



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD AGENDA

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 – **6:15 p.m. *NOTE TIME**

Shields-Carter Meeting Room/Zoom

Brookens Administrative Center

1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order establishing a pandemic disaster in the State of Illinois that covers the County of Champaign, and the County Executive's determination that holding this meeting in person is not prudent at this time due to health concerns with rising numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations being reported in the county, this meeting will be held remotely via zoom. Public comment also will be taken remotely. The public may watch the meeting live or via recording on the County's [YouTube Channel](#).

Agenda Item

- I. Call to Order**
- II. *Roll Call**
- III. Read Notice of Meeting**
- IV. Approval of Agenda/Addenda**
- V. Public Participation**
 - Being accepted remotely through zoom – for instructions go to:
http://www.co.champaign.il.us/CountyBoard/CB/2021/210914_Special_Meeting/210914_Zoom_Instructions.pdf
- VI. Communications**
- VII. New Business**
 - A. Adoption of Resolution No. 2021-291 appointing Lola Jones as County Board Member in District 11 to fill Titianna Ammons' unexpired term ending November 30, 2021
 - B. Administration of Oath of Office to new County Board Member by County Clerk
- VIII. Other Business**
- IX. Adjourn**

All meetings are at Brookens Administrative Center – 1776 E Washington Street in Urbana – unless otherwise noted. To enter Brookens after 4:30 p.m., enter at the north (rear) entrance located off Lierman Avenue. Champaign County will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities. Please contact Administrative Services, 217-384-3776, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.



OFFICE OF THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY EXECUTIVE

1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois 61802-4581

Darlene A. Kloepfel, County Executive

MEMORANDUM

TO: County Board Members
FROM: Darlene Kloepfel, County Executive
DATE: September 3, 2021
RE: County Board District 11 Appointment

Following notification of the County Board and both political parties of a vacancy created by the resignation of County Board Member Titianna Ammons on August 10, 2021, and pursuant to the Executive's authority to make an appointment of a Democratic representative to complete this term, I am recommending appointment of Lola Jones to the vacant County Board District 11 seat expiring November 30, 2022.

By way of background, Ms. Jones has held positions as an Administrative Specialist with the Department of Human Services, a Dietary Worker for the Champaign County Nursing Home and the University of Illinois. She is currently a school bus driver, a lifetime resident of Champaign County and the elected Democratic precinct committeeperson for Urbana 3 precinct in County Board District 11.

Because I am not appointing the party's nomination in this case, for transparency I outline my decision points here.

- a) The Democratic Central Committee forwarded Wayne Williams as its nominee for this vacancy. In addition to Mr. Williams' role as the Second Vice Chair of the Democratic Central Committee and a precinct committeeperson in District 11, he is currently elected to serve as the Cunningham Township Assessor.

Questions arose as to whether a person could serve in two elected positions at the same time or in these two specific elected positions at the same time. Research found that *"It is lawful in Illinois for any person to hold the office of county board member and the office of township assessor or town clerk, simultaneously, in counties of less than 300,000 population"*. (50 ILCS 110/2) (from Ch. 102, par. 4.11) (Source: P.A. 90-748, eff. 8-14-98.)

Mr. Williams meets the state's statutory requirements for this appointment, however, continued legal controversy regarding the overlap of duties indicates that jointly serving as township assessor and county board member may not be best practice. The Township Assessor's work is reviewed by the Supervisor of Assessments and can be overturned by the Board of Review, both of which are offices that require County Board approval for confirmation of their officials' appointments and their budgets. Legal opinions argue the questionable advisability of jointly holding these two elected offices due to conflict of duties. I concur with this position.

In addition, the Champaign County *Officials' Code of Ethics* states that *county officials should 1) actively promote public confidence in county government and 2) should not engage in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties*, noting that even the appearance of conflicts are to be avoided.

- b) Of the 22 County Board Member seats, two currently sitting members are employees of Cunningham Township. Mr. Williams is the Cunningham Township Assessor, which would bring this total to three. Again, while statutorily allowed, I question whether concentration of board members from one organization is a good idea.
- c) My objections to appointing the proposed party nominee led me to see if other qualified applicants were or could be recruited. County Board District 11 consists of nine precincts in Champaign-Urbana north of University Ave. with over 17,000 residents and a very high percentage of active Democrats. I find it unusual to have only one applicant for appointments that have per diem stipends and a large pool from which to recruit.

Possibly limiting the number of applicants, I learned one of the five precinct committeepersons voting was appointed by the central committee chair rather than elected and does not live in District 11 (allowed by election code but not ideal for knowing constituents); internal party conflict is significant; and I was surprised to hear that Lorraine Cowart, who is the other sitting board member for District 11, was not consulted nor present to vote. I made two phone calls, which generated an additional qualified applicant.

This due diligence process follows precedent of past County Board Chairs in making appointments, which have not always conformed to the party's nominees. Democratic governance provides for appropriate checks and balances requiring that there be at least some level of agreement between the party, the County Executive and the County Board to complete the appointment process successfully.

I am requesting County Board confirmation of the appointment of Lola Jones to the County Board District 11 seat.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-291

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING LOLA JONES AS A COUNTY BOARD MEMBER
IN DISTRICT II TO FILL TITIANNA AMMONS' UNEXPIRED TERM
ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2022

WHEREAS, Titianna Ammons, a County Board Member in District II for Champaign County with a term ending November 30, 2022, submitted her resignation from that office effective August 10, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to 55 ILCS 5/2, when a vacancy occurs in any elective county office, the County Executive shall declare that such vacancy exists and notification thereof shall be given to the county central committee of each established political party, and the vacancy shall be filled within 60 days by appointment of the County Executive with the advice and consent of the county board; and

WHEREAS, The Champaign County Executive sent notification of the vacancy to the county central committee of each established political party; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive recommends the appointment of Lola Jones to fill the unexpired term of County Board Member in District II ending on November 30, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive also recommends the appointment of Lola Jones to serve as a member of the Highway Committee replacing Titianna Ammons;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED By the County Board of Champaign County that the appointment of Lola Jones to fill the unexpired term ending November 30, 2022 of Champaign County Board Member District II, is hereby approved.

PRESENTED, PASSED, APPROVED, AND RECORDED this 14th day of September A.D. 2021.

Kyle Patterson, Chair
Champaign County Board

Recorded
& Attest: _____
Aaron Ammons, County Clerk
and ex-officio Clerk of the
Champaign County Board
Date: _____

Approved: _____
Darlene A. Kloepfel, County Executive
Date: _____