

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
August 21, 2025

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 6:30 PM in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center, 102 East Main Street, Urbana, Illinois, Board Chair Jennifer Locke presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call showed the following members present: Rodriguez, Sexton, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Esry, Farney, Fava, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, Peugh and Locke – 19; absent: Carter, Rogers, and Thorsland– 3. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business. Board Member Crane departed early shortly before 8:08, missing the final vote on Resolution No. 2025-247.

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Board Chair Locke asked for a moment of silent reflection about county service, 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 7, August 14, and August 20, 2025.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA**

Board Member Esry offered a motion to adopt the Agenda; Board Member Lokshin seconded.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to amend the agenda to strike item XIII. A. 2. Adoption of Resolution No. 2025-240, and to move item X. Board Member Communications to follow XV. Other Business, and to move items XV A.-C (American Rescue Plan Act, Grant Coordinator Update, and Opioid Settlement Task Force) to follow XVIII. (Public Input); Board Member Cagle seconded. Board Member Wilson asked why Resolution No. 2025-240 was being struck; Board Member Vanichtheeranont stated that the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal employees (AFSCME) had filed a grievance relating to the proposed resolution; Board Chair Locke added that it would be inappropriate to discuss the issue until the grievance has been resolved. The motion to amend the Agenda carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote. Following the vote IX. Consent Agenda and XI. Approval of minutes were inadvertently moved to follow item XII. B. 1. Resolution No. 2025-238.

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

### **Standing Committees:**

- A. County Facilities Committee  
Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center
- B. Environment and Land Use Committee  
Thursday, September 4, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center
- C. Highway and Transportation Committee  
Friday, September 5, 2025 at 9:00 AM  
1605 E Main St, Urbana

### **Committee of the Whole:**

- A. Justice and Social Services; Policy, Personnel, and Appointments; Finance  
Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center
- B. Special Finance Committee of the Whole  
Tuesday, September 30, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center

### **County Board:**

- A. Regular Meeting  
Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Bennett Administrative Center

## **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-236 honoring county employees for years of service; Board Member Farney seconded. Board Member Vanichtheeranont read the entire text of the resolution. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-237 honoring retiring county employees; Board Member Lokshin seconded. Board Member Wilson spoke about employees' dedication to county service, exemplified by their long tenures.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

County Auditor George Danos spoke against Resolution No. 2025-247, arguing that County Administration would usurp the functions of the elected Auditor's Office

John Bambanek, of Mahomet, spoke about alleged corruption by the county for leasing Brookens office space to company associated with a Board Member and stated that he has filed document request via the Freedom of Information Act.

Sanford Hess, of Champaign and Democratic candidate for County Executive, spoke against the creation of a finance department within County Administration; he shared his experiences with various county finance departments and compared and contrasted them with the Champaign County plan for a finance department.

Bud Windelborn, State's Attorney's Office Operations Manager, spoke about the upcoming Scott Bennett Family Resources Day at Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana on August 22, 2025.

Cece Phillips, Circuit Clerk's Office employee and AFSCME Local 900 President, spoke about the need to reevaluate county employee job descriptions, titles, and wage scales, as many are outdated.

Nathanael Jones was called to speak but was no longer present.

### **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT**

ARPA Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on various ARPA projects, noting the comprehensive memorandum in the Agenda Packet. Board Chair Locke asked about the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) small business project; Project Manager Larson stated that the application deadline is August 22, 2025, and she anticipates the EDC to evaluate those applications in September.

### **GRANT COORDINATOR UPDATE**

County Grant Coordinator Kait Kuzio presented two videos showcasing the county, noting all five videos are available for viewing on the county website. She spoke about securing grant funds to cover multiple employees pay. She also spoke about the difficulties in performing her job due to deficiencies of the Auditor's Office, especially the county being placed on the stop payment list due to the late County Audit, which not only prevented the county from receiving grant funds for three months but also prevented applying for additional grants. Board Member Farney noted that 25 people recently attended a firearms safety training in St. Joseph and thanked Grant Coordinator Kuzio for making that possible. Board Member Wilson asked if Grant Coordinator Kuzio felt that her job was in jeopardy due to the failures of the Auditor; Grant Coordinator Kuzio declined to answer.

### **OPIOID SETTLEMENT TASK FORCE**

Board Member Farney offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-244 approving an agreement between the County of Champaign and the Broadlands-Longview Fire Protection District; Board Member Wiggs seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Sexton offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-245 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2025/7/473 appropriating funds for the agreement with the Broadlands-Longview Fire Protection District; Board Member Esry seconded. Board Member Esry thanked Clayton Bosch for bringing the issue to the Board and invited other fire departments to do the same. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote:

Yeas: Rodriguez, Sexton, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Esry, Farney, Fava, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, Peugh, and Locke – 19

Nays: none

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Board Chair Locke noted that the Summaries of Action Taken for the County Facilities Committee of August 5, 2025, and Environment and Land Use Committees of August 7, 2025, were received and placed on file.

Board Member Esry offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-238 approving subdivision case 207-25, Ray's Minor Subdivision; Board Member Farney seconded. Board Member Votava asked for updates on the soil report discrepancies; no member provided an answer. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Board Chair Locke noted that the Consent Agenda and the Approval of Minutes were both inadvertently skipped. Board Member Esry offered a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda; Board Member Lokshin seconded. The motion consisting of 17 resolutions (Nos. 2025-219, 2025-220, 2025-221, 2025-222, 2025-223, 2025-224, 2025-225, 2025-226, 2025-227, 2025-228, 2025-229, 2025-230, 2025-231, 2025-232, 2025-233, 2025-234, and 2025-235) and one ordinance (No. 2025-10) carried by unanimous roll-call vote:

Yeas: Rodriguez, Sexton, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Esry, Farney, Fava, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, Peugh, and Locke – 19

Nays: none

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Member Esry offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board on March 20, 2025; Board Member Sexton seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Wilson offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board on July 24, 2025; Board Member Crane seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES (continued)**

Board Chair Locke noted the Summary of Action Taken at the August 8, 2025, Highway and Transportation Committee Meeting was received and placed on file.

### **AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Board Chair Locke noted the Summary of Action Taken at the August 12, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting (Justice and Social Services; Finance; *and* Policy Personnel, and Appointments) was received and place on file.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-239 amending the schedule of authorized position in the Physical Plant Department – Building Supervisor; Board Member Lokshin seconded. Board Member Farney spoke about the issues with both the Brookens building and the proposed building supervisor position: he noted great financial cost of various improvements and repairs identified in 2023, stating that the County's General Fund cannot support the long-term maintenance; he noted that in light of this, the Building Supervisor position is not well planned; and he added that the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) will need to be relocated to a suitable building in the near future. Board Members Wilson and Peugh both agreed with Board Member Farney's assessment of the Brookens building, and Board Member Peugh suggested that a sale of the building could have a clause keeping RPC in the building. Board Member Farney read a statement from retired Board Member Jim Goss in support of selling Brookens and recommended the County hire a broker/commercial manager to market the building. Board Member Fortado spoke about RPC's difficulty in finding a new office lease due to their grant funding but stated that Brookens will need to be sold at some point in the future; she agreed with Mr. Goss's suggestion to hire a commercial manager; and she proposed postponing the decision on the Building Supervisor position to evaluate the options.

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to table the resolution until the October 23, 2025, County Board Meeting; Board Member Vanichtheeranont seconded. Board Member Rodriguez stated that she was abstaining from any votes associated with the Brookens building. Board Member Peugh requested that the County have a commercial broker evaluate the building. Director of Administration Michelle Jett was invited to join the discussion; she stated that the county had previously started the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for a broker but the tenuous grant funding climate for RPC had caused the county to end the RFP prematurely. Board Member Lokshin raised a point of order as Board Member Peugh's discussion was not germane to the motion to table the resolution.

The motion to table Resolution No. 2025-239 until the October Regular County Board Meeting carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-241 authorizing payment of claims; Board Member Fortado seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Sullard offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-242 authorizing purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Lokshin seconded.

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered an amendment to strike the State's Attorney item under Inappropriate Use of County Funds, as she felt it was an appropriate expenditure in compliance with County Purchasing Policy; Board Member Farney seconded. The motion to amend the resolution carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion to adopt the resolution as amended carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-243 Budget Amendment BUA 2025/5/41 to cover the anticipated shortfall for autopsy services; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. Board Member Wilson asked for the current, actual budget shortfall; Board Chair Locke stated that it was \$18,000 and added that the Coroner had budgeted to hire a medical examiner but had not yet done so, causing the work to be outsourced. Board Member Farney added that the Coroner had already spent approximately \$160,000 on autopsy services. carried by unanimous roll-call vote:

Yeas: Rodriguez, Sexton, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Esry, Farney, Fava, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, Peugh, and Locke – 19

Nays: none

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Board Member Cagle offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-246 approving changes to the employee health insurance and related benefit plans for FY2025; Board Member Esry seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Sullard offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-247 creating a Finance Division and amending the Schedule of Authorized Positions in the Administrative Services Department of the County Executive's Office; Board Member Lokshin seconded.

Board Member Hanauer-Friedman offered an amendment to specify Salary Grade F as the Grade Range in paragraphs six and seven; Board Member Sexton seconded. The motion to amend the resolution carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Peugh expressed a desire for more time to consider the resolution. Board Member Wilson expressed surprise that the resolution was placed on the agenda as the discussion in Committee of the Whole was unresolved; he wanted to know what roles of the Finance Division would be duplicated with those of the Auditor's Office; and he stated an opposition to creating county growth without a full examination of the

needs and functions.

Board Member Wilson moved to table the resolution until the October 23, 2025, County Board Meeting; Board Member Farney seconded. The motion to table failed by roll-call vote:

Yeas: Sexton, Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, Crane, Esry, Farney, and Peugh – 8

Nays: Rodriguez, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Fava,

Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, and Locke – 11

Board Members Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, and Rodriguez stated that the Finance Division creation was an urgent need as the County finances were not functioning; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman added that the blame falls on the Auditor himself and not the staff of the Auditor's Office. Board Member Farney asked when the changes would occur; Director Jett was invited to join the discussion and stated the Finance Division would begin September 29, 2025. Board Member Farney asked if the Auditor would be able to hire new staff in the interim; Director Jett stated that the State's Attorney would need to be consulted. Board Member Farney requested a closed session to discuss the legal issues with the State's Attorney at the next Committee of the Whole on September 9, 2025. Board Member Fortado stated that authorizing the creation of the Finance Division is just the first of a multi-step process. Board Member Wilson asked if the County's proposal complies with relevant laws and asked why the State's Attorney had not yet been consulted; Director Jett stated that the State's Attorney is aware but had not provided comment; Board Member Wilson stated that the Board needed the legal opinion of the State's Attorney. Board Member Cagle asked if the Board must overtly request the State's Attorney to provide an opinion; Board Members Hanauer-Friedman and Cowart stated that the State's Attorney will provide preemptive comments. State's Attorney's Office Civil Division Chief Andrew Bequette was invited to join the discussion; he stated that the State's Attorney does not typically insert themselves into discussions but will note when discussions are blatantly illegal. Chief Bequette stated that the State's Attorney has not thoroughly reviewed the resolution, but it appeared to be a largely political and not legal issue; he noted that the State's Attorney does not endorse or oppose the resolution but, on the surface, it does not appear to be blatantly illegal. Board Member Fava asked what will happen to the Auditor position; Director Jett stated that would be a future Board decision. Board Chair Locke stated that County Auditor George Danos was elected to audit and the Board is within their rights to remove non-auditing responsibilities from the Auditor, which will free up the Auditor to focus on the core function of the office. The motion to approve the resolution, as amended, carried by roll-call vote:

Yeas: Rodriguez, Sexton, Sullard, Vanichtheeranont, Votava, Wiggs, Esry,  
Farney, Fava, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Lokshin, and Locke –  
14

Nays: Wilson, Cagle, Cowart, and Peugh – 4

Absent: Crane – 1

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Board Member Wilson noted the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment granting women's suffrage.

Board Member Fortado spoke about the work women had done through activism, agency, and personal risk to achieve suffrage.

Board Member Sullard promoted Men Wear Pink breast cancer advocacy. He also spoke about the recent rescue of a drowning child by Marcus Pierson.

Board Member Esry spoke about the Half Century of Progress farm show in Rantoul, August 21-24, 2025, coinciding with the Farm Progress Show exposition in Decatur.

**ADJOURN**

Board Chair Locke adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron Ammons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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