



**Champaign County Board
Environment and Land Use Committee (ELUC)
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois**

MINUTES – Approved As Distributed

DATE: Thursday, October 10, 2024
 TIME: 6:30 p.m.
 PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
 Brookens Administrative Center
 1776 E Washington, Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members

Present	Absent
Aaron Esry (Vice-Chair)	
John Farney	
Donald Owen	
Emily Rodriguez	
	Jilmala Rogers
Chris Stohr	
Eric Thorsland (Chair)	

County Staff: Steve Summers (County Executive) John Hall (Zoning Administrator) and Liz Dillingham (Administrative Services)

Others Present: None

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Thorsland called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

II. Roll Call

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

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Farney to approve the agenda and seconded by Mr. Owen.
 Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. August 8, 2024 – Regular Meeting

MOTION by Mr. Esry to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2024, regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Farney. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the minutes.

V. Public Participation

Andrew Rehn spoke about protecting our sole source of water supply from the Mahomet Aquifer which serves a million people. Andrew is the Climate Policy Director for Prairie Rivers Network. Mr. Rehn stated if our precious water source is impacted, the users would not have a reasonable alternative for drinking water. Threat to the Mahomet Aquifer are carbon sequestration and pollutants. Ultimately, Co2 is injected into the wells. He opposes storage under the Aquifer. He explained the existing regulations, threats, leak risks such as ADM, and processes.

Mayor Diane Marlin, City of Urbana Mayor, also supports a moratorium on carbon sequestration in and under the entire Mahomet Aquifer which serves fifteen counties in Illinois. She indicated the Mahomet Aquifer is the sole source of water in the area and needs protected. The aquifer task force has been working on this issue as well. She talked about mapping of the aquifer, which is like an M.R.I. She echoed Mr. Rehn's concerns and supports a ban on projects which would destroy the aquifer.

Chibu Asonye, Vijay Shah, Joe Hooker, Tom Yu, on behalf of City of Champaign Mayor Debra Frank Feinen, Dr. Anna Nesbitt, Ted Hartke, Elizabeth Kirby, and Harold Diamond are all in support of protecting the Mahomet Aquifer and they support a ban on carbon sequestration activity in Champaign County.

Alison Harper, resident of 2306 S. Mattis, stated she moved her hobby farm 20 minutes from her residence. She is in support of agriculture on private property and defends Champaign County residents raising their own livestock for nutritious reasons. She stated it is difficult to find farmland and discussed the challenges of obtaining water and electricity. She asked the board to think about increasing the number of chickens and allowing various species of agriculture on private property within the city.

Mr. Thorsland asked if anyone else wanted to speak and no one did so he closed Public Participation.

VI. Communications

Mr. Stohr mentioned the Residential Electronic Collection event is this weekend.

VII. New Business: Items For Information Only

- A. **Places may still be available for the Residential Electronic Collection Event at Parkland College from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, October 12, 2024.**

Mr. Hall stated all time slots are full but encouraged citizens to register in case there are cancellations, and they can work additional citizens in. There will be another event next May.

VIII. New Business: Items to be Approved by ELUC

A. Recreation & Entertainment License for Gordyville USA, LLC d.b.a. Corner Concessions (under new ownership), 2205 CR 3000 N Gifford IL

MOTION by Mr. Farney to approve Recreation & Entertainment License and seconded by Mr. Esry. Upon voice vote, **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

B. Authorization for a public hearing on a proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment to establish a safety moratorium on carbon sequestration activity in Champaign County

There was a discussion between all committee members who support the ban on carbon sequestration activity in Champaign County.

Dr. Stohr initiated and presented the Carbon sequestration topic before the board several months ago. He stated it is risky to inject the carbon dioxide beneath the sole source Aquifer. He feels there might be other safe places outside the Aquifer that would be safer. It is a matter of concern, and he agrees with some of the public speakers. He believes it deserves more time for gathering thoughtful information in Illinois and around the world. This will be a large undertaking for the Champaign County Board. He urges his fellow board members to look upon this subject favorably.

Ms. Rodriguez acknowledged Ms. Harper and thanked her for showing up consistently to all the previous board meetings and finds her presentations informative. She also thanked Vijay Shah, U of I grad student for attending tonight's meeting. She was appreciative of both the Urbana and Champaign Mayors who were in attendance, as well as the other participants. Ms. Rodriguez is whole heartedly happy to protect the aquifer.

Mr. Owen appreciates the public participation and residents who are educated on the carbon sequestration topic. He fully supports the moratorium. He clarified with Mr. Hall this is a 365 day temporary moratorium while ensuring there will be hearings and things put in place to protect the aquifer while working on a permanent amendment.

Mr. Hall confirmed he is correct and added the moratorium will have to go through the public hearing at the ZBA. It will be a long road to develop the final amendment.

Mr. Farney echoes previous comments and fully supports the moratorium. He commented on the handout from representative Ammons. He stated the County Board is fixing problems that Springfield created.

Mr. Esry fully supports a moratorium. He does not personally use the aquifer water source. He agrees the process will be long but is necessary.

Mr. Stohr spoke about the local legislators that worked very hard to ensure sole source aquifers are exempt from the bill that was passed and signed this past summer. They were disappointed the pleas did not make the final passage. Watchdog groups told him they thought the bill provided protection. Mr. Stohr stated he has support from Representative Ammons & Senator Faraci in that they would like to see Champaign County to enact a moratorium to give them more time to enact a bill through

the legislature.

Mr. Thorsland spoke about how important it is to protect our climate as water is fundamental to life. He spoke about Mclean County, IL and all the other towns over the aquifer wanting to protect it. He also thanked Ms. Harper for her presentations. He appreciated Dr. Nesbitt and Vijay Shah. He explained the process and the pending vote to forward the text amendment to establish a temporary moratorium discussion to the ZBA. The soonest this topic would hit the Full County Board would be Thursday, February 20, 2025.

Mr. Stohr thanked Mr. Hall for his expeditious draft and hard work.

Mr. Hall recognized the State's Attorney's office for their great help & assistance.

MOTION by Mr. Owen to approve a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to establish a safety moratorium on carbon sequestration activity in Champaign County seconded by Mr. Stohr. Upon voice vote, **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

IX. Other Business

A. Discussion of Solid Waste Hauler License Fee

The ELUC committee discussed increasing the fees due to the budget projections. The cost of the license is currently \$35.00 and there has not been an increase in fees for 16 years. This fee was comparable to other counties back then.

Mr. Hall explained the current balance from the funds we receive from Solid Waste License Fees for the 2025 projections will not be enough to hold events like Household Hazardous & Electronic Waste Collection. The cost is \$10,000 total.

Mr. Summers originally thought some members of the board would like to go with incremental increases. The budget will be tight next year, and this will not work. He suggested the best course of action would be to move forward with the increase as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Thorsland asked Mr. Hall what the ideal rate would be to keep the events going as they are popular. He also mentioned the County attempts to be very considerate of the end user.

Mr. Hall said the information he has from the Budget meeting indicates the stickers would go from \$35.00 to \$145.00. Some companies get more than a dozen stickers. He will re-calculate the amount, but he is confident each sticker will be more than \$100.00. All companies would be notified before an increase is presented to the committee.

Mr. Stohr said \$35.00 a truck is ridiculously low. He believes at a minimum; it should be \$55.00 on top of the \$35.00. He agrees it is a big jump but not unreasonable.

Mr. Farney inquired about a list of all the fees the County collects (notary, birth certificates, etc.) to see how \$145.00 fee fits into the mix. He stated all these need to be looked at due to the tight budget next year and the foreseeable future. He concurs with Mr. Stohr.

Mr. Summers stated the liquor license fee has not been raised in sixteen years. The topic will be looked at soon.

Mr. Esry has no problem requesting an increase since the cost of everything has gone up. He requests whatever we do, to make the increase sustainable for the next foreseeable future of 5-10 years.

Mr. Owen agrees with Mr. Esry and does not feel this is an unreasonable jump for the companies involved.

Mr. Thorsland feels it is best just to increase the fee and ensure the amount decided upon is an amount that doesn't need increased in a few years.

Mr. Summers stated garbage hauling fees are \$100.00 per vehicle in Champaign, IL.

Mr. Owen suggested moving the fee all the way up now.

Mr. Hall will have the Solid Waste Hauler License Fee topic on the agenda next month.

The ELUC committee discussed the pros & cons of increasing the fees all at once due to the budget projections. The cost of the license is currently \$35.00 and there has not been an increase in fees for 16 years. This fee was comparable to other counties back then. Landfill locations were discussed, and Mr. Ted Hartke confirmed Hoopston is closed.

B. Monthly Reports-None

X. Chair's Report- None

XI. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda-None

XII. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.