

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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**STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 2, 2008**

**Meeting Room 3, Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana**

4:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Betz, Knott, McGinty

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kat Bork (Administrative Secretary), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), C. Pius Weibel (County Board Chair), Robert Rich (University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs)

**CALL TO ORDER**

McGinty called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Recording Secretary called the roll. Betz, Knott, and McGinty were present at the time of roll call, establishing the presence of a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM**

**MOTION** by Knott to approve the agenda; seconded by Betz. **Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Betz to approve the Strategic Planning Subcommittee minutes of September 18, 2007 and September 24, 2007; seconded by Knott. **Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN**

McGinty provided background on the original ten-point plan that received input from all County officials and was developed into the Champaign County Strategic Plan. The County Board wants to make sure it does this process right. McGinty re-introduced Robert Rich, who would assist the subcommittee by educating them on strategic planning and providing structure for the plan. He encouraged the subcommittee to be thinking about defining the County's vision.

Rich stated that he understood that the subcommittee was looking for an implementation framework to serve as a framework for moving forward that both the County Board and the public could refer to. Rich encouraged the subcommittee to stop him if he stated anything incorrectly about the County's plans. In looking at the strategic plan, Rich asked if the plan embraces the values you as a board want to move forward with,

because then it is really a philosophy. He expressed it is important to ask what is the level of development and economic growth the County Board's wants to emphasize. Referring to the second sentence of the vision statement, he asked what the metric is for determining a safe and healthy environment for the citizens. The plan has underscored education, which Rich found interesting because the County does not have a particular jurisdiction the way it does with healthcare or the criminal justice system. Rich suggested the subcommittee revisit the mission statement. The vision is a statement of direction as well as values. He was not sure they have captured the direction.

Betz stated he does think the County has the diversity it values. He said land use policies can increase diversity by allowing lower income development. The County has made diversity a priority with its construction projects and workforce. McGinty stated it would make sense to have a separate value statement. Rich said that was just what he was going to suggest. Many strategic plans have a separate value statement and it is important to make it consistent. He next pointed out that a strategic planning process represents a roadmap of how we get from here to there. He encouraged the subcommittee to think of implementation in three different time periods: 1 to 12 months, 13 to 24 months, and 24 to 36 months. He stated one cannot go beyond 36 months in the reality of trying to be operational. The next step is to use goals as building blocks for the strategic plan.

Betz asked what Rich meant by operational. Rich said it means each goal be feasible (not a Christmas wish list), each goal be expressed in terms of the steps needed to get it done (some steps to occur in the three time periods, some beyond), and the goals must be measurable in order to see if they have actually been achieved. McGinty said it is difficult to put measurements on some County departments. Rich stated a measurement is not necessarily a five-point scale; it is whether one can verify that a goal has been achieved. A measurement can have a yes or no answer or a range. McGinty mentioned the Juvenile Detention Center and the measurement of success would be in that type of institution. Rich wants to resist the notion that some things are not measurable. When something is hard to measure, we implement multiple measures because a single measure will not capture success. One of the goals is to define the range of success. Betz noted the Mental Health Board has developed a matrix for measuring recidivism in an interesting way. Weibel added that things can be measured in two ways, the goal and how far one has improved. Rich talked about revising the goals once you measure what is achieved and see why or why not the goals were reached. McGinty said the County Board could do a progress update towards the three-year goals annually at budget time. Rich suggested the subcommittee determine for each goal how it is feasible, measurable, and expressed in terms of how it will be done. Then the goals are broken into sub-goals for each time period. This is the first step for each of the goals, and then you have your implementation framework. McGinty said Board members have talked about using a dashboard metrics to quickly review the progress. Rich suggested they revisit the goals every four months during the first time period and afterwards every six months. The review would look at the steps to see how the County was doing. It may mean some additional sub-goals are established. Rich emphasized this is not meant to be a straightjacket, it is meant to be a helpful framework.

Betz was worried about a political report card that might lead to revising goals to make them look more achievable for political purposes. Rich said to not express it as a report card, express it as progress towards meeting the strategic goals. He explained what constitutes success is a conceptual discussion, not a measurement. Rich said Betz's point was well taken, if we are not there yet, it does not mean we have failed. McGinty said this was excellent beginning. Rich was willing to return to another meeting to start on the goals and facilitate the discussion of goals with the subcommittee. Weibel said the subcommittee should start this process themselves and then have Rich review their progress. Knott asked Rich's advice on people not being comfortable with strategic planning, how do we get most people on board. Rich suggested having a frank discussion about how you will use it. This is an ongoing discussion, not a five-year plan or straightjacket. It is important to say this is meant to be a dynamic management tool. The purpose of the four-month review is not an evaluation session, it is a progress report. He wanted the County Board to understand they are after a formative discussion on goals. They have agreed on goals and are having a midterm assessment. Betz stated that broad goals are fairly easy to get agreement on. Rich noted that is why you have sub-goals. Betz some

goals will not be unanimous. Rich stated that being unanimous is not the goal. There are multiple measures of success, not one. Goals adopted on a vote of 12 to 11 basis are difficult to implement and at that point it would be hard to succeed. Betz raised his point because some of the goals could be split in that fashion amongst Board members. Rich introduced the concept of readiness to implement as whether there is capacity in the County to move forward with implementing goals. One of the ways to look at capacity is the level of consensus and opposition. With a 12 to 11 split, there is not a high level of readiness at that time. Weibel asked for Knott to comment on Board members against this. Knott replied some Board members see this plan as just an expansion of government and that we cannot agree on it. Some Board members do not have experience with this type of planning. Rich noted some people might have had negative experience with a strategic plan had been done but then shelved without being implemented.

Betz said he has been skeptical of the process. His concerns in part are things like what occurred with BigSmallAll where a great deal of money was spent and the report is now just sitting out there rotting. Rich responded that the process is more important than the product. He is firm believer that strategic planning is only as good as the process you use to get there. An implementation process builds confidence when people can see a positive result. Knott said the County has resources to implement the strategic plan where other entities do not. The budget will limit how much the County can do. Rich said the budget is very important because sometimes goals cost more than originally thought and the planning process allows the Board to determine if it wants to spend more money on a goal or not. Knott emphasized engaging all Board members early on some difficult issues that they will not want to deal with. Knott said the budget process has generated more discussion and gotten more consensus in the last couple of years. McGinty stated he did not want this strategic plan to sit on the shelf. The County Board is the implementers; it is up to them to do it. It should be an autopilot method of doing business. Betz asked, in terms of the procedures, if it done through this type of subcommittee or with a full study session of the County Board. Rich stated his experience is to have this subcommittee prepare a draft, and then take the draft to a full committee for discussion.

McGinty suggested the subcommittee take what they have today and do more work, then review it with Rich. Rich encouraged the committee to email or call him because he could help clear something up. Betz asked if Rich was suggesting they rewrite the strategic plan. Rich suggested they start with a new section called "Values," then revisit the vision statement. You want to talk about the core County values that you are trying to promote and then see if you are capturing it in vision statement. Busey remarked the vision statement could end up being very different. Rich said they should consider what they want the County to look like 20 years from now, what is an achievable dream. Rich recommended not going back to the County Board until the subcommittee has goals and sub-goals.

The subcommittee agreed to meet on April 30, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. with Rich and on April 17, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. with just the subcommittee. Betz said they could almost have a chart of values and statements. Busey suggested starting with the values and forget they have vision statement. The subcommittee could list all the values of the County Board and then see if those values are covered. The subcommittee agreed.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

McGinty stated that he and Knott have started to discuss logistics of reducing size of the County Board. Knott did some research and passed out information about what other counties are doing regarding their County Boards' size. McGinty stated any reduction plan could not happen until after the redistricting in 2012. McGinty has heard from many constituents that the County Board is too big and cumbersome. Knott had articles about a county that did some strategic planning. The County Board makes the decision on the size and number of districts. They could put an advisory question on the ballot to get the voters' opinion. McGinty and Knott just wanted to throw this idea out on table so it does not get lost. McGinty stated the Board's size, the number of Administrators, and the Board Chair's role are all interconnected. Knott noted it is easier to ask the question well in advance. McGinty distributed a chart that showed the math of reducing the County Board to 18 Board

members. All of the committees would be reduced to seven members, except for the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee which would remain at nine members. Every County Board would serve on two committees, except for the Board Chair who would serve on the Policy Committee and two other committees. The outline would remove the Justice & Social Services Committee because the business of that committee would be covered by the Nursing Home Board of Directors. McGinty would like to see a reduction in the size of the Board as an advisory question on this year's ballot to help guide the County Board. Knott said it is similar to the previous single member district question, in that it is an indicator, not an enforceable question.

Betz stated he thought they were skipping the whole process of goals and that this idea is a solution before the process has been done. Betz stated one of our values is racial diversity and Champaign County has one of the only racially diverse County Boards. He felt the County Board would lose its diversity with a reduction in its size. He thought they are coming to a solution before we have followed the process and it disturbed him. McGinty said the focus is on strategic planning. This is a side conversation between him and Knott that they wanted to bring to the table. Betz noted the subcommittee is nowhere near goals statements. He thought this goes outside of this process. Knott said they threw it out there to keep it in the mix. The ballot question would have to be decided by August, so this fits the timeframe. Weibel agreed with Betz because they have not set any goals about reducing the Board. Busey suggested it was too early to discuss this proposal because the subcommittee could start looking at goals. There are five months between now and August, by that time she hoped the strategic plan will be documented. This could be an outcome of a little bit later in the process. McGinty said he understood, but was concerned by time flying and progress is not made. Knott and McGinty were thinking aloud and are willing with have it go through process. Knott said he would not apologize for bringing an idea to the table because often members do not. Betz said it is too early to discuss and this could derail the entire thing. Knott said every county has its issues and they should not be afraid to talk about it. Betz said if they are going to talk about reducing the Board's size, then he wants to talk about every possible option of reducing it.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 5:42 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.*