

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
April 18, 2024

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, April 18, 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: Fortado, Greer, Locke, Lokshin, Peugh, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Esry, Farney, and Carter – 17; absent: Hanauer-Friedman, Michaels, Owen, and Rodriguez – 4; late: Cowart (arrived at 6:41, missing the Approval of Agenda/Addenda and Consent Agenda votes) – 1. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business. Five members departed early: Straub (at 7:47, missing the County Auditor's Presentation), Thorsland (at 8:23, during the County Auditor's Presentation), Rogers (shortly before 8:50, during the County Auditor's Presentation), Sexton (at 9:04, during the County Auditor's Presentation), and Farney (at 9:04, during the County Auditor's Presentation).

PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

County Executive Summers read 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 4, April 11, and April 17, 2024.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA

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

Board Member Farney offered an amendment to move up items XIV. A. 1. (Update from the ARPA Project Manager), 2. (St. Joseph Water Project Update and Request for Additional Funding), and 3. (Request for ARPA Funding – County Executive's Office – Market Study) to be placed between XII. (Areas of Responsibility) and XIII. (New Business); Board Member Wilson seconded. The amendment carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote.

DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Standing Committees:

- A. County Facilities Committee
Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- B. Environment & Land Use Committee
Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- C. Highway & Transportation Committee
Friday, May 10, 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, May 14, 2024 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

County Board:

- A. Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 6:30 PM
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Steve Becket was asked to speak later at item XII. A. 1. Adoption of Resolution No. 2024-99 Honoring Bruce Hannon – Naming the Bruce Hannon Memorial Courthouse Clock.

Mary King of Urbana spoke about employee whistleblower complaints about the County Auditor; she urged the board to support County employees and to censure County Auditor George Danos.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Member Locke offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Board Member Straub seconded. The motion comprising 29 resolutions (Nos. 2024-70, 2024-71, 2024-72, 2024-73, 2024-74, 2024-75, 2024-76, 2024-77, 2024-78, 2024-79, 2024-80, 2024-81, 2024-82, 2024-83, 2024-84, 2024-85, 2024-86, 2024-87, 2024-88, 2024-89, 2024-90, 2024-91, 2024-92, 2024-93, 2024-94, 2024-95, 2024-96, 2024-97, and 2024-98) carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Fortado, Greer, Locke, Lokshin, Peugh, Rogers, Sexton, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Esry, Farney, and Carter – 17

Nays: none

COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Rogers noted the upcoming floor signing event at the Urbana Park District's Health and Wellness Center on April 20, 2024, from 10 AM to noon; she also noted the Circuit Clerk's Office Amnesty Week program April 15-26, 2024.

Board Member Stohr noted the April 20, 2024, document shredding event at the State Farm Center; he also noted that April 22, 2024, is Earth Day and urged people to reduce, reuse, recycle, and refuse. County Executive Summers added that Black Dog Smoke and Ale House in Champaign uses paper straws instead of plastic.

Board Member Lokshin noted the Illinois Marathon events on April 25-27, 2024, which will result in street closures and detours throughout Champaign and Urbana.

Board Chair Carter noted that she had researched the rules and regulations of both the Champaign County Board Rules and state statutes for the county board chair position and stated that the County Board Rules will need to be updated.

Board Member Thorsland stated that April 19, 2024, is the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's (UIUC) Disability Resources and Educational Services' 75th anniversary; he also noted that in February and March, the State of California produced more than 100% of its energy from renewable sources.

Board Member Fortado stated that April 28, 2024, is the Workers Memorial Day, with an event at 2 PM at Dodds Park in Champaign; she also noted the upcoming, April 23, 2024, County Board Study Session for the proposed Public Safety Sales Tax.

Board Member Peugh noted the April 20, 2024, Boneyard Creek clean-up program and the April 22, 2024, African-American Heritage Trail tour on the UIUC campus. Board Member Locke read the UIUC press release.

Board Member Wilson spoke about his recent tour of the County Emergency Management Agency and MetCAD fire and law enforcement dispatch facilities.

Board Member Taylor noted that the County Auditor is always welcome to present on the Committee of the Whole agenda.

County Executive Summers noted a bill in the Illinois state legislature to allow County Assessors to post yearly assessments online in lieu of publishing in a print newspaper, adding that the cost of print newspaper publication is significant.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board of March 21, 2024; Board Member Straub 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 April 2, 2024, and the Highway and Transportation Committee on April 5, 2024, were received and placed on file.

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 April 9, 2024, was received and placed on file.

Board Member Stohr offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-99 honoring Bruce Hannon – naming the Bruce Hannon Memorial Courthouse Clock; Board Member Farney seconded. Steve Beckett of Urbana was invited to read the full resolution text. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on ARPA-funded projects, noting final payments for the St. Joseph wastewater project, the Justine Petersen loan program, and the Vision to Succeed violence prevention program. Board Member Wilson asked to have the ARPA quarterly reports available on the County website; Project Manager Larson stated that the quarterly reports are specifically formatted for submission to the Department of the Treasury and not in a manner to be readily understood by the general public. Board Member Wilson asked about the accrued interest on ARPA funds; Project Manager Larson stated the interest earned is not subject to ARPA reporting or rules. Board Member Fortado asked if there have been any extensions to Federal ARPA deadlines; Project Manager Larson stated that no deadlines have been extended. Board Chair Carter asked how much project spending is on track; Project Manager Larson stated the majority are on schedule. Board Member Smith asked about the County Board of Health senior study; Project Manager Larson discussed the two parts of the study, emphasizing the Advocates of Aging market study that was up for discussion at the meeting. Board Member Thorsland asked for an update on the rural broadband; Project Manager Larson stated the internet providers are waiting on state funding; County Executive read a statement about the project from the Farm Bureau; Board Member Fortado added that Findley Engineering provides weekly project updates to the Finance Committee. Board Member Stohr asked about progress with the low-hurdle grant program; Project Manager Larson stated that they are waiting on it. Board Member Lokshin asked for an update on the Central Illinois Land Bank project; Project Manager Larson stated they have funds to assist five to seven houses; County Executive Summers added the county is working to accelerate the work.

Joe Hackney, St. Joseph Village Administrator, presented an update on the St. Joseph wastewater project and requested additional funding for a flooding infrastructure improvement project. Board Member Fortado noted wetland grants are available for future, post-ARPA funding needs. Board Member Stohr asked about the village's contribution to wastewater project; Village Administrator Hackney estimated \$20-25 million in total, including bonds and sewage rate increases. Board Chair Carter asked how much funding is requested for the flooding infrastructure improvement project; Village Administrator Hackney stated he is seeking \$480,000 in ARPA funds. Board Member Fortado recommended the board further discuss the flooding infrastructure improvement project at the May Committee of the Whole meeting. County Director of Administration Michelle Jett was invited to join the discussion; she stated that County Administration will have ARPA funding requests at the May Committee of the Whole meeting.

Director Jett addressed the board about an additional \$15,000 for the nursing home market study. Various board members noted the importance of completing the study. County Executive Summers noted that no other entities—cities, villages, hospitals, or the university—within the county have contributed to the study, despite their also having interest in the results of the study. By a showing of thumbs, the board directed Project Manager to fund an additional \$15,000 for the study.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to approve a Recreation and Entertainment License for Araceli Gutierrez for a Spanish rodeo at the Champaign County Fairgrounds, 1302 N Coler Ave, Urbana, IL to be held May 5, 2024; Board Member Esry seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Taylor offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-100 authorizing payments of claims; Board Member Vanichtheeranont seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Chair Carter offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-101 approving purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Cowart seconded. Board Member Lokshin noted the extensive list; County Executive Summers stated the quantity of purchases is a result of an effort to be more comprehensive in reporting and the close of the fiscal year. Board Member Farney noted past purchasing list were much longer. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

County Auditor George Danos presented a state of county economics analysis, emphasizing the lack of need for a Public Safety Sales Tax. When completed, County Executive remarked on the disjointed format of the presentation and stated that Auditor Danos' cost estimates did not align with quotes or examples from similar counties and

include wild assumptions; Auditor Danos refuted County Executive Summers' accusations and the analysis of experts. Board Member Fortado refuted Auditor Danos' assumptions and explained the funding process for the Veteran's Assistance Commission (VAC). Board Member Lokshin asked from what source did the data come; Auditor Danos stated the data largely came from the Munis monthly summary reports, which he noted does not require him to log in to the Munis software. Board Member Locke stated that the role of the County Auditor is to audit accounts and detect potential fraud, and not to be a financial accountant or create alternative budgets for the county. Board Member Fortado discussed specifics of sales taxes, economic cycles, and county budgeting. Board Chair Carter and Board Member Stohr asked Auditor Danos to share his presentation and data with the County Board and invited him to present regularly at the monthly Committee of the Whole meetings; County Executive Summers requested the data before the April 23, 2024, Public Safety Sales Tax Study Session meeting. Board Member Lokshin asked about the request for County elected official salary increase; Auditor Danos stated he is requesting a 17.5% increase for official elected in 2024, to raise them above the salary of those elected in 2022, and he added that he will update his spreadsheets to reflect that salary increase. Various Board Members and Auditor Danos debated the proposed salary increase. Board Chair Carter and Board Member Locke discussed and disputed specifics of the Court and Sheriff's Office budget needs; Auditor Danos defended his budgeting data for the Sheriff's Office. Board Member Farney noted that a recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request showed Auditor Danos performing personal, political activity during work hours, using a county computer; Board Chair Carter objected to the relevance of the FOIA information to the county finance discussion; Board Member Fortado expressed exasperation at the personal, political activity at work. Director Jett was invited to join the discussion; Auditor Danos refused to continue if Director Jett was to speak and departed the meeting. Director Jett gave details refuting Auditor Danos' data on bond repayments, the Public Safety Sales Tax, and future tax projections.

ADJOURN

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 9:07 PM.



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