized outgoing St. Joseph Mayor Tami Fruhling-Voges.

Board Member Wilson spoke on the passing of Pope Francis, noted that the day of the meeting was Holocaust Remembrance Day [*sic*], and spoke against the rise of antisemitism.

Board Chair Locke discussed the Illinois Marathon events taking place in Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy on April 25-26, 2025. She also noted that tularemia has been identified in the county and warned against touching dead animals.

Board Member Stohr spoke about the Carbon Sequestration Activities Task Force meeting on April 21, 2025, that featured presentation by subject matter experts. He recognized outgoing Urbana Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin and noted that the Hotel Royer in Urbana is finally open.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont spoke about the Champaign Central High School theater production of Rogers and Hammerstein's Cinderella running April 24 to 27, 2025.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

County Executive Summers noted that the minutes of the Regular County Board Meeting of March 20, 2025, were not available for review and would be on the Agenda of the next regular Board meeting.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Study Session Meeting of March 25, 2025; Board Chair Locke seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

County Executive Summers noted the Summaries of Action Taken at the April 8, 2025, County Facilities Committee Meeting; the April 10, 2025, Environment and Land Use Committee; and the April 11, 2025, Highway and Transportation Committee were received and placed on file.

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-7 granting a special use permit Zoning Case 144-S-24 "Little Prairie Solar LLC c/o BayWa r.e. Projects LLC" Utility Scale PV Solar Farm and Accessory Battery Energy Storage System including the decommissioning and site reclamation plan; Board Member Wiggs seconded. Board Member Rogers recused herself and abstained from all discussion and voting as she is employed by Meyer Capel, the law firm representing BayWa r.e. although she has never personally worked on behalf of BayWa r.e. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

County Executive Summers noted the Summary of Action Taken at the April 15, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting (Justice and Social Services; Finance; and Policy, Personnel, and Appointments) was received and placed on file.

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-136 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/3/407 for the initial investment for the Highway Department solar panels; Board Member Farney seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 18

Nays: none

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-137 approving award of contract for voter registration and pollbook software and vendor support, pursuant to RFP 2024-005; Board Member Rogers seconded. County Clerk and Recorder Aaron Ammons was invited to join the discussion. Board Chair Locke and Board Member Wilson thanked Clerk Ammons for his diligent work on the Request for Proposal (RFP). Board Member Wilson asked if both the voter registration and pollbook programs were needed; Clerk Ammons confirmed that both are necessary as they work in tandem and he added that the pollbook program requires the use of an iPad, which is included in the cost. Board Member Wilson asked if other Tenex election programs will be added at a later date; Clerk Ammons stated that no additional programs are needed nor anticipated to be needed in the future. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Cowart offered a motion to adopt Resolution No.2025-138 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/4/285 for the appropriation of funds for the Tenex contract; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Fava, and Locke – 17

Nays: Farney – 1

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-139 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/4/286 for the appropriation of funds for the Tenex contract; Board Member Greer seconded. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Fava, and Locke – 17

Nays: Farney – 1

Board Member Farney offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-140 approving the proclamation designating the week of May 4<sup>th</sup> as National Correctional Officer Week; Board Member Sexton seconded. Board Member Stohr read the entire text of the resolution. Board Member Stohr acknowledged Board Member Sexton's past work as a correctional officer. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Wilson offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-141 approving the proclamation designating the week of May 11<sup>th</sup> as National Police Officer Week; Board Member Crane seconded. Board Member Stohr read the entire text of the resolution. County Executive Summers acknowledged Board Member Sexton's son as a Rantoul Police Department officer and Board Member Crane as a University of Illinois Police Department officer. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board Member Rodriguez offered a motion to approve the recreation and entertainment license for Araceli Gutierrez for a Spanish Rodeo at the Champaign County Fairgrounds, 1302 North Coler Avenue, Urbana, IL, to be held on May 4, 2025; Board Member Thorsland seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Cowart offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-142 authorizing payment of claims; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-143 purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Cagle seconded. Board Member Farney requested more detailed descriptions of the improper purchases. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.



Board Member Cowart offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-144 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/3/396 to correct a disbursement error that occurred between 2010 and 2019; Board Member Sullard seconded. Board Member Crane asked about the consequences of not paying. Board Member Farney questioned the practice of paying the state in full to later receive a 60% reimbursement, where it would be more logical to simply pay the state 40%. The motion carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 16

Nays: Sexton and Crane – 2

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-145 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/4/211 appropriation of funds for CliftonLarsonAllen to provide services for the completion of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report; Board Member Vanichtheeranont seconded. Board Member Wilson asked the purpose of the expense; Board Chair Locke stated that this was a response to the chronically late audits in an effort to speed up the process. Board Member Farney stated his reluctant support but the County Audit has proven himself to be incapable of submitting a timely audit without assistance. Board Member Wilson noted that the work of the report is the responsibility of the Auditor, and he asked if this will be a recurring expense; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman stated that it would largely be a one-time expense with a small recurring expense. Board Member Farney state that the resultant spreadsheets would be county property. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 18

Nays: none

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

County Executive Summers noted the memorandums in the Agenda Packet for the Priority of Facilities Capital Projects and the Grant Coordinator Update.

Board Chair Locke moved that the Board enter into Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) to consider litigation that is pending against or on behalf of Champaign County, and litigation that is probable or imminent against or on behalf of Champaign County and further moved that Assistant State's Attorney Joel Fletcher, County Executive Summers, Director of Administration Michelle Jett, and Finance Director Travis Woodcock remain present; Board Member Farney seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 18

Nays: none



The Board returned to open session by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Peugh, Rodriguez, Rogers, Sexton, Stohr,  
Sullard, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart,  
Crane, Farney, Fava, and Locke – 18

Nays: none

Board Member Sexton offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-90 authorizing a settlement agreement with the Carle Foundation in Champaign County Case 2013-CH-170; Board Member Wilson seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**ADJOURN**

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 8:48 PM.



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