



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD

LABOR COMMITTEE

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 – 4:30 p.m.

Jennifer Putman Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

Committee Members:

Emily Rodriguez – Chair
Aaron Esry
John Farney – Vice Chair
Stephanie Fortado
Donald Owen

Agenda Items

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Roll Call**
- III. **Approval of Agenda**
- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. April 11, 2024
- V. **Public Participation**
- VI. **New Business**
 - A. Resolution Censuring Champaign County Auditor George P. Danos for Failure to Serve as an Independent Watchdog of County Taxpayer Funds and Conduct Unbecoming an Elected Official
- VII. **Other Business**
- VIII. **Adjournment**

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.



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County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois
Thursday, April 11, 2024 – 4:30 p.m.

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10 **MINUTES – Subject to Approval**

11 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Aaron Esry, John Farney (Vice Chair), Don Owen, Emily Rodriguez
12 (Chair),

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14 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Stephanie Fortado

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16 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Leah Taylor (County Board Member), Jenny Lokshin (County Board
17 Member), Steve Summers (County Executive), Michelle Jett
18 (Director of Administration) and Megan Robison (Recording
19 Secretary)

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21 **Agenda Items**

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23 **I. Call to Order**

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25 Chair Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

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27 **II. Roll Call**

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29 A verbal roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

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31 **III. Approval of Agenda**

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33 **MOTION** by Mr. Farney to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Owen. Upon vote, the
34 **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

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36 **IV. Approval of Minutes**

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A. February 2, 2023

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39 B. **MOTION** by Mr. Esry to approve the minutes of February 2, 2023; seconded by Mr.
40 Farney. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously with Mr. Owen abstaining.

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42 **V. Public Participation**

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VI. New Business

A. Response to concerns about Champaign County Auditor’s Office

Chair Rodriguez explained she would like to first start with a discussion about any questions, ideas, thoughts that Committee Members may have about this topic. In particular, any questions they may have for the State’s Attorney’s Office to determine what levers they have at their disposal.

Mr. Farney stated he does have a long list of questions for the State’s Attorney’s Office because he worries that the County is open to litigation because of the County Auditor’s actions. He has meetings set to talk with employees in the office who are experiencing things first-hand. He wants to ensure the well-being of the employees but also doesn’t want crucial staff members leaving in the middle of the annual audit.

Mr. Owen believes it is the role of County Board Members to ensure that the employees are protected, and the workplace is not hostile. He questioned what the Board can do, without overstepping, to protect the employees under an elected official. He believes they really need to focus on what they want the County Auditor to do.

Ms. Jett discussed with the Committee members the oversight that they do and don’t have in regard to an elected official’s office.

B. Review of draft response to Champaign County Auditor’s Office

Mr. Farney explained the draft resolution has been created using censure resolutions passed in Madison County and Tazwell County.

Committee members discussed changes and reordering of items in the draft resolution. Ultimately, they decided to send the draft and a list of questions to the State’s Attorney’s Office for review.

VII. Other Business

A. Approval of closed session minutes

- 1. February 2, 2023

MOTION by Mr. Esry to approve the closed session minutes of February 2, 2023; seconded by Mr. Farney. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously with Mr. Owen abstaining.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Rodriguez adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-XX CENSURING CHAMPAIGN COUNTY AUDITOR
GEORGE P. DANOS FOR FAILURE TO SERVE AS AN INDEPENDENT WATCHDOG OF
COUNTY TAXPAYER FUNDS AND CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL**

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board is committed to the vision to be a recognized leader in local government where every official and employee has a personal devotion to excellence in public service and embraces the highest standards of ethics and integrity to serve the citizens of Champaign County; and

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board, as the elected representatives of the citizens of Champaign County, expects all elected officials to hold themselves to the highest ethical behavior; to perform their job duties to the highest standards of excellence; to maintain a level of professionalism that allows for efficient operation of county offices; to act in a professional way with fellow elected officials, county employees, and the public; to be stewards of county resources, both financial and operational assets, utilizing the public dollar and public equipment to fulfill a mission of public service; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County has some of the finest employees in the State of Illinois who work in important, highly stressful positions, and should be allowed to perform their duties without the fear of supervisory misconduct, harassment, or other impediment; and

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board strives to provide a safe working environment for all employees by being committed to the highest standards of conduct by, and among, County officials in the performance of their public duties; and

WHEREAS, individual and collective adherence to high ethical standards by public officials is central to the maintenance of public trust and confidence in government; and

WHEREAS, trust between the Champaign County Board, its employees; and its elected officials is vital to a healthy, functioning government; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, in violation of the Champaign County Technology Policy and the Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, maintained sexually explicit images on county owned equipment and viewed an image of an inappropriate nature during work hours where it was witnessed by an employee; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, has documented log-ins into Champaign County Munis Software on 20 of 461 days between January 1, 2023 and April 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, failed to complete the annual audit within statutory time lines in 2018 and 2019, with the 2019 audit being so delinquent, Champaign County was placed on a “stop payment” list by the Illinois Department of Economic Opportunity, which Danos did not disclose to the County Board, the adverse action being only discovered when the Regional Planning Commission requested

emergency funding from the County to ensure the uninterrupted provision of services to our community's most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, in violation of Article VIII of the Illinois State Constitution, State Officials and Employees Ethics Act 5 ILCS 430, and the Champaign County Ethics Ordinance 719, has been documented utilizing his county office and county owned equipment for the commission of prohibited political activities; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, in violation of the Champaign County Travel & Business Expense Ordinance 2022-10 purposely and knowingly submitted request for reimbursement for expenses that he did not incur in the commission of his duties as County Auditor; pressured employees of the County Auditor's Office to issue reimbursement for expenses that he did not incur in the commission of his duties as County Auditor; and

WHEREAS, the actions of Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, have created a work environment the County Board does not condone or support; and

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board seeks to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board seeks to make Champaign County government a safe working environment, free of harassment and misconduct for all employees.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Champaign County Board does hereby formally censure Champaign County Auditor, George P. Danos, for his repeated violation of the Illinois State Constitution, the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, and the Champaign County Ethics Ordinance, Travel & Business Expense Ordinance, the Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, and the Technology Policy, for his misuse of county resources; for his failure to uphold ethical standards of an elected official; and for conduct unbecoming a county official;.

PASSED THIS 23rd DAY OF MAY 2024.

ATTEST:

Champaign County Clerk

Champaign County Executive