



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD**  
**SPECIAL FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois  
Tuesday, September 24, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.

Shields-Carter Meeting Room  
Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois

---

**MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on October 15, 2024**

---

**Members Present:** Samantha Carter, Lorraine Cowart, Aaron Esry, John Farney, Stephanie Fortado, Elly Hanauer-Friedman, Jennifer Locke, Jenny Lokshin, Diane Michaels, Brett Peugh, Emily Rodriguez, Jilmala Rogers, Mike Smith, Chris Stohr, Jennifer Straub, Leah Taylor, Eric Thorsland, Bethany Vanichtheeranont and Jeff Wilson

**Members Absent:** Carolyn Greer, Donald Owen, and Tom ‘Ed’ Sexton

**Others Present:** Steve Summers (County Executive), Michelle Jett (Director of Administration), Travis Woodcock (Budget Director), Cassandra Johnson (Treasurer), Stephen Thuney (Coroner), and Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

---

**Agenda Items**

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Fortado called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

**III. Approval of Agenda/Addenda**

**MOTION** by Ms. Straub to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Locke. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment on the Proposed FY2025 Budget**

None

**V. Communications**

Mr. Peugh reminded everyone that the Illini men and women’s hockey games will be starting soon and are an affordable sporting option for anyone that wants to attend.

Ms. Hanauer-Friedman entered the meeting.

Ms. Rogers entered the meeting.

**VI. Discussion and Decisions Regarding FY2025 Budget**

Chair Fortado reminded everyone they are currently budgeting in the deficit, to take into account the recurring costs of a decision and that the fund balance directly effects the County’s bond rating.

Ms. Rodriguez entered the meeting.

A. FY2025 Decision Points

Mr. Woodcock began by sharing an update about his meeting with Moody's today and the credit rating will be coming soon. He clarified the different types of fund balance calculations and explained that the County uses budgetary, not gap, fund balance and why.

Moving on to the FY2025 budget Mr. Woodcock explained that revenue is expected to be lower in 2025 due to lower interest and inflation rates. The current budget has a \$2.5 million deficit that is split between the General Fund and Public Safety Sales Tax Fund balance. He listed the major items that are already included in the budget.

Chair Fortado explained that they have been saving the \$2 million for the replacement of the court management system, which will take place in 2025, and the remaining \$500,000 is deficit budgeting. Ms. Fortado suggested placing more of the deficit on the Public Safety Sales Tax Fund to raise the General Fund balance. Board members continued to discuss this suggestion. Ms. Jett explained the downside to this decision would be that there won't be any additional funds available if the court management system costs more than anticipated. Board members agreed to placing more of the deficit on the Public Safety Sales Tax Fund.

Next, the Board members discussed the revenue options, Waste Hauler License Fees and the GIS Recording Fees. Discussion continued about ways to gradually raise the waste hauler fees versus a large increase. Everyone agreed that the fee needs to be raised and wants to see that go to ELUC for discussions and recommendation. No one spoke in opposition to raising the GIS Recording Fee.

Over the last several months there have been many requests for additional expenditures. Looking through the list of requests, the Board members selected all of the items they wanted to discuss funding in 2025 even if there isn't any additional revenue. After making their selections, they discussed each one individually.

Circuit Clerk Digitization Project – they discussed space needs, the potential loss of important documents and the possibility of grant funding. While they understand this is an important project that needs to be completed, there are more crucial funding requests and very limited funding.

Trauma Counselor – this is a great idea, but more research needs to be completed before funding.

Probation Officer – Board members discussed the overwhelming caseloads in this department and the lack of funds for a recurring cost like this. Due to recent changes in legislation, the requirements of the criminal justice system have grown, and these departments need more funding to successfully complete those requirements. After a show of hands, the majority of Board members want to fund this position.

The Board members decided the next items under consideration were the ones without recurring costs. They discussed the PREA doors for JDC, ballistic vests for the Sheriff's Office, a new K9 officer and the expert witness funds for the Public Defender. A decision was made to fund the PREA doors and the ballistic vests from the Public Safety Sales Tax Fund. Since there are other K9 officers in the area, they are not funding that item at this time, and they moved the expert witness discussion to the ARPA section.

The discussion moved back to the items on the list that have recurring costs. After discussing the requests for more attorneys in the Public Defender's Office and replacing a Sheriff Deputy position that was upgraded to Sergeant, the Board members decided not to fund these requests due to the recurring costs and limited funding in future years.

Attorney in the State's Attorney's Office – this position is being funded at 80% by the Adult Redeploy Grant and the State's Attorney is requesting the County to cover the remaining costs to make this a full-time position. After recalling the details of this arrangement, the Board members wish to fund the remaining 20% of this position.

Personal printers in the State's Attorney's Office – staff requested for the Board to allow the IT Department to work with our current vendor to fix the issues that were brought to them or to find a new vendor that could provide a better arrangement for the County. Board members agreed and do not wish to fund this request at this time.

Supervisor of Assessment's Salary – comparables show that the current Supervisor of Assessments is underpaid, she has been a great employee, has been in the position for several years and the salary is partially reimbursed by the state. The Board would like to fund a salary increase for this position.

After making all of these changes they are now at a \$2.7 million total deficit across both funds and the General Fund Balance is at 27%.

**B. American Rescue Plan Act Funding**

They moved on to discuss allocation of the remaining ARPA funds. Ms. Jett explained that the Pesotum Consolidated Drainage District is having difficulties obtaining their UEI number from the Federal Government. Mr. Farney has pushed their attorney to get this completed and is confident it will be done soon.

The County funded a digitization project with ARPA funds for several different departments. Currently, this project needs an additional \$409,000 to be fully completed. Clerk Ammons has offered reallocate some of his unused ARPA funds and contribute funds from his Recorder Automation Fund to cover this shortfall. This would only leave a shortfall of \$269,000.

Mr. Farney just received final numbers from the Village of Ludlow. They need \$108,000 to complete the project for their drinking water within the Village. This project has been paid for by Village funds, USDA Loans and grant funds. This project is ready to go as soon as funding is approved.

Mr. Peugh left the meeting.

Ms. Vanichtheeranont suggested approving allocation of funds for the digitization project and the Village of Ludlow water project. No one spoke in opposition to that proposal.

Ms. Fortado mentioned the requests from Urbana Connections and the one from Reverend Comer. Each group is asking for funding for a van for transportation to and from events. Ms. Carter spoke about the great work these two groups are doing with the youth in our community. Ms. Fortado proposed that they fund both requests for transportation, with the overage coming from the ARPA interest. No one spoke in opposition to that proposal.

Ms. Fortado also suggested funding the Public Defender's request for expert witness funds in the amount of \$35,000 from the ARPA interest and the Board members agreed. They also agreed to allow the remaining ARPA interest to grow in case it is needed in the future.

**VII. Other Business**

None

**VIII. Adjournment**

Chair Fortado adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.