

Montgomery County Board Minutes For Tuesday, January 14th, 2025 – 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, January 14th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 13 members present, 1 member absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Evan Young

Members Absent: Patty Whitworth

Moment of Silence in memory of former Montgomery County Board member Ed Helgen, who served from 1992 through 2012 in roles including Chairman of the Health, Welfare & Elections Committee. He passed away on Thursday, December 26, at age 84.

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board Member Connie Beck.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Beck and second by Daniels to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting:

Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve the minutes of the previous regular County Board meeting held on Tuesday, December 10th, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Animal Control Report** – April Pier, present for questions.
- 2. Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins, report submitted, present for questions.
- 3. Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham, report submitted.
- 4. County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser, report submitted, present for questions.
- 5. Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett, report submitted, present for questions.
- 6. EMA Report** – Dan Hough, report submitted, present for questions.
- 7. EPA Report** – Dan Hough, present for questions.
- 8. Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee, report submitted, present for questions.
- 9. Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood, report submitted, present for questions.
- 10. Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst, report submitted.
- 11. Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici, report submitted.
- 12. Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson, report submitted.
- 13. ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman.
- 14. Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser, report submitted, present for questions.
- 15. SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus, report submitted, present for questions.
- 16. State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti, report submitted, present for questions.

- 17. Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman, report submitted, present for questions.
- 18. VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton, report submitted, present for questions and made a verbal correction to her report, indicating \$350 in financial assistance in December, 2024.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Corso and second by Jones to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** — Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the 708 Board met on January 13th, reviewed reports from grantees, and will elect a new chair in February.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** — Whitworth was not present.
- **IL Association of County Officials** — Bergen had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** — Hughes reported a meeting set for January 23rd at which Matt Jones of WCDC will be the guest speaker.
- **Planning Commission** — Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** — Daniels reported the board met yesterday, and the new solar system is installed.
- **UCCI** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **U of I** – Beck had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported an open house was held on December 18th, 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- **Bill Schroeder** urged the County Board to attend the informal conference and public hearing yet to be scheduled for the Deer Run Mine Permit 424 significant revision application. He said the application is to increase the refuse site height from 65 feet tall to over 100 feet in order to accept coal waste from City Water Light & Power (CWLP), the public utility in Springfield. He questioned whether the mine is currently accepting CWLP coal waste, and reminded the board of the February 22nd public comment deadline.
- **Linda Liebscher** distributed information about Montgomery County Health Department funding, pointing out the health department purchased a \$1.3 million CD in January 2024. With a total fund balance of over \$4 million, she suggested using funds to boost services such as off-site services. She said she also shared this information with the 708 board, which distributed \$185,000 to the health department in 2024, and said the Health Department missed out on an IDPH Mental Health Division grant opportunity received by Macoupin County.
- **Brandi Lentz** said she had obtained the necessary petition signatures to place a public question to elect the Supervisor of Assessments on the ballot. She said concerns raised about the current Supervisor of Assessments go beyond the wooded acreage issue and urged the county board to vote to place the question on the ballot at this meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EMA Director Dan Hough reported volunteers have been working in the office, but one volunteer had been recently hospitalized.
2. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Donaldson said a meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 16th, 2025.
3. **Ad Hoc Special Advisory Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the committee will act in an advisory capacity to give input into the process described by SB3455, but will not have any personnel input. Four County Board members and three members of the public have been asked to serve on the committee: county board members Chad Ruppert, Christine Daniels, Andy Ritchie, and Russell Beason, along with public members John Lentz, Jesse Boehler, and Ron Deedrick. Beason will chair the committee, which will begin meeting in February, 2025. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Hughes to appoint County Board members Chad Ruppert, Christine Daniels, Andy Ritchie, and Russell Beason and public members John Lentz, Jesse Boehler, and Ron Deedrick to an Ad Hoc Special Advisory Committee to Address SB3455. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **ARPA Treasurer's Office Carpet Bids Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the committee opened two bids for new carpet in the Montgomery County Treasurer's Office and one bid for carpet installation. The committee approved the low bids of \$5,710.11 from Quality Flooring of Litchfield for carpet and from Greg Chambers for \$4,930 for installation. Remaining ARPA funds will be used for the project.
5. **Litchfield TIF 4 Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported board member Andy Ritchie voted in favor of a new Litchfield TIF district as he represented the County Board at a Taxing District meeting on Dec. 18 in Litchfield for a new residential TIF district seeking to provide new single-family and multi-family developments near St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield. In answer to questions from board member Young, Ritchie described the intent of the TIF. Ruppert added the county had little choice in protesting municipal TIFs, and Hughes said they are a good economic development tool.
6. **National Law Enforcement Day (Jan. 9) Proclamation Update/Approval:** Donaldson read a proclamation acknowledging January 9th as National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day and said since the board meeting fell after that date, the media had been notified in advance. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Murzynski to adopt a proclamation acknowledging January 9th, 2025 as National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in Montgomery County. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 83).**
7. **Nextlink Update/Approval:** Donaldson stated Nextlink representative Mike Johnson visited the county in December, and he was the project manager to update the county. His report, including a detailed map, is in the County Board packet.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Chad Ruppert:

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee heard business proposals from Korenne Mesnard of Drape's Lounge, John Casterline of Bobo's Tough Toys, Cody and Jennifer Gudgel of Gudgel Ranch Saloon, John R. Gwinn of Dirt Doctor Hobby Shop, Angie Eickhoff of White & Associates and AEJE Holdings, and

David Kalaher and Jeff Compton of Miss Kitty's Goldmine. With these awards, the county will have awarded \$297,500 of the allotted DCEO Energy Transition Grant funds and have just over \$39,000 remaining in the grant fund. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to award Small Biz Grants of \$5,000 to Drape's Lounge in Schram City; \$7,500 to Bobo's Tough Toys in Fillmore; \$20,000 to Gudgel Ranch Saloon in Litchfield; \$7,500 to Dirt Doctor Hobby Shop in Raymond; \$7,500 to White & Associates and AEJE Holdings in Hillsboro; and \$7,500 to Miss Kitty's Goldmine in Litchfield. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

2. **Plains Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee discussed the revised site plan with developer Rebecca Cheatham virtually present by telephone. The committee requested another 30 days to develop siting permit conditions, and Cheatham said she would propose language for the requested conditions.
3. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee was notified that Apex Clean Energy submitted a permit application for Montgomery Springs Solar, as well as the application fee, on December 19th, 2024. The committee will wait until after a City of Hillsboro zoning hearing scheduled for January 20th on the parcel before setting a permit Public Hearing date. The committee also discussed a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to review the permit application. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to accept a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to review the permit application for a fee not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 84).**
4. **SOA Elected Position Election Referendum Ordinance 25-01 Update/Approval:** Ruppert said concerns about the Supervisor of Assessments' performance have been raised to the committee and the county board, along with a request the office be changed from an appointed position to an elected one. This action can only happen by voter referendum, and the referendum could be placed on the ballot in one of two ways: by county board action or by petition. Committee Chair Ruppert said the position has always been appointed in Montgomery County because it should not be partisan; the office should operate according to the law and not ruled by the county board. He said according to IDNR, Montgomery County is one of the last in the state to implement wooded acreage reclassification, and the forestry CSP program is an easy work-around for those affected. Ruppert expressed confidence the Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments office is doing everything by the book. Ritchie asked if the position had ever been elected in Montgomery County; County Board Administrator Plunkett confirmed it has not. Bergen said he intended to vote against placing the position on the ballot because there should be a better way to handle public criticism. Young said voters should have the right to determine if the office should be elected or appointed. Chairman Donaldson said he is asking the County Board to consider placing the question on the ballot because those who want to see the question on the ballot have proven they can easily get the required 2% signatures on a petition to do so. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti said in order for the board to put the public question on the ballot, they would need to approve an ordinance directing the County Clerk to do so. He presented such an ordinance, which was read by Ruppert in making the following motion: **Motion by Ruppert and second by Young to adopt the ordinance directing the Montgomery**

County Clerk to place a yes-or-no public question on the November 2026 ballot to change the Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments position from an appointed position to an elected position. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Young. Voting no: Bergen, Corso, Hughes, Ruppert. **Motion carried 9-4. (For copy of Ordinance 25-01, see Resolution Book 22, page 85).**

5. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden April Pier reported a successful adoption event was held at Rural King on December 26th, 2024. She said she is researching a cremains processor. The committee will review and potentially change adoption fees at the next committee meeting.
6. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the county received a nearly \$1.2 million grant reimbursement check on Tuesday, January 7th, which catches the grant up with all submissions of request for payment to date. County Board Administrator Plunkett reported December grant disbursements were submitted and approved by DCEO in the same afternoon. DCEO continues to review the next phase grant application, and a grant agreement is expected soon.
7. **City-Wide Clean-Up Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed an application for re-instituting city-wide clean-up grants to municipalities and townships. The grant would reimburse eligible municipalities or townships up to \$750 per year for landfill costs from the Montgomery County Board Trustee Fund, which is generated from the trustee sale program. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to reinstitute the City-Wide Clean-Up Grant. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **TIF District Update/Approval:** Ruppert encouraged attendance at a public hearing for a proposed new Litchfield TIF set for 6 p.m. Thursday, January 16th, 2025, at Corwin Hall, and a public hearing for a proposed new Nokomis TIF set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, January 27th, 2025, at Nokomis City Hall.
9. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Bushue HR has been working with the county to update the Employee Handbook; and after a meeting with them on Thursday, January 9th, Ruppert said the Development & Personnel Committee should have an updated handbook for the board to review next month.
10. **Rivers & Routes Tourism Resolution Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and discussed an annual resolution in support of participation in Rivers & Routes Tourism at no cost to the county. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Bergen to adopt a resolution in support of Rivers & Routes Tourism. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 86).**

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Mark Hughes:

1. **Courthouse Chiller Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee opened six bids; and, after a discussion about separate proposals for electric work and controls for the new chiller, the committee agreed separating the contract could lead to warranty problems, so they approved a motion to reject all bids and rebid it as a turn-key project. Maintenance Director Phil Ernst met with Hurst-Rosche to obtain a proposal for writing bid specs and overseeing installation. **Motion by Hughes and second by Hancock to approve a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to write bid specs and oversee installation of a new chiller at the Montgomery County Courthouse. Motion by**

Ruppert and second by Young to amend the motion for an amount not to exceed \$5,000. All in favor, motion carried.

2. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Hughes thanked the Maintenance Department for their snow removal efforts. At the Maintenance Director's recommendation, the committee also approved a bid from Weiss Construction for \$4,500 to remove and replace a section of flooring in the Montgomery County Courthouse to allow for plumbing repairs and from Heise Plumbing for \$1,491 to make repairs to damaged cast iron pipes. Hughes said this work has begun and the damaged cast iron pipes have been repaired, but he expects the existing cast iron plumbing to continue to fail.
3. **Courthouse Complex Cleaning Contract Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed the current contract with National Maintenance & Cleaning, which calls for a rate of \$25 per hour beginning January 1st, 2025, for 4-6 hours per day for cleaning the Montgomery County Courthouse Complex and requires a 30-day termination notice. The committee will continue to research other options.
4. **Courthouse Annex Table Request Update/Approval:** Hughes said Regional Superintendent Julie Wollerman offered to replace tables in the Courthouse Annex meeting room with smaller rolling tables and the committee gave consent. He stated the Regional Superintendent is arranging transportation.
5. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Hughes said AV work in the County Board Room to equip it as a backup court room will be conducted Feb. 3rd-7th, 2025. Committee meetings will have to be moved to either the Conference Room or the Courthouse Annex to accommodate the work.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported Engineer Cody Greenwood has a draft road use agreement and requested input from the committee as to how to proceed. The County Engineer will continue to work on the draft and hopes to have it ready by the February committee meeting. The committee will then review it for 30 days before making a recommendation to the full board.
2. **Horseshoe Solar Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski said Engineer Greenwood presented a road use agreement for Horseshoe Solar at the intersection of Fillmore Trail and Schoolhouse Road. The solar project has the same developer as previous neighboring project Anacott and Blue Star, and Greenwood said the road use agreement is also the same. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Ruppert to approve the Road Use Agreement with Horseshoe Solar. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 87-96).**
3. **Highway Department Snow Response Update/Approval:** Murzynski stated Engineer Greenwood gave a number of updates, including his department's response to the 8-10 inch snow event. He said county forces logged 314 hours plowing 7,100 miles and assisting 21 stranded drivers. The highway department used 1,750 gallons of diesel fuel and spread 660 tons of salt, sand and grit mixture. He said the committee also watched a video on the effectiveness of segmented snow plow blades in use by the highway department.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus provided State of Illinois sales ratio information and subsequent township multipliers to the committee, adding because of the sales ratio and multiplier process, under-assessed property impacts every other property owner. She reported the process has rolled to the Board of Review level, which can make changes as they deem necessary. She also provided intergovernmental agreements with the Audubon-Nokomis MTA and the Fillmore Consolidated-Witt MTA which will needed to be approved by the county board. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve an intergovernmental agreement with the Audubon-Nokomis MTA for assessment services for \$7,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 97-98). Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an intergovernmental agreement with the Fillmore Consolidated-Witt MTA for assessment services for \$7,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 99-100).**
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated the November coal royalty payment was \$61,776.04 and coal interest earned through the end of November of \$417,254.59.
3. **MCSO Vehicle Bid Award Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed one bid for two 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit AWD police vehicles from Victory Lane Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Carlinville. He said the first bid was \$45,709 less \$9,000 trade in for a 2020 Ford Police Interceptor Utility with 99,120 miles for a net price of \$36,709. The second bid was \$45,709 less \$19,000 trade in for a 2020 Ford Explorer with 41,291 miles for a net price of \$26,709. During the course of the meeting, in response to a request by the committee, Sheriff Holshouser obtained proposals from GTSI of Greenville to equip the new vehicles for \$8,318.31 each. The total to purchase and equip the two vehicles is \$80,054.62 and the amount budgeted from coal reserves was \$135,000. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to award the low bids of \$36,709 and \$26,709 for two new 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit AWD vehicles to Victory Lane of Carlinville. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Young. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve a proposal from GTSI of Greenville to equip the two vehicles for \$8,318.31 each. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Unified Child Advocacy Network (UCAN) Update/Approval:** Ritchie said UCAN Executive Director Tammy Lercher and Family Advocate Kathy Norris addressed the committee to request funds for their organization which provides forensic interviews of abused children. Norris said UCAN is a non-profit organization receiving state and federal funding, plus funding from all five counties covered, and their main office is in Jerseyville. Undersheriff Jeff Roach added he has worked approximately 80 cases with UCAN over the last five years, and Sheriff Tyson Holshouser said the organization helps immensely and, sadly, is needed far too often. In the past, UCAN has been locally funded through the 708 levy for amounts ranging from \$7,800 to \$16,500 per year, but this past year they missed the application deadline. **Motion by Ritchie and second by**

Corso to donate \$15,000 from ARPA interest to UCAN. All in favor, motion carried.

5. **IRS Mileage Rate Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted the IRS mileage rate increased to 70 cents effective January 1st, 2025, and the county typically reimburses travel at this rate. Beason said there is no reason to raise the travel reimbursement rate above the current 67 cents per mile. Young said board members do not have to voucher reimbursement at the full allowable rate and he only vouchers for 50 cents per mile. Ruppert said the annual mileage rate will be addressed in upcoming Employee Handbook updates. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to set the county mileage reimbursement rate at 70 cents per mile effective January 15th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **County Credit Card Update/Approval:** Ritchie said on the advice of Treasurer Nikki Lohman, the county needs to develop a credit card policy. Lohman has been working on a policy using Champaign County's policy as a template, and she has researched it with our county auditors. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser added the county travel ordinance also needs updated to reflect current travel and lodging rates. Committee members reviewed the most recent county credit card bill, the voucher to pay the bill from the Forfeiture Fund, receipts, travel ordinance, and the draft credit card policy. Ritchie pointed out special funds, such as the Forfeiture Fund, may be spent per statute at the office holder's discretion. The Finance & Budget Committee will place reviewing the bill for possible reimbursement to the Forfeiture Fund, reviewing and recommending a credit card policy, and reviewing and updating or revising the county travel ordinance on next month's agenda.
7. **Education Incentive for Township Assessors Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported Chairman Donaldson had asked the county to research financial incentives to pay for the education required for individuals to seek the office of Township Assessor. The committee discussed this need, and the Supervisor of Assessments will provide a list of training requirements and the cost for training prior to the next committee meeting.

RULES OF ORDER AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Connie Beck:

1. **Rules of Order Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations Update/Approval:** Beck said the county board had recommendations to review the Rules of Order for 30 days, and the ad hoc committee made three more revisions, which she pointed out and explained. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to adopt the revised Montgomery County Board Rules of Order. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Montgomery County Board Committee and Liaison Assignment Update/Approval:** Beck reported State's Attorney Affrunti informed the ad hoc committee since county board committee and liaison assignments were made by the County Board Chairman, consent of the board is needed. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to approve the Montgomery County Board committee and liaison assignments as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Beason and second by Ritchie to approve the six committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Donaldson reminded the board of two TIF public hearings: the Litchfield TIF Public Hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16th, 2025 at Corwin Hall in Litchfield, and the Nokomis TIF Public Hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27th, 2025 at City Hall in Nokomis.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS: None

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Young and second by Jones to pay all approved bills and Payroll. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, February 11th, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, February 11th, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, February 11th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call: 13 members present, 1 member absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Ethan Murzynski

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Bill Bergen.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser. **Motion by Young and second by Hughes to approve the mileage and per diem. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Jones and second by Hughes to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, January 14th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA: All reports were submitted.

1. **Animal Control Report** – April Pier was present and added she will be attending euthanasia training the following week.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present and added he had submitted preliminary abatement work to the Supervisor of Assessments.
6. **EMA Report** – Dan Hough was present and added he was planning CPR/AED training for Feb. 24-27, 2025.
7. **EPA Report** – Dan Hough was present and added he had completed basic State of Illinois EPA training.
8. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
9. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was not present.
10. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
11. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
12. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
13. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
14. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was not present.
15. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was present and added her office is responding to the Illinois Department of Revenue in their work on a tentative multiplier.
16. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present and added he recently met with the County Treasurer about charges appearing on the county credit card after a

conference he attended, and he has reimbursed the county for charges placed on the card by mistake.

17. Treasurer's Report – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.

18. VAC Report – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Beck and second by Young to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.

All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report
- **708 Board** – The regular meeting had been cancelled.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported MCEDC held a meeting on Jan. 23 in Farmersville and determined they would begin using some of the \$180,000 on hand to promote the county. MCEDC Executive Director William Montgomery added he has put together a team for the Broadband Breakthrough program through the Benton Institute and recently learned the county had been accepted into the program.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported at a meeting on Feb. 11, a guest speaker offered line dance lessons to local senior citizen organizations.
- **UCCI** – Corso reported by attending a UCCI event on Jan. 27 he learned UCCI is looking for an office building, and the organization has invited up to three county board members to attend their upcoming conference.
- **U of I** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 20.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Bill Schroeder reminded the board of the IDNR informal conference set for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 27, and asked board members to attend and ask questions. He said an insignificant revision to the permit remains pending, and provided board members with aerial mine site photos showing the proximity to the hospital, City of Hillsboro, and Village of Schram City.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported IS Director Curt Watkins said he is working to archive 2024 data and has implemented two-factor authentication throughout most of the Courthouse Complex, Historic Courthouse, and Jail. Early feedback indicates an increase in productivity and security. He will be assisting with work in the County Board room the following week, and a new network recording server and cameras should be arriving shortly.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Director Dan Hough made his report during the consent agenda.
3. **CIPT IGA and Ordinance 25-02 Update/Approval:** CIPT Mobility Manager Nathan Nichols provided a letter requesting donations, and he also presented public transportation stats. He stated CIPT operated for 251 days between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, covering 81,435 service miles. He noted the unfulfilled rides were higher last year due to driving staff vacancies. He also noted most of the trips last year were for medical purposes. **Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to approve Ordinance 25-02 for Public Transportation. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 101). Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth to approve the intergovernmental agreement with Shelby County to administer the grant for Public Transportation. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 102-103).**
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the council met on Jan. 16 and continues to meet goals. Chairman Donaldson added the Litchfield office has moved and the Jacksonville office will be moving.
5. **Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the first meeting has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
6. **Broadband Breakthrough Program Update/Approval:** Donaldson said as referenced in the liaison report, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery has been working with Administrator Mike Plunkett to develop a local team for inclusion in the Broadband Breakthrough Program, in which the Benton Institute will help the county select broadband providers for grant applications. There is no cost to the county.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee heard presentations from applicants Jennifer Helgen of Just Off Route 66 Car Wash, Jennifer and Jay Huston of Main Street Gaming, John Snoddy of R&J's Outdoors, and Shane and Dawn Uhlry of Uhlry Family Farms. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Bergen to award Small Biz Grants of \$5,000 to Just Off Route 66 Car Wash in Litchfield; \$2,500 to Main Street Gaming in Coffeen; \$2,500 to R&J's Outdoors in Schram City; and \$7,500 to Uhlry Family Farm in Hillsboro. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **City-Wide Clean-Up Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed applications from ten municipalities. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to award \$750 City-Wide Clean-Up Grant reimbursements to the Village of Raymond, City of Witt, City of Hillsboro, Village of Donnellson, City of Nokomis, Village of Waggoner, Village of Coalton, Village of Irving, City of Coffeen and Village of Walshville. All in favor, motion carried.**

3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden April Pier has been following up on foster-to-adopt contracts she found in the file with no follow-up documentation. She will also review adoption fees and make a recommendation to the committee next month. Board member Mark Hughes complimented Warden Pier on the job she is doing.
4. **Plains Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert acknowledged developer Rebecca Cheatham of Cypress Creek Renewables who was present at the meeting, and said the committee reviewed the revised project map and discussed five proposed conditions for siting approval for Cypress Creek Renewables to site Plains Solar, a 4.99 MW community solar energy facility south of Witt Avenue and east of E. 14th Road. Ruppert reported the committee had been studying the project since July 1 and found it meets state legislation and county ordinance. In response to a question from board member Young, Ruppert said the proposed solar array will cover about 38 acres. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve Cypress Creek Renewables to site Plains Solar, a 4.99 MW community solar energy facility on parcel 12-04-100-001 located south of Witt Avenue and east of E. 14th Road, subject to the following five conditions 1) The developer shall provide detailed construction drawings for review by the relevant authorities no less than two months prior to the commencement of construction of the solar project; 2) The developer shall submit detailed storm water management drawings and plans for review by the relevant authorities no less than two months prior to the commencement of construction; 3) The developer shall provide the name and contact information of the designated construction liaison once the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) team or construction team has been onboarded by the developer; 4) The developer shall provide the name and contact information of the contracted Operations and Maintenance (O&M) company once that company has been contracted by the developer; and 5) The developer shall remit a check payable to Montgomery County for \$6,727 within 30 days to cover expenses in excess of the previously submitted \$2,500 application fee, and remit a check to cover any addition expenses prior to the issuance of an operating permit. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee set a public hearing date of 6 p.m. on Monday, March 24, to review a solar application submitted by Apex Clean Energy for a 5 MW solar facility on parcels 16-24-176-004 and 16-24-127-007 on Route 127 just south of the former VFW Hall in Taylor Springs.
6. **County Project Labor Agreement (PLA) Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee had discussed a resolution adopted in February of 2011 requiring a Project Labor Agreement attached to all county projects with an estimated cost over \$100,000. Ruppert said instead of requiring a PLA, he would like for his committee to research and develop “Montgomery County First” language requiring a local workforce in county contracts. Board member Young asked if the amount triggering the PLA could be raised instead, and Ruppert said it could be, but he also believes the PLA has other language listed that takes a measure of control from the County Board. Chairman Donaldson said he would like local union labor input into “Montgomery County First” discussions. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to repeal the 2011 Montgomery County Resolution requiring Project Labor Agreements on projects over \$100,000. Motion carried (Young and Donaldson voted no).**

7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported due to requests from grant sub-recipients Lincoln Land Community College and the City of Hillsboro, the county asked for and received a grant extension from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2026. A grant agreement for the next phase is anticipated to arrive any time.
8. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed changes recommended by Bushue HR, the State's Attorney, Circuit Clerk, and committee members. The issues will be discussed with Bushue at a meeting scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13.
9. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee discussed the situation with county offices requiring notarized documents who do not have a notary on staff. The committee will continue to research the issue.
10. **Nokomis TIF District Update/Approval:** Ruppert said he and Administrator Plunkett attended a public hearing on the proposed Nokomis TIF district on Monday, Jan. 27. Approximately one-third of the cities EAV would be captured in the district and the county has no input into whether or not the TIF is created, although it negatively impacts every taxing body for 23 years. County Clerk Leitheiser added the City of Litchfield filed its newly formed residential TIF #4 ordinances in her office earlier in the day, setting the TIF base level for the 2023-payable-2024 tax year.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Courthouse Chiller Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee opened four bids for replacing the chiller in the Courthouse Complex ranging from \$118,901 to \$155,780. The committee asked bidders if they could meet the required completion date of April 30. Daikin-TMI said they could since they were holding a place in line, and Committee Chair Hughes reported that place in line could be transferred to the awarded bidder. The committee expressed concern the chiller needed to be operating by the first week of May. **Motion by Hughes and second by Young to award the low bid of \$118,901 to Henson Robinson Company of Springfield. Roll call vote:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the county Maintenance Department completed 44 work orders last month. The committee endorsed a \$257.64 proposal from Quality Flooring of Litchfield plus \$180 for installation to replace flooring in the Courthouse Complex basement where plumbing repairs have been completed.
3. **Historic Courthouse First Floor Lighting Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee discussed inadequate lighting issues at the north and south entrances to the Historic Courthouse, as well as in front of the restrooms on the first floor. He stated the committee approved a proposal from Hillsboro Electric for \$2,103.12 to address the problem by adding lighting to be controlled by the main hallway switch.
4. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Hughes said work began on Monday, Feb. 3rd as scheduled, and was largely complete except for programming. He anticipates the new tech will be ready to use at the March meeting.
5. **Green Diamond Bike Trail Update/Approval:** Hughes reported State's Attorney Affrunti prepared documents to transfer the Green Diamond Bike Trail to the Village of

Waggoner, along with an agreement to reimburse the village for oil and chipping the trail one time. **Motion by Hughes and second by Ruppert to approve the intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Waggoner to transfer ownership of the Green Diamond Bike Trail and reimburse one-time oil and chip expenses up to \$22,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 104-105.) Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to transfer title by Quit Claim Deed on parcels 03-04-100-003 and 03-28-176-002 to the Village of Waggoner. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Hughes said at a Jan. 22 meeting about cleaning issues at the Courthouse Complex, concerns were expressed about non-county employees having access to the building after hours and bringing children into the building with them. The current contract with National Maintenance & Cleaning in Litchfield calls for 4-6 hours per day cleaning for \$25 per hour. The committee discussed ways to clean the building using county employees. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to give 30-day notice to terminate the contract with National Maintenance & Cleaning. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to pursue hiring a part-time employee four hours per day five days per week to be supervised by the Maintenance Director. All in favor, motion carried.**

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Vice Chairman Bill Bergen:

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** After conversations with consultant Brown, Hay & Stevens Bergen reported the committee agreed with Engineer Cody Greenwood's suggestion of an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for third-party review to make recommendations on pre-construction road improvements based on the Traffic Impact Analysis. He said UKA will be responsible for any associated costs.
2. **2025 Township MFT Rock Letting Results Update/Approval:** Bergen said the annual township rock letting is required for any township anticipating expending over \$30,000 on rock material. He reported the committee reviewed bids from Nokomis Quarry and Louis Marsch in Morrisonville, and referenced bid tab sheets in the county board packets. **Motion by Bergen and second by Ruppert to award low township MFT rock bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **2025 County MFT Rock Letting Results Update/Approval:** Bergen said the committee reviewed bids from Louis Marsch of Morrisonville, Beelman Truck Company of East St. Louis, Nokomis Quarry, and Miller's Lime Service of Fillmore, and bid tab sheets were in the county board packets. **Motion by Bergen and second by Hughes to award low county MFT rock bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **2025 Pipe Culvert Letting Results Update/Approval:** Bergen stated the committee reviewed the lone bid from Metal Culverts, Inc. of Jefferson City, MO, and the tab sheets were in the county board packets. Bergen noted municipalities and townships can purchase using the per-foot approved county bids. **Motion by Bergen and second by Whitworth to award the low pipe culvert bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Section 20-00145-00-PV Coffeen Rd/Seven Sisters Ave Intersection Update/Approval:** Bergen reported the Illinois Department of Transportation awarded the low bid of \$512,832.10 to Illinois Valley Paving of Springfield for updates at the

intersection of Coffeen Road and Seven Sisters Avenue. All bids came in under the \$606,648 engineer's estimate. Greenwood also presented an engineering services agreement with Hurst-Rosche for \$39,919 including on-site inspections. **Motion by Bergen and second by Young to approve an Engineering Services Agreement with Hurst-Rosche of Hillsboro for \$39,919 for Section 20-00145-00-PV Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters Avenue Intersection. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 106-116).**

6. **Section 15-00138-00-BR Red Ball Trail – White Town Bridge Supplemental Engineering Agreement Update/Approval:** After inaccuracies were discovered in construction elevations at the White Town Bridge work site on Red Ball Trail, Bergen said IDNR was contacted and determined the likelihood mine subsidence from the old Coffeen Mine had occurred after the initial survey was conducted nearly 10 years ago. Because of the site changes, further engineering work was needed. **Motion by Bergen and second by Hancock to approve a supplemental engineering agreement with WHKS & Company of Springfield for an amount not to exceed \$29,983. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 117-126).**

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reviewed her report to the committee, noting exemption renewals were mailed on Monday, Feb. 3, and the next flyover is scheduled for March. She explained the illegal practice of “sales chasing” and reviewed GIS mapping work. The SOA also noted the Grisham-Walshville-East Fork MTA contract is ready for county board approval. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an intergovernmental agreement with the Grisham-Walshville-East Fork Multi-Township Assessment District for \$10,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 127-128).**
2. **Township Assessor Education Incentive Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus explained to the committee township assessor qualifications include four core classes and two electives, ranging in total cost from \$1,480 to \$2,220 not including travel. She provided information noting “These expenses must be reimbursed by the township once the township assessor is elected or appointed.” After discussion, the committee concluded incentives may not be necessary.
3. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported a December coal royalty payment of \$145,099.44.
4. **Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed potential changes to the Pre-Approved Vendor List as presented by County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to make changes to the Pre-Approved Vendors List, adding Montgomery County Highway Fuel Bills and Otis Elevator, and deleting National Maintenance & Cleaning, IL Dept. of Revenue – Revenue Stamp Replenishment, County Board Committee Chairmen Annual Reimbursement Expense, Hillsboro Advanced Veterinary Care, Huels Oil, J.T.C. Petroleum, Newman Signs, and Schindler Elevator. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Ambulance Service Agreements Update/Approval:** Ritchie said FY 2025 Ambulance Service agreements were mailed out on Jan. 2, and all four have been signed and

returned. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve the FY2025 agreement with the Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried.** **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve the FY2025 agreement with the Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried.** **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve the FY2025 agreement with the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried.** **Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve the FY2025 agreement with the Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **County Credit Card Policy Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and discussed a county credit card policy drafted by Treasurer Nikki Lohman, which requires a written request for use of the card and details what the card can be used for. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve the County Credit Card Policy and Credit Card Request Form. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 129-131).**
7. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** Ritchie reiterated a travel issue from last month's meeting has since been resolved after the traveler repaid the county for expenses exceeding the travel ordinance. The committee discussed possible revisions to the County Travel Ordinance, such as the need to roll call travel vouchers in excess of allowable travel expenses, and if this requirement applies to all funds. County Clerk Leitheiser volunteered to update the county travel ordinance, and the committee will review it next month.

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to approve the five committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Donaldson announced the following:

1. The next meeting with Bushue HR is scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13.
2. IDNR has scheduled an Informal Conference for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 27, in the County Board Room regarding a significant revision application to permit No. 424 for the Hillsboro Energy Deer Run Mine.
3. UKA has indicated they remain on schedule and committed to developing the Virden Wind project.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS:

1. Jen Carron of Raymond to a 4-year term on 708 Board Update/Approval: **Motion by Young and second by Jones to appoint Jen Carron of Raymond to the Montgomery County Mental Health (708) Board. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. Dan Hough of Raymond to a 1-year term on 708 Board Update/Approval: **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to appoint Dan Hough of Raymond to the Montgomery County Mental Health (708) Board. All in favor, motion carried.**

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Young and second by Hughes to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. Roll call vote: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, March 11th, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. **Motion by Daniels and second by Hughes to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, March 11th, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois on Tuesday, March 11th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 12 members present, 2 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Evan Young

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by board member Rob Corso.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Jones and second by Hughes to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Hancock and second by Daniels to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, February 11th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Animal Control Report** – Chad Ruppert was present for questions.
- 2. Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
- 3. Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
- 4. County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
- 5. Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions and reported receiving an application.
- 6. EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions and reported training and a visit from the state EMA director's office.
- 7. Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
- 8. Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
- 9. Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
- 10. Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
- 11. Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
- 12. ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
- 13. Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
- 14. SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was present for questions.
- 15. State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions.
- 16. Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
- 17. VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Hughes and second by Beason to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the board met the previous evening and elected Dan Hough as Chairman. He stated they also had updates from several grantees.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen was not present.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth reported the board is scheduled to meet April 15.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported meeting with Rivers & Routes officials last month.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported working on a list of senior events and stated budget letters will go out next month.
- **UCCI** – Corso reported a Feb. 24 meeting and a scheduled legislative meeting on March 19.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported a new employee in Macoupin County and provided a schedule of seminars.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported meeting goals, but stated they are making budget adjustments in anticipation of potential cuts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Karyl Dressen thanked the County Board members who attended the previous IDNR informal conference on Feb. 27 now rescheduled for 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 19 due to the absence of a verbatim court reporter. The informal conference is regarding a pending permit revision to raise the Deer Run Mine's slurry wall from 65 feet to 100 feet. She questioned if the informal conference could still be held in the Historic Courthouse if the elevator is out of service, and Chairman Donaldson said County Coordinator Plunkett will check.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said IS Director Curt Watkins reported Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins has secured \$132,925.51 from a court grant to be used to improve security cameras, monitors, PCs, and server cooling systems. He also reported county board room tech work is complete pending final adjustments; he is working on video camera and server upgrades, and is continuing multi-factor token installation with county employees.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said EMA Director Dan Hough reported he was told by Deer Run mine officials no fly ash was entering from off site.
3. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** The first meeting was on Feb. 19. Public member Ron Deedrick cannot be a committee member because of his lobbyist job description. Donaldson said Vince Reincke has agreed to fill this position. Ad Hoc Committee Chairman Russ Beason reported the committee is working on two goals: a list of best practices for property owners with wooded acreage and recommendations for the state's review of legislation due in July 2026.

4. **Resolution in Support of National Ag Day March 18 Update/Approval:** Donaldson read a resolution in support of Montgomery County Agriculture in honor of National Ag Day on March 18 and thanked the Montgomery County Farm Bureau for gift bags presented to board members. Farm Bureau Manager Katie Wilson thanked the board for their support and introduced two directors present, Tom Anderson and Dennis Hand. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Ruppert to approve the Resolution in Support of Montgomery County Agriculture in honor of National Ag Day on March 18. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 132).**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee reviewed applications and heard presentations from Kevin Kirby of Kirby Painting, Caleb Reynolds of War Turtle Meadery, Dylan Richter of The Sweet Spot, Scott Merano of Sam's Services, Becky Stolte and Ryan Follis of Curbside Cravings, and Luleta Rushiti of The Old Y Diner, and reviewed the application of Steve's Repair. Ruppert described each application along with one from Steve's Repair in Coffeen. He said these awards will deplete the DCEO grant funds for Small Biz grants, and he said committee members expressed interest in renewing the program with future grants. Jones encouraged the county to apply for another round of funding and encouraged those awarded this month to reapply since the amount of funds available for this last group of businesses was less than prior groups. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to award Small Biz Grants of \$2,500 to Kirby Painting in Hillsboro; \$1,000 to War Turtle Meadery of Hillsboro; \$1,000 to The Sweet Spot in Hillsboro; \$1,000 to Steve's Repair in Coffeen; \$1,000 to Sam's Services in Hillsboro; \$3,500 to Curbside Cravings in Nokomis; and \$11,594.55 to The Old Y Diner in Taylor Springs. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Nextlink Update/Approval:** The county board viewed a presentation from Karson Ortiz and Craig Hall of Nextlink showing a map of 10 active Nextlink towers and seven pending towers Hall anticipates will be active by the end of 2025. MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery participated in the discussion, pointing out the rural ag community depends on the availability of fast, reliable internet. He also questioned the location of a tower at Central Park in Hillsboro since it is in one of the lowest areas of the city. In response to a question from board member Jones, Hall said Nextlink service will eventually be provided from their location in Morrisonville.
3. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and approved the annual Tourism Grant Application. He stated completed applications must be submitted by March 28 and will be awarded in April and added applications are available on-line and in the County Board Administration office.
4. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed three more applications. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to award \$750 City-Wide Clean-Up grants to the Village of Schram City, City of Litchfield, and Village of Taylor Springs. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert reminded the board the public hearing for the project will begin at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 24 in the County Board Room.

6. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed changes in the latest draft, which will remain under review until next month. Bushue HR will be on site at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 13 for the next meeting.
7. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted the committee continued a discussion from last month about the possible need for notaries in the Historic Courthouse. Before next month, County Board Administration will check with each office on the number of documents requiring notary services.
8. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the Animal Control Warden has been suspended pending the result of criminal charges. In the meantime, Ruppert stated the facility is operating as usual. He said the City of Litchfield is considering signing the county animal control contract, and he has discussed details with the City Administrator. He stated County Board member Jones and State's Attorney Affrunti will be attending the next Litchfield City Council meeting to answer questions.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the elevator in the Historic Courthouse has been out of service since the end of the day on Monday, March 3. Otis Elevator has diagnosed a power failure; the pertinent parts are on order.
2. **Tuck-pointing Update/Approval:** Hughes presented photos depicting the condition of the north wall of the VAC building basement where mortar up to two inches deep is gone, and a few areas on the Historic Courthouse where bricks were out and areas had been caulked but not tuck-pointed. The committee reviewed a proposal from RL Construction of Butler for \$12,400 total; \$7,550 for VAC work and \$4,850 for Historic Courthouse work. Funds are budgeted, and work will be completed within three weeks when weather allows. **Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to award the \$12,400 proposal from RL Construction of Butler for brick and tuck-point work at the VAC and Historic Courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Generator Waiting List Update/Approval:** Hughes said Maintenance Director Phil Ernst expressed concern the price of the Cat generator he applied for in the next DCEO grant will increase beyond the allotted grant amount. He requested permission from the committee to place the county on a no-obligation waiting list, much the same as the chiller process, and was given permission.
4. **Cinric VAC Wall Painting Proposal Update/Approval:** Hughes said because the proposed mural on the north wall of the VAC building is now off the table, the committee agreed the wall will not need to be painted.
5. **Old Highway Department Property Update/Approval:** Hughes reported Hillsboro School Superintendent David Powell and officials from the Hillsboro School District told the committee the district remains interested in the entire former Highway Department property on Seymour Avenue and University Street in Hillsboro for potential building trades house sites and a possible day care facility. Discussions will continue.
6. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Hughes reported he (along with Personnel & Development Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert and Maintenance Director Ernst) interviewed four candidates before the County Board meeting. He stated National Maintenance & Cleaning remains under contract for cleaning through March 14.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski anticipates the committee will review a draft road use agreement next month.
2. **Resolution 2025-1 appropriating funds for 100% county culvert replacement at multiple locations Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the committee reviewed maps with the locations of 13 pipe culverts to be installed under county highways this year when weather permits. Two of the locations are in Bois D'Arc Township, three in Grisham, three in North Litchfield, three in Walshville, one in Witt, and one is in Zanesville. The total cost for all 13 is \$101,500 to be paid from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to approve Resolution #2025-01 appropriating \$101,500 from County Aid to Bridge Fund 235 for 13 pipe culverts. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 133-139).**
3. **Resolution 2025-2 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Updated/Approval:** Murzynski said there is still no word from the state.
4. **Purchase of 2015 Stepp Manufacturing Model SPHD 3.0 Asphalt Dump Trailer Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee studied a video on the Stepp SPHD 3.0 hot box pothole patcher, a towable piece of equipment Engineer Cody Greenwood said he had anticipated budgeting \$60,000 next year to purchase new. He has discovered, however, a used 2015 model available in Indianapolis for \$29,000. His department has inspected the equipment and reports it is in "like new" condition. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Corso to purchase the 2015 Stepp Manufacturing Model SPHD 3.0 Asphalt Dump Trailer for \$29,000 from Joseph Sullivan of Indianapolis, IN. All in favor, motion carried.**

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted according to the report filed by Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, 907 senior homestead exemptions have been received and processed and 146 disabled person and disabled veteran exemptions have been received and processed. Ritchie added Montgomery County has earned a tentative multiplier of 1.0000% from the Illinois Department of Revenue, noting assessments are 33.09% of market value, up from 30.92% last year. He reported Niehaus is working with Information Services Director Curt Watkins on the possibility for township assessors to have direct access to the county's DevNet software from their location for data entry purposes.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted a \$162,645.73 coal royalty payment in January.
Community Solar Proposals Update/Approval: Ritchie said the committee heard a proposal from Nathan McCarthy of Solar on Earth allowing the county to save 20% on county properties' electric bills through community solar credits. He said the Solar on Earth proposal would require a 10-year commitment but allow for an opt-out with 180

days' notice. He said McCarthy estimated the deal would save the county \$16,000 annually in electric charges. Ritchie stated a second proposal from Nexamp arrived on Monday, March 10 providing a 12% savings for a 15-year commitment and 14% for a 20-year commitment. Board members Hughes and Beck both said the county should consider installing its own solar array. Hughes added before committing, the State's Attorney needs to review any potential contracts. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to accept the community solar credit proposal from Solar on Earth as presented. Motion withdrawn. Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to table action until next month to allow the Finance & Budget Committee and State's Attorney to review any potential contracts. All in favor, motion carried.**

3. **ARPA Ordinance for ETSB Data Room Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and discussed the ordinance for ARPA funds previously assigned. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve the ordinance to appropriate \$25,000 ARPA funds for ETSB Data Room upgrades. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 140).**
4. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported the committee reviewed and discussed possible changes to the County Travel Ordinance as submitted by County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser. He said changes made include referencing the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) for maximum allowable reimbursement rates, referencing local transportation expenses, and defining to whom the ordinance applies. The committee discussed a request to add a pre-travel approval process, and ultimately decided to do so by referencing the applicable Illinois statute. Ritchie stated at the recommendation of Leitheiser, the committee will continue the discussion next month when the State's Attorney is available to participate.
5. **Resolution to Transfer Coal Rights Parcel 01-07-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and recommended the resolution from a trustee sale. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve the resolution to transfer Coal Rights Parcel 01-07-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township to Keyrock Energy. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 141-142).**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Beck and second by Daniels to approve the five committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: County Board Chairman Donaldson noted the following:

1. The next meeting with Bushue HR is scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, March 13 in the County Board Room, 2nd floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
2. IDNR has re-scheduled the Informal Conference for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 19 in the County Board Room, 2nd floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro regarding a significant revision application to permit No. 424 for the Hillsboro Energy Deer Run Mine. He said this location may have to be changed due to the building's elevator issue.
3. The Development & Personnel Committee has scheduled a public hearing for the proposed Montgomery Springs Solar project for 6 p.m. Monday, March 24, in the County

Board Room, 2nd floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro. He said this location may have to be changed due to the building's elevator issue.

4. IDNR has scheduled a Public Hearing for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9, in the County Board Room, 2nd floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro regarding a significant revision application to permit No. 424 for the Hillsboro Energy Deer Run Mine. He said this location may have to be changed due to the building's elevator issue.
5. BLH has scheduled its 2025 Electronics Recycling Drives for Saturday, May 3 in Litchfield and Saturday, Sept. 13 in Hillsboro.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Daniel Fenton to Shoal Creek Fire Protection District Update/Approval:** Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to appoint Daniel Fenton as Trustee to the Shoal Creek Fire Protection District from May 1, 2023 through May 5, 2026. All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Donald Sturgeon Jr. to Shoal Creek Fire Protection District Update/Approval:** Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to appoint Donald Sturgeon Jr. as Trustee to the Shoal Creek Fire Protection District from May 1, 2024 through May 3, 2027. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Beck and second by Ritchie to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, April 8th at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, 2nd floor, Historic Courthouse, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, April 8, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. at the Montgomery County Farm Bureau in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, April 8, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 11 members present, 3 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Keith Hancock, Andy Ritchie

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by board member Chris Daniels.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Hughes and second by Young to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ruppert, Whitworth, and Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Beason and second by Corso to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – None
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions and thanked election workers and voters, noting the April 1, 2025 Consolidated Election had over 25 percent voter turnout.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions and noted abatements for the year were completed.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was present for questions and noted the final abstract has been completed and will be delivered tomorrow to the Illinois Department of Revenue in Springfield by County Clerk Leitheiser.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions and noted an Assistant State's Attorney has accepted a position in Montgomery County.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Young and second by Beason to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** — Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** — Murzynski reported a meeting is scheduled for the following week.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** — Bergen was not present.
- **Health Department** — Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** — Hancock was not present.
- **MCEDC** — Hughes introduced Executive Director William Montgomery, who reported on recent conversations with Nextlink and stated he is working on increasing MCEDC membership.
- **Planning Commission** — Ritchie was not present.
- **Senior Citizens Board** — Daniels reported a line dance instructor was present at the last meeting and has planned monthly dances to be held in the future.
- **UCCI** — Corso had nothing to report.
- **U of I** — Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** — Jones had nothing to report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. North Litchfield Township Assessor Tom Baker reported on his efforts to access county DevNet software to increase productivity by entering his assessment data from the field. He said there would be no cost to the county, but the county Information Services department has concerns about data and would like an intergovernmental agreement. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti said he has reviewed a sample intergovernmental agreement provided by Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus and is working with Information Services to resolve the issue. Chairman Donaldson said the item will be on the next Coordinating Committee agenda.
2. Citizen Bill Schroeder thanked Chairman Donaldson and Vice Chairwoman Whitworth for speaking against CWLP coal waste at the recent IDNR informal conference. He also pointed out the county has been without weather radio service for two and a half years, and shared telephone numbers for county board members to join him in contacting Rep. Mary Miller and Sen. Tammy Duckworth to reinstate a weather radio tower in Montgomery County.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department has begun working on court grant projects, has ordered 31 PCs and begun routine replacement, and has finished implementing multi-factor log-ins. He anticipates needing more internet bandwidth, a possible price increase on the new telephone system due to tariffs, and a switch to ArcPro for GIS.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson noted EMA Director Dan Hough expressed gratitude for a \$3,700 rural development grant awarded to his office by the Montgomery County Farm Bureau for a radio network. He also reported nearly 50

county employees completed AED/CPR training and the need for an EPA office administrative assistant. Hough added he will be attending training and a conference during the month of April. He said he is working on 13 new open dumping cases and reported the National Weather Service maintains it is still in contract negotiations regarding a new weather radio tower.

3. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson pointed out Committee Chairman Russ Beason reported Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus did an excellent job explaining procedures during the committee meeting on March 26, and former Champaign County SOA Stan Jenkins contributed a lot of information and offered support. Donaldson said the next committee meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, in the County Board Room.
4. **National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (April 13-19) Resolution 2025-5 Update/Approval:** Donaldson read the resolution and 911 Director Ed Boyd thanked the county board for their support. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to adopt Resolution 2025-5 in support of National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week April 13-19. All in favor, motion carried. (See Resolution Book 22, Page 143).**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported as of last week, there were 22 animals at the facility. He said Litchfield has approved a contract with Animal Control. Personnel issues at Animal Control were discussed in executive session and the warden at the facility was terminated this past week. Ruppert noted the county is currently advertising for the Animal Control Warden vacancy and solicited applications.
2. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said 14 applicants have requested \$11,750 from the Tourism Grant and \$5,000 has been budgeted. The committee will score applications according to the rubric and be ready to discuss awards after the May committee meeting.
3. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee reviewed applications from the villages of Harvel and Ohlman. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to award City-Wide Clean-Up Grants of up to \$750 to the Village of Harvel and the Village of Ohlman. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported at a public hearing on Monday, March 24 the committee reviewed a good map, a complete application, and heard no comments from neighbors. He said the committee will be working with the applicant to develop a set of conditions to be reviewed next month before making a recommendation.
5. **Litchfield Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted a public hearing has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, April 28. The committee reviewed the proposal from Hurst-Rosche. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to approve a proposal from Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the proposed Litchfield Solar project for a fee not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Pages 144-145).**
6. **Bushue Background Screening Agreement Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed the background screening proposal by Bushue HR for a base price of \$50 per applicant as needed. State's Attorney Affrunti said he found no issues in his

review of the contract. In response to a question from board member Jones, Ruppert said the standard background check looks back seven years, but a longer timeframe can be requested. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve a background screening agreement with Bushue HR. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Page 146-157).**

7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett noted Phase I remains on schedule, but a grant agreement for Phase II remains pending. He said Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell facilitated a virtual meeting with DCEO contacts.
8. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the committee reviewed updates and said they are still working with Bushue on tech language. Bushue will be on site for a meeting on Thursday, April 10.
9. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee reviewed a partial list of forms required in the Historic Courthouse needing notarized. The committee hopes to review a complete list of documents requiring notarization next month.
10. **Montgomery Local Labor First Initiative Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported committee member Chris Daniels said she has met with labor leaders and she is researching language with other sources for a packet she intends to have ready next month.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Hughes described a substantial amount of work underway at the Historic Courthouse. First, he noted two circuit boards in the building's elevator need to be programmed before the elevator is again operational, and he hopes work will be completed by the end of the week. Second, Hughes said a 150-pound concrete headstone fell off the northeast corner tower of the Historic Courthouse two weeks ago. Since then, emergency repairs have been underway and the rest of the building has been checked for similar issues. The fallen headstone and another loose headstone have been replaced with white brick to mimic the original look and a seal coating is being applied to flaking concrete window ledges. Third, roof replacement work began on Monday, April 7, and should be completed by the end of the week.
2. **Courthouse Complex Chiller Update/Approval:** Hughes said the new chiller is scheduled to ship from Mexico on April 14, and told the board controls may need to be updated next fiscal year.
3. **Historic Courthouse Flower Bed/Pots Update/Approval:** Hughes said Imagine Hillsboro volunteers have agreed to maintain the flower pots on the Historic Courthouse lawn and the flower bed on the south side. Imagine Hillsboro volunteer Bob Schwander was present at the meeting and reported about work completed thus far.
4. **Hillsboro Market Update/Approval:** Hughes said Imagine Hillsboro has requested to move their monthly Saturday morning summer markets to the parking lot south of the Courthouse Complex. Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the judges have no issues with this use as long as the grounds are left clean. **Motion by Hughes and second by**

Whitworth to allow Imagine Hillsboro to host monthly Saturday morning markets on the parking lot south of the Courthouse Complex. All in favor, motion carried.

5. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Hughes noted both Maintenance Director Ernst and Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the new custodian at the Courthouse Complex is doing an excellent job, but it appears four hours per day is not enough time for the work. The committee voted to allow Ernst to schedule him for up to five hours a day as needed, and then revisit this schedule in a month.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **County 2025 MFT Oil Letting Results Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the lone bid from Louis Marsch of Morrisonville was opened and reviewed by Engineer Cody Greenwood and is in board packets. In response to a question from board member Young, Greenwood said the base oil bid is \$2.95 a gallon. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Jones to award the low 2025 county MFT bid for oil to Louis Marsch. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Township 2025 MFT Oil Letting Results Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported bids from Litchfield Bituminous of Hillsboro and Louis Marsch of Morrisonville. Those bid tabulation sheets are also in board packets. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Corso to award the low 2025 township MFT bids for oil to Litchfield Bituminous and Louis Marsch. All in favor, motion carried (Murzynski abstained).**
3. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported Engineer Greenwood will meet with attorneys before the next committee meeting to continue developing the road use agreement.
4. **Resolution 2025-2 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail, South Litchfield Township Update/Approval:** The committee discussed the resolution and reviewed the map for a pipe culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail in South Litchfield Township. The anticipated \$60,000 cost would be split 50/50 between the county and the township, with the county portion coming from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Young to approve Resolution 2025-02 appropriating funds for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail in South Litchfield Township. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Pages 158-159).**
5. **SB2504, SB2217, and HB2515 – Township Consolidation and Low Population Township Dissolution Resolution 2025-06 Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee discussed the status of three pieces of proposed state legislation which would eliminate or consolidate various township functions. SB2504 would eliminate township and multi-township assessors in counties with populations less than 50,000. SB2217 would dissolve all townships with a population less than 5,000, and HB2515 would dissolve all townships with a population of less than 500. Donaldson read the proposed resolution in opposition, and both Engineer Greenwood and Treasurer Lohman reported their state organizations stand opposed to the proposed legislation. 911 Director Boyd noted townships respond speedily to calls to clear roads for first responders. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Jones to adopt Resolution 2025-06 in opposition to SB2504, SB2217, and HB2515. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Page 160).**

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Vice Chairwoman Connie Beck:

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Beck said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reported Board of Review hearings were conducted on Monday, March 31. She has begun advertising for a vacant part-time data collection position and has a full-time employee who will be retiring in June. Niehaus reported an MTA district under contract to the county may be considering signing a contract with an assessor to do the work instead of the county. She also told the committee she filed an incident report for a senior citizen who fell while coming up the south stairs to the Historic Courthouse.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Beck noted the February coal royalty payment was \$160,901.92.
3. **University of Illinois Extension Agreement Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed and discussed the annual agreement with the University of Illinois Extension service, for which the county has agreed to levy \$157,000 in property taxes. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to approve the agreement with University of Illinois Extension. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Pages 161-162).**
4. **Coroner Mutual Aid Agreement Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee also reviewed the statewide mutual aid agreement submitted by Montgomery County Coroner Randy Leetham. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to approve the Coroner Mutual Aid Agreement. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Pages 163-168).**
5. **Mobile Home Delinquent Tax Sale Fee Resolution 2025-07 Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed and discussed a resolution presented by Treasurer Nikki Lohman to allow her office to collect a \$10 sale and error fee on delinquent mobile homes beginning with the tax sale in October 2025. **Motion by Beck and second by Ruppert to approve Resolution 2025-07 authorizing a \$10 fee to be imposed on the sale of delinquent mobile home taxes. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Page 169).**
6. **Transfer 5 Coal Rights Parcels to Keyrock Energy Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed five mined coal parcels in Bois D'Arc and Pitman Township sold by the trustee to Keyrock Energy. **Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to transfer parcels 01-27-100-301, 01-26-100-301, and 01-35-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township, and 03-04-300-302 and 03-02-100-302 in Pitman Township to Keyrock Energy, LLC. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 22, Pages 170-174).**
7. **Dispersal of Redemption/Reconveyance Default Funds Resolution Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed the resolution for parcel 13-06-179-001 in Witt, sold on Oct. 25, 2021 for \$7,206.16. To date, the redemption party has paid only \$1,326. After several attempts by the trustee to collect the balance, the party has defaulted and the collected funds should be disbursed. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to approve the Resolution disbursing \$1,326 on parcel 13-06-079-001 in Witt. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 22, Page 175).**

8. **UCCI Salary & Benefits Survey Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed and discussed the UCCI Salary & Benefits Survey, which is available on file in the County Board Administration office.
9. **Solar Credit Proposals/Contracts Update/Approval:** Beck said State's Attorney Affrunti reviewed proposals and contracts from Solar on Earth and Nexamp for solar credits; he explained the process for buying solar credits and said he believes it would be in the county's best interest to build its own solar arrays to power county buildings instead of entering into a contract with one of these companies. After discussion, Beck said the committee voted to reject the solar credit proposals from Solar on Earth and Nexamp and continue the discussion of county solar panels.
10. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** Beck said State's Attorney Affrunti reported to the committee after reviewing the proposed amendments to the Montgomery County Travel Ordinance that he does not believe the statute allows the county board to pre-approve overnight travel as suggested as recommended changes to Section II of the ordinance. She said he agreed with the Section III change to the ordinance referencing the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) website for travel location reimbursement rates. The State's Attorney reiterated the ordinance does not apply to funds not under county board control. Hughes said he believes state law requires a pre-approval process and does not reference funds to which the statute applies. He said special funds are still county money and questioned who watches over them. Affrunti said he understood Hughes's concerns and believes they are valid, but not statutory. County Clerk Leitheiser noted special fund expenditures are on the pre-approved vendor list. Hughes maintained that statutorily, he believes a travel voucher paid recently through a special fund controlled by the State's Attorney should have been roll call voted by the County Board. Young said the County Board's control of special funds is via the budget process. Affrunti said staff travel requirements should be addressed in the employee manual, and board member Daniels suggested the county solicit advice from Bushue HR. **Motion by Beck and second by Daniels to approve the amended Montgomery County Travel Ordinance as presented. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beck, Corso, Jones, and Whitworth. Voting no: Beason, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Murzynski, Ruppert, and Young. **Motion failed 4-7.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Beason and second by Corso to approve the five committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Chairman Donaldson reported IDNR had scheduled a Public Hearing for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9 at the Montgomery County Farm Bureau regarding a significant revision application to permit No. 424 for the Hillsboro Energy Deer Run Mine, but due to the technical need for a virtual court reporter, the meeting location has been changed to the Montgomery County Court Complex.
2. Donaldson reported the next meeting with Bushue HR will be Thursday, April 10, beginning at 1 p.m. in the County Board Room.

3. Donaldson reported the Illinois EPA has scheduled question-and-answer public meetings at the East Fork Township Building at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Thursday, May 1, about the Coffeen Power Station ash pond closure process.
4. Donaldson reported BLH has scheduled its 2025 Electronics Recycling Drives for 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 3, at the former Litchfield Recycling Center.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS:

Robert Matli as Trustee to the Raymond Community Fire Protection District Update/Approval: **Motion by Beck and second by Young to appoint Robert Matli as Trustee to the Raymond Community Fire Protection District from March, 2025, through March, 2028. All in favor, motion carried.**

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ruppert, Whitworth, and Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, May 13, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, May 13th, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. at the Montgomery County Farm Bureau in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, May 13th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie (virtually by Google Meet), Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by board member Keith Hancock.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser.

Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to approve the mileage and per diem. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: Motion by Beck and second by Corso to approve the minutes of the previous regular County Board meeting held on Tuesday, April 8th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – No report.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions, and he added AV upgrades paid for by an addition to the court grant will begin on June 2nd, 2025. He also noted an anticipated change to a new e-citation system which will benefit law enforcement and local ordinance violation entry.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions and said he will complete EMA training next week in Rochelle, Illinois.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Bane Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was not present.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions and reported his new assistant, Brian Shaw, has begun work and comes to the office with 16-17 years of successful prosecution experience.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions and added she attended a recent ICRMT Human Resources training. She stated tax bills will be mailed by the end of this week.

17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Beason and second by Young to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski had nothing to report.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported the next meeting is set for May 15th, 2025.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
 - **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported after four weeks of line dancing classes attended by 15-20 each week, the board would like to hire the instructor and host monthly line dance classes.
- **UCCI** – Corso had nothing to report.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported a meeting is scheduled for the following month.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the next meeting is set for May 15th, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Citizen John Scott thanked those board members who attended the recent IDNR public hearing on the Deer Run Mine coal impoundment structure. He expressed frustration the IEPA does not participate in the IDNR permitting process. He questioned IDNR's oversight. If their permit process is up-to-date, why has no permit application ever been rejected by IDNR, and if there could be local oversight or a local permitting process for coal mines.
2. Citizen Bill Schroeder thanked the board for the Resolution they are considering in opposition to the pending Deer Run Mine permit 424 revision and noted it represents the first time the County Board has stood up for citizens in opposition to the coal mine.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **North Litchfield Township DevNet Access Update/Approval:** State's Attorney Affrunti explained an intergovernmental agreement he prepared to allow the North Litchfield Township assessor to directly input into the county's DevNet property tax software. He said language in the agreement addresses concerns expressed by the county Information Services department. **Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to approve an intergovernmental agreement with North Litchfield Township for field access to DevNet. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 176-177).**
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EPA/EMA Director Hough reported completing a lot of training, including training three volunteers who were trained on EOCs. Hough stated he would like to use community service workers through Montgomery County Probation along with City-Wide Clean-Up funds to abate an issue at a residence on Highland Avenue in Hillsboro scheduled to be deeded to the county trustee through a tax deed.
3. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Donaldson noted the council met on April 17th, 2025, and discussed

relocating the Jacksonville office to another Morgan County location, a current program underway with Dometic in Litchfield, and falling Montgomery County unemployment numbers.

4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Committee Chairman Beason stated due to the inoperable Historic Courthouse elevator, the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, was cancelled and rescheduled for Wednesday, April 30th, 2025. He reported the committee spent much of the meeting discussing the notification plan for woodland reclassification for 2026 payable 2027 at the end of the two-year pause. He said the committee also discussed when notification letters should go out, to whom, from whom, and if notification should also include an educational meeting. Beason reported the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 17th, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Courthouse Annex.
5. **Nextlink Communication Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the committee reviewed answers to questions posed by MCEDC Executive Director William Montgomery. Nextlink is negotiating for a tower location in Donnellson.
6. **Interstate Interdiction Intergovernmental Agreement with Monroe County Update/Approval:** Donaldson said Sheriff Holshouser asked the County Board to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement to allow Monroe County to supply resources to work in Montgomery County. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Ruppert to adopt an Intergovernmental Agreement with Monroe County for Interstate Interdiction. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 178-179).**
7. **Termination of MCSO Employee Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson reported a correctional officer at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has been terminated, and an investigation by the Illinois State Police is ongoing.
8. **Resolution 2025-08 in Opposition to Deer Run Mine Permit No. 424 Revision No. 1 Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson read the resolution in opposition. **Motion by Young and second by Murzynski to adopt the Resolution in Opposition to Deer Run Mine Permit No. 424 Revision No. 1. 13 members in favor, 1 member (Jones) abstained, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 180).** Audience members applauded its approval.
9. **National Correctional Officers Week (May 4-10) Resolution 2025-09 Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson read the resolution honoring Correctional Officers. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to adopt the Resolution in Support of National Correctional Officers Week. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 181).** Audience members applauded its approval.
10. **Mental Health Awareness Month Proclamation Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett read the proclamation in support of National Mental Health Awareness Month. **Motion by Young and second by Daniels to adopt the Proclamation in Support of Mental Health Awareness Month. All in favor, motion carried.** Audience members applauded its approval. **(For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 182).**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Health Insurance Update/Approval:** Tony Johnston of Assured Partners was in attendance and reported the county group health insurance is running smoothly, and he

anticipates the renewal rate will be at the 8% cap. He said year-to-date the county has paid \$500,833 in premiums, but Blue Cross Blue Shield has paid out \$745,402 in claims, which could cause a concern when renewing county group health insurance in 2026.

2. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported there were four applicants for the vacant Animal Control Warden position, and the committee recommended hiring Tricia Papin. He introduced her and reported due to the heavy work load, she began work on Tuesday, May 6th, 2025. Young questioned why the previous Animal Control Warden was removed by the Animal Control Administrator and not by a vote from the board. State's Attorney Affrunti replied while the board's Rules of Order require board approval for hiring a department head, they do not require board approval for terminating a department head. Chairman Donaldson said this need can be addressed in the future in the Rules of Order by the Rules Committee. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to hire Tricia Papin as Animal Control Warden beginning May 6, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee scored the 14 applications for a total of \$5,000 in Tourism Grants. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to award Tourism Grants based on scoring: \$575 for Historic Red Rooster 2nd Anniversary; \$350 for DAR Trivia Night Scholarship Fundraiser; \$450 for Hell's Burrow Haunted Attraction; \$350 for Coffeen Fall Fest; \$575 for Montgomery County Fair; \$350 for Litchfield Festival of Trees; \$340 for Old Settlers Car Show; \$350 for Old Settlers Concerts; \$175 for Cardboard Boat Regatta; \$175 for Historical Society Summer Solstice Celebration; \$160 for Looking for Lincoln Welcome; \$450 for Litchfield Pickers Market; \$450 for Old Settlers Celebration; and \$250 for Imagine Hillsboro Markets. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed four conditions for siting approval for Montgomery Springs Solar on Route 127 just south of the former VFW hall. Project Developer Sido Shira was present at the meeting to answer questions. Ruppert said panels in the proposed project are a little tight compared to other solar arrays, Shira assured the committee the ground cover management plan will take into account the anticipated amount of shade due to panel location. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve the siting permit for Montgomery Springs Solar subject to the following four conditions: 1) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC, shall provide detailed construction drawings for review by the relevant authorities no less than two months prior to the commencement of construction of the solar project; 2) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC, shall provide the name and contact information of the designated construction liaison once the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) team or construction team has been on-boarded by the developer; 3) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC, shall provide the name and contact information of the contracted Operations and Maintenance (O&M) company once that company has been contracted by the developer; and 4) Access to the facility off S IL Route 127, will be developed in accordance with IDOT standards and will be designed and maintained to minimize impact to adjacent properties. Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC, will coordinate with IDOT as needed; typical approvals or coordination for use of state roads include permits for over-size or over-weight vehicles, permits for any work on**

constructing/modifying entrances/exits, or permits for any use causing damage to the state roads being used. All in favor, motion carried.

5. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the developer has provided much of the additionally requested information after the April 28th, 2025, public hearing, and the committee will deliberate on siting approval for the proposed project on Old Route 66 south of Litchfield next month.
6. **CF IL Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** Ruppert said a public hearing for the project on Mine Avenue north of Farmersville has been set for 6 p.m. Thursday, May 22nd, 2025. **Motion by Rupert and second by Murzynski to approve an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the CF IL Solar project for an amount not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, Page 183).**
7. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed changes in the Employee Handbook developed in cooperation with Bushue HR. He asked the board to review the proposed handbook and be ready to act at the June meeting.
8. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed the spreadsheet of offices in the Historic Courthouse requiring notarized documents. He stated each office should have a notary because documents needing notarized at the building should be able to be notarized in the building, but stated this request is not mandatory. Whitworth said the county should pay for all insurance, bond, and other legal costs for any county staff who are notaries. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beck to request at least one person in the County Clerk's office, at least one person in the Treasurer's office, and at least one person in the Supervisor of Assessments' office is a notary. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Ordinance Update/Approval:** Ruppert asked County Board Administrator Plunkett to explain a proposed Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Ordinance. Plunkett stated the goal of this initiative ordinance is to: 1) include standard "responsible bidder" language requiring all bidders to comply with state law, provide certificates of insurance, comply with prevailing wage, participate in an apprenticeship program, provide certified payrolls; 2) establish a "Montgomery First" Local Business Adjustment to allow county businesses to reduce bids by up to 5% but not more than \$20,000; and 3) allow the county to consider, at its discretion, attaching a Project Labor Agreement to any public works or construction contract over \$100,000. Ruppert said the committee will review the ordinance for a month and allow time for the State's Attorney to also review and comment.
10. **EMA/EPA Office Deputy Director Update/Approval:** Ruppert said EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough explained the need for an office assistant and provided a tentative job description. He said the EPA delegation agreement requires him to inspect the landfill weekly as well as respond to numerous open dumping complaints which result in a substantial time out of the office. He said some of the costs for this employee can be recovered through the EMA and EPA grants. Ruppert stated the committee voted to add an EMA/EPA employee for up to 30 hours per week at the county's starting hourly rate of \$16.00 an hour unless otherwise recommended by the Finance & Budget Committee. He reported the Finance & Budget Committee agreed with Hough's recommendation to set the starting salary at \$19/hour. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Murzynski to**

add an EMA/EPA Deputy Director for up to 30 hours per week at up to \$19/hour. All in favor, motion carried.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said rain water is running over the porch roof on the south side of the Historic Courthouse after roof replacement, and the contractor will be returning to remedy it soon. He reported the Maintenance department responded to 67 work orders over the past month, and the elevator at the Historic Courthouse returned to operation on Monday afternoon, May 12th, 2025.
2. **Emergency Historic Courthouse Repairs Update/Approval:** Hughes said an invoice has been presented for completed emergency repair work at the Historic Courthouse. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beason to pay the \$63,000 invoice from RL Contractors for emergency work at the Historic Courthouse from the \$300,000 building maintenance budget from Office 375. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth (Young had left the meeting). **All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee will consider awarding the low bid when the DCEO grant agreement paying for the new generator is signed.
4. **Courthouse Complex Chiller Update/Approval:** Hughes stated the new chiller for the Montgomery County Court Complex arrived on Monday, May 5th, 2025, to be installed by Friday, May 9th, 2025, and is working fine on manual mode. The contractor is scheduled to return to address control issues.
5. **DC Waste & Recycling Baler Lease Update/Approval:** Hughes said according to the State's Attorney, the county can sell the baler to DC Waste for \$1 at the end of the current lease term. DC Waste owner Bryan Deming indicated by email he would agree to those terms. **Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to amend the lease agreement with DC Waste & Recycling by adding a \$1 buy-out option at the end lease agreement. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 184-188).**
6. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Hughes reported both Maintenance Director Phil Ernst and Circuit Clerk Dan Robbins believe five hours per day is the appropriate amount of time needed to clean the Montgomery County Court Complex.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski said while the tentative Road Use Agreement (RUA) was 95% complete as of Tuesday, May 6th, 2025, attorneys for UKA recently notified the county work on the agreement has been "paused."
2. **Resolution 2025-3 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Grove Branch Trail, Walshville Township Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Grove Branch Trail. The project cost estimate is \$6,000 with the county responsible for 50%. **Motion by Murzynski and**

second by Whitworth to approve Resolution 2025-3 appropriating \$3,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Grove Branch Trail in Walshville Township. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 189-190).

3. **Resolution 2025-4 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Dutchmans Avenue, Walshville Township Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Dutchmans Avenue. The project cost estimate is \$6,000 with the county responsible for 50%. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Corso to approve Resolution 2025-4 appropriating \$3,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Dutchmans Avenue in Walshville Township. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 191-192).**
4. **Resolution 2025-5 appropriating funds for 100% county culvert replacement on Ohlman Road Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Ohlman Road. The project cost estimate is \$38,000 with the county responsible for 100%. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Bergen to approve Resolution 2025-5 appropriating \$38,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a culvert replacement on Ohlman Road in Audubon Township. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 193-194).**
5. **Resolution 2025-6 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported hearing from IDOT since the committee meeting and asked the County Board to anticipate taking action at the June meeting.
6. **New Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the floor of the new building was poured on Monday, May 5th, 2025; storm sewer work is complete; the contractor is working on the parking lot area, and the building package should arrive from the vendor FBI, who is based in Indiana, in the next two weeks.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie remotely:

1. **Animal Control Funding Request Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported Development & Personnel Committee Chairman Ruppert made a written request for \$7,500 from ARPA interest to pay for a new lawnmower, a cremains processor, ventilation fans, and a tranquilizer gun safe. The fans have been provided. The committee voted to allow Animal Control to make the necessary purchases and will transfer the funds at the end of the fiscal year.
2. **Audit Report Update/Approval:** Treasurer Nikki Lohman introduced Robin Klingler from Auditor Scheffel Boyle's Alton office. Klingler said the county earned a clean opinion on financial statements and a clean opinion on federal expenditures. She reported three compliance findings and one significant deficiency on internal control; the significant deficiency is due to the county relying on auditors to prepare financial reports. Klingler noted a FY2024 deficit of \$639,690 across all funds, but pointed out the county spent \$1.9 million in ARPA grant funds during the fiscal year. Regarding the county's current financial condition, she noted the recommendation is for 180 days of operation to be kept in reserve, and the county has 465 days of operation in reserves. Ritchie thanked

the auditor and Treasurer Lohman. The board will be asked to take action on the audit report at the June meeting.

3. **ARPA Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Treasurer Lohman provided an ARPA spreadsheet to the committee, and noted all of the \$5.5 million in ARPA funding has been expended except for four items, all of which are under contract.
4. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reported the Board of Review will open for the 2025 year on June 2nd, 2025, and the county earned a state multiplier of 1.0000 for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year. Ritchie stated her office budgeted \$15,000 for a required GIS software switch to ArcPro, but the actual cost will be \$7,848.54 over the budget. The committee discussed taking the cost overrun from the budgeted \$100,000 coal contingency, but ultimately decided to terms provided by Bruce Harris & Associates to pay for the cost overrun next fiscal year. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve the ArcGIS Pro Parcel Fabric Conversion contract with Bruce Harris & Associates of Batavia for \$22,848.54. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie said although the March coal royalty payment was received late and therefore not on the report, it was in excess of \$180,000. He stated total coal reserves are \$10.3 million.
6. **County Solar Project Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed solar proposals for county buildings garnered by Maintenance Director Phil Ernst in February, 2024. Committee member Evan Young has solicited another proposal, which is not complete yet. He said the committee will continue to analyze the costs and benefits before making a recommendation.
7. **Electric Bids Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported three brokers submitted five proposals, the least expensive of which ranged from a 27.1% increase to a 42.9% increase. After discussion, the committee is recommending the least expensive rate of 0.08792 for one year, up from this year's rate of 0.06918. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve a 12-month contract with Direct Energy through Your Choice Energy. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 195-202).**
8. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed a spreadsheet prepared by Treasurer Lohman comparing FY26 collective bargaining wage increases of 6%, 4%, and 85 cents per hour. The committee discussed percentage raises versus set-amount raises, and ultimately asked Lohman to add 5%, \$1 and \$1.15 to the spreadsheet for review and a recommendation next month.
9. **IPRF Work Comp Refund Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated after reclassification work by Treasurer's office employee Trish Roemelin, the county earned a workers' compensation refund of \$9,124.
10. **IMRF Invoice Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported due to the state mandated higher increase in Sheriff's salary and his subsequent retirement, IMRF has imposed a \$96,281.66 penalty on the county. He said payments will be deferred over the next three years.
11. **Bellwether Letter of Agreement for FY2026 Budget Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated the committee reviewed and discussed the proposed agreement with Bellwether for FY2026 budget preparation for the same terms as the past two years: \$12,000 payable in

two installments. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve of the Letter of Agreement with Bellwether for FY2026 budget services for \$12,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 203-205).**

- 12. Pre-Paid Vendor List Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed the Pre-Paid Vendor List, with emphasis on special funds on the list highlighted by County Clerk Leitheiser. The committee discussed whether funds not originating from specific vendors should be included on the list and ultimately determined the list is more accurately a part of a process than a list of vendors. He said the committee discussed various ideas such as developing a Pre-Approved Payment List with regular reviews and returning to the practice of committee review of pre-approved payments. The committee hopes to make a recommendation next month.

- 13. Travel Ordinance 2025-10 Update/Approval:** Ritchie said after the proposed travel ordinance was rejected by the full board last month, the committee discussed returning the suggested language requiring “prior written approval” to the ordinance. The committee discussed adding the “prior written approval” language only for out-of-state travel. Chairman Donaldson read the proposed new language from the travel ordinance, and Young said he is still opposed to the updated ordinance because the new language should apply to all travel, not just out-of-state travel. Bergen also questioned why the language could not refer to both in-state and out-of-state travel. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to adopt amended Travel Ordinance 2025-10 requiring prior written approval for reimbursement for out-of-state overnight travel, meals and lodging. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Whitworth. Voting no: Bergen, Hancock, Ruppert, Young. Motion carried 10-4. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 206-207).**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS:

- 1. Gary Hulbert as Trustee to the Nokomis Area Fire Protection District Update/Approval: Motion by Donaldson and second by Ruppert to appoint Gary Hulbert as Trustee to the Nokomis Area Fire Protection District to a three-year term beginning May 1, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Daniels and second by Murzynski to pay all approved bills and payroll. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth (Young had left the meeting). All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN: The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, June 10th, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Murzynski and second by Hancock to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, June 10th, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois on Tuesday, June 10th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 13 members present, 1 member absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Evan Young

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Mark Hughes.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Daniels and second by Hughes to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, May 13th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions, and he commented courtroom AV renovations have begun.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present and noted receiving a \$500 grant from Grain Belt Express for a radio upgrade. He also said he received seven applications for the deputy director position and has received grants and donations to replace a drone.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present and added construction work at the intersection of Coffeen Road and Seven Sister has begun, which will close the intersection for a maximum of 30 days.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was not present.
14. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was present for questions.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the committee met Monday, June 9th, 2025 and reviewed six applicants. They also voted to fund half of the 911 Rave Alert System.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth reported the board will meet in July.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported the board will meet on Thursday, July 12th, and also stated Executive Director William Montgomery has announced his resignation.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported working on DCEO grant projects.
- **UCCI** – Corso reported he recently attended a leadership conference.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported the board will meet Thursday, and 4-H shows will begin soon.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the board met May 15th, 2025 and is anticipating funding cuts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said Information Services Director Curt Watkins reported to the committee he has been completing court grant work, replacing PCs, performing server upgrades and data room restructuring, and preparing for the move to ArcGIS Pro. Cyber security updates are complete; however, monthly training participation is down among employees.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reported completing EMA training. He is in the process of hiring a deputy director and is planning a tabletop exercise for the Historic Courthouse this fall.
3. **911 Rave Alert System Update/Approval:** 911 Director Ed Boyd presented information on a Motorola Rave alert system to notify cell phones in a determined area about local emergencies, such as weather events, mass evacuations, boil orders, etc. The cost is \$26,500 covering five years, and the ETSB has determined it cannot make the expenditure. Dan Hough reported the 708 Board has committed to funding half of the cost. Whitworth asked if the funding will be required up front, and Boyd responded affirmatively. Boyd will present the plan at the scheduled July 30th, 2025, Mayors Meeting.
4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the committee will meet next on Tuesday, July 15th, 2025 at 6 p.m. in the Courthouse Annex.
5. **Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval:** A meeting date has been set for 1 p.m. Thursday, July 17th, 2025, for the committee to re-examine department head termination procedures.

6. **Sesquicentennial Banner from Tim Elliott Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett noted the 1971 Montgomery County Sesquicentennial Banner on display in the County Board Room was donated by Tim Elliott of Hillsboro.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin is working to reduce the inventory of 18 dogs and 15 cats at the facility. He said the new mower, tranquilizer gun cabinet, and cremains processor are working well, and service will begin soon in Litchfield.
2. **Scheduled Solar Hearings Update/Approval:** Ruppert said solar siting permit public hearings are set for Monday, June 23rd, 2025, at 6 p.m. for RDC IL N24th Solar near Harvel, and on Monday, July 7th, 2025 at 6 p.m. for Atticus Solar and Finch Solar on Route 127, and on Monday, July 28th, 2025 at 6 p.m. for Montgomery IL Solar 1, all in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois.
3. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Project Developer Kayleigh Furth of Carson Power was present for the committee meeting and reviewed information she provided which was requested at the April 28th, 2025 public hearing about Litchfield Solar, on Old Route 66 south of Litchfield. She reviewed the drain tile survey map, option to purchase, fence detail, conversations with South Litchfield Drainage District #1, an email from the Litchfield Airport Authority expressing no objections, conversations with neighbor Dee Leitschuh regarding the preference of no landscaping to the north, and correspondence with the Illinois Department of Transportation. Leitschuh said she spoke to other drainage district officers who would prefer to meet when the spring planting season is completed. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Bergen to approve the siting permit for Litchfield Solar with the following conditions:** 1) The developer shall provide detailed construction drawings for review by the relevant authorities no less than two months prior to the commencement of construction of the solar project; 2) The developer shall provide the name and contact information of the designated construction liaison once the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) team or construction team has been on-boarded by the developer; 3) The developer shall provide the name and contact information of the contracted Operations and Maintenance (O&M) company once the company has been contracted by the developer; 4) The developer shall provide a signed agreement with South Litchfield Drainage District #1 for replacement of existing clay tile shown on the submitted drain tile survey; 5) As noted by the applicant, no vegetative landscape to be installed on the North perimeter of the project; 6) The developer shall provide a copy of the required IDOT permit for the entrance culvert off Old Route 66; 7) Litchfield Solar LLC will offer the Contingent First Right of Refusal Agreement to be signed between Litchfield Solar LLC and Denelle E. Leitschuh Revocable Trust prior to the beginning of construction of the solar facility. All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Solar Application Review Agreements with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee recommended approval of the standard agreements with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of three solar applications. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Murzynski to approve an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for**

independent review of the RDC IL N24th Solar project for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 208-209). Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to approve an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the Atticus Solar project for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 210-211). Motion by Ruppert and second by Beck to approve an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the Finch Solar project for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 212-213).

5. **Small Biz Start-Up Grant Follow-Up Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported County Board Administration recently sent a letter to Small Biz Start-Up Grant recipients who have not yet submitted final grant reports. He said many have since responded and some new businesses have yet to open. Ruppert stated the committee will continue to monitor their progress.
6. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the Phase II grant agreement has been signed by the county and is now awaiting state signatures. Phase III has been announced and County Board Administration has been in contact with First Due Consulting representative Dan Rogers for grant writing services. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve an agreement with First Due Consulting of Witt for reimbursable grant writing for a not-to-exceed fee of \$1,500. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted since the presentation to the full board in May, the only change to the proposed new Employee Handbook is the introduction of language mirroring changes made by the County Board to the Montgomery County Travel Ordinance last month. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to approve the Montgomery County Employee Handbook, effective upon passage. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** Ruppert said committee members discussed the proposed downward adjustment numbers of 5% up to a maximum of \$20,000 local business adjustment. He said the committee would like to continue researching those numbers and give State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti an opportunity to offer legal advice.
9. **Viriden Wind Extension Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert introduced Jeff Smith and Jack Butler of UKA, along with their attorney Amy Antonioli. Project representative Butler said in spite of the change in the management team, UKA is completely committed to the 100MW wind project east of Farmersville. Ruppert reminded the board the Montgomery County Wind Siting Ordinance requires construction to begin within one year of siting approval, which was granted by the County Board on June 11th, 2024. Per County Board permit conditions, UKA has requested an extension to December 31st, 2026. The committee recommended an extension to September 30th, 2025 to allow time to meet and determine how much of a time extension will actually be required. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve the Resolution 2025-11 extending the construction deadline for Viriden Wind Energy to September 30th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 214).**

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said the Maintenance Department responded to 51 work orders in May. He stated adjustments continue to be made on the new chiller at the Courts Complex and new “A” coils are scheduled to be installed at several units at the Historic Courthouse.
2. **Alpha Controls Presentation Update/Approval:** Hughes said what the committee thought was going to be a presentation by Alpha Controls on managing Courts Complex HVAC controls was a presentation about the company’s energy savings solutions using software and artificial intelligence instead. He said the committee will continue to discuss the proposal.
3. **Elevator Maintenance Contract Update/Approval:** Hughes said he and Maintenance Director Ernst would like to examine the elevator contract in light of the recent 10-week shut-down, but still need to discuss the issue with the State’s Attorney. Hughes stated the item will be on next month’s agenda.
4. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** Hughes said the matter will be considered next month when the DCEO grant agreement for Phase II is signed and executed.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Section 23-01134-00-BR Audubon Township White Settlement Trail Bridge Replacement Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the committee opened sealed bids from C-Hill Civil Contractors of Campbell Hill, Stutz Excavating of Alton, and Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon for this project. Bids ranged from \$359,621.10 to \$412,021.45. The project will be 80% township funded and 20% county funded. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Hancock to award the apparent low bid of \$359,621.10 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fielden for Section 23-01134-00-BR in Audubon Township for the White Settlement Trail Bridge Replacement. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Section 23-18119-00-BR Witt Township East 22nd Road Bridge Replacement Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee also opened sealed bids from C-Hill Civil Contractors of Campbell Hill, Stutz Excavating of Alton, and Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon for this project. Bids ranged from \$376,672.23 to \$428,670.56. The project will be 80% township funded and 20% county funded. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to award the apparent low bid of \$376,672.23 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fielden for Section 23-18119-00-BR in Witt Township for the East 22nd Road Bridge Replacement. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Walshville Trail Improvement Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported engineers at WHKS are working on the project development report, which includes identifying existing drainage patterns and side street tie-ins. He said construction remains on schedule to begin in 2026 or 2027. County Engineer Greenwood added remaining IDOT Rebuild Illinois funds must be authorized by July 1st, 2025. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to approve a resolution to appropriate**

\$150,000 for Section 20-00144-00-FP Phase I roadway design for improvement and relocation of the Major Collector roadway through Walshville. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 215).**

4. **Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters Avenue Intersection Project Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood told the board the intersection was closed and work began on Monday, June 2nd, 2025. The contract calls for 30 working days, but Greenwood said he anticipates the closure to remain in effect for 2-3 weeks depending upon weather.
5. **Resolution 2025-6 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Update/Approval:** Murzynski said committee members reviewed minimum recommended County Engineer salaries provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation, which increased 10% over last year. By participating in the program, 50% of the County Engineer's salary is reimbursed; the remaining 50% is paid through MFT funds. Chairman Donaldson noted the salary is set to meet the IDOT recommendation for reimbursement. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Bergen to increase the County Engineer's salary by 10% to \$132,255.75 effective December 1st, 2024. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 216-217).**

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reviewed the items on her monthly report, noting the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) approved with North Litchfield Township required some small typographical corrections. State's Attorney Affrunti will make the required corrections and present the agreement to Chairman Donaldson for his signature.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie pointed out coal royalty payments of \$142,936.05 in March and \$185,258.38 in April, both received in April. The payments bring the total Coal Fund balance to \$10,608,855.87.
3. **DevNet Contract Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and recommended a new contract with DevNet for five years beginning August 1st, 2025 for \$45,868.57 per year, payable quarterly. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve a five-year contract with DevNet beginning August 1st, 2025, for \$45,868.57 per year. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Convey Parcel 15-05-228-007 in Litchfield Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and recommended the resolution to transfer the Litchfield parcel at 817 W. Sargent Street sold by the trustee. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to convey parcel 15-05-228-007 in the City of Litchfield to Donna M. Hemken. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 218).**
5. **Audit Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee recommended approval of the FY2024 audit report under review since presentation at the April County Board meeting. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve the FY2024 Audit Report. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **MCSO K9 Squad Box Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported the current K-9 is a year from retirement and the Sheriff's department is making plans for a new K-9 to be trained and assigned to a deputy. Upgrades to the deputy's squad vehicle will have to be made to handle the K-9, and State's Attorney Affrunti agreed to pay the estimated \$10,550 cost from his Forfeiture Fund. Ritchie said the deputy will be reimbursed the \$2,100 for a doghouse concrete kennel pad poured at his residence.
7. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed a spreadsheet with FY2025 county employee salaries, collective bargaining agreement (CBA) raises for FY2026, and potential raises of varying percentages and dollar amounts. After discussion, the committee first voted to recommend raises based on a percentage rather than a dollar amount. After even more discussion the committee ultimately voted unanimously to recommend a 5.5% increase to non-union and part-time salary line items for FY2026. Ritchie pointed out the increase would be to the budget line item and distributed by department heads as they see fit. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend 5.5% non-union and part-time budget line item salary increases for FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval:** Continuing a discussion beginning with the May committee meeting, Ritchie reported State's Attorney Affrunti has researched statutory authority for each special fund and has no issue with removing them from the Pre-Approved Vendor List, per audit recommendations. Affrunti, Plunkett, Lohman and Leitheiser will meet prior to next month's committee meeting to review special funds on the Pre-Paid Vendor list for potential removal. The committee will also discuss a process to voucher special fund expenses such as citing statute on the "County Board Approved Signature" line of vouchers, and a process by which the County Board will review special fund vouchers.
9. **Montgomery County Farm Bureau Parking Lot Work Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the Montgomery County Farm Bureau has asked the board to participate in a project to seal and re-stripe the Farm Bureau parking lot, frequently used by the county. The committee agreed with Chairman Donaldson's recommendation to pay half of the \$4,200 estimated cost. Chairman Donaldson reminded the board the Farm Bureau has been generous with allowing the County Board to use meeting space when requested. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to spend \$2,100 from Fund 375 to pay for half of the seal and re-stripe work at the Montgomery County Farm Bureau parking lot. All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Whitworth and second by Beason to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The next meeting with Bushue HR is scheduled for 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 12th, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
2. The next meeting of the Wooded Acreage Ad Hoc Committee will be at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, July 15th, 2025, in the Courthouse Annex on the Courthouse Square in Hillsboro.

3. A public hearing for the proposed RDC IL N24 Solar project near Harvel is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Monday, June 23rd, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro. Public hearings for Atticus Solar and Finch Solar will begin at 6 p.m. on Monday, July 7th, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, and for Montgomery IL Solar 1 at 6 p.m. on Monday, July 28th, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.

APPOINTMENTS: None

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Hughes and second by Daniels to pay all approved bills and payroll. All in favor, motion carried. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN: The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, July 8th, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, July 8, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, July 8, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call: 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Jeremy Jones.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to approve the mileage and per diem. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Young and second by Corso to approve the minutes of the previous regular County Board meeting held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – No report provided, and Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett said he had updated packets and had two Enterprise Zone requests from Litchfield and one from Nokomis.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough said in light of deadly flooding events in Texas, he would like the County Board to consider supporting a mass notification system.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was not present.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Bane Ulrici said Recovery Court recently celebrated four graduations.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** -- Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was not present.
14. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus was not present.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was not present.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Beason and second by Jones to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason reported the meeting has been moved to Thursday, July 10, 2025.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski said the board will meet on Monday, July 14, 2025.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen said the committee will meet Thursday, July 17, 2025.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth reported the next meeting had been moved to Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported the corporation has partnered with Rivers & Routes at a cost of \$15,000 and has set the annual meeting for Monday, Aug. 11, 2025.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported working on DCEO grant-funded projects.
- **UCCI** – Corso said he plans to attend the annual conference in Galena.
- **U of I** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** – Jones had nothing to report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson stated IS Director Curt Watkins reported to the committee his department is working on concluding court grant upgrades, annual PC upgrades, and server upgrades. He said county employees need to continue to be diligent and on guard for phishing emails. His department is beginning work to upgrade the phone system and switches, projects funded by the DCEO Energy Transition Grant.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reported to the committee he has hired an assistant who will begin work the second week of July. He has ordered a new grant-funded drone which will be an asset to multiple departments, and he is working on other grant opportunities.
3. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 17, 2025.
4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 6:00 pm.
5. **Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 17, 2025 at 1:00 PM.
6. **Supervisor of Assessments Resignation Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the County Board received a letter of resignation from Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus on June 10, 2025. Her last day of employment will be July 11, 2025, and her last day in the office was Friday, June 27, 2025. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to**

accept the letter of resignation from Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus effective Friday, July 11, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.

7. **Deer Run Mine Update:** Donaldson said County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser shared a letter with the committee from IDNR to Deer Run Mine dated June 17, 2025, asking for numerous modifications to their application for Revision No. 1 to Permit No. 424 to increase an impoundment facility height. The letter gave Deer Run Mine one year to complete the application modifications. The county has also learned Deer Run had withdrawn its request to accept Springfield City Water, Light & Power (CWLP) coal combustion waste.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden Papin responded to 25 calls in June, and the facility is currently housing 12 dogs and 19 cats. Most of the county costs related to adoptions are for required spay/neuter services, and Papin is working on a plan to reduce those costs. Ruppert reported the contractual services to Litchfield is going well, and the committee discussed the plan of action for enclosing the porch at the facility, which is an improvement funded by Phase II of the DCEO Energy Transition Grant.
2. **CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Pivot Senior Developer Brittney Krebsbach was present at the committee meeting and reviewed a written presentation addressing seven issues raised at the May 22, 2025, public hearing including vegetative management research, community partnerships, drain tiles, cooperation with neighbors, local labor, glare potential, and sound mitigation. Due to feedback from the hearing, Krebsbach said the developer has moved inverters to the center of the project, is working on shifting the entire site away from Mine Avenue, and has added a vegetative buffer to the east side. The committee will work on siting approval conditions, share them with the developer, and present them for a recommendation vote at next month's meeting.
3. **RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert said relatively few issues were raised at the June 23, 2025, public hearing. The committee's consensus was to honor the property owner's request to waive the vegetative screening requirement in favor of a mowing agreement. The committee will work on standard siting approval conditions and then present them for a recommendation vote at next month's committee meeting.
4. **Bluestar & Horseshoe agreements with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee reviewed standard agreements with Hurst-Rosche for independent review agreements. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve the independent engineer review agreements with Hurst-Rosche for the Bluestar Solar projects for fees not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve the independent engineer review agreements with Hurst-Rosche for the Horseshoe Solar projects for fees not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 22, pages 219-221).**

5. **Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the public hearing was Monday, July 7, 2025, in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro. Ruppert noted the two community solar projects are side by side, and the committee intends to reach out to a neighbor.
6. **Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the public hearing date is set for Monday, July 28, 2025, beginning at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated projects in Phase I are about 85% complete. The grant agreement for Phase II has been executed and projects are underway, and the initial application for Phase III was submitted to DCEO on Friday, June 27, 2025.
8. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee continued to discuss the proposed Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative and Responsible Bidder Ordinance allowing local businesses who request to do so to reduce their bids up to a maximum of 5% if necessary to meet the low bid. The committee had been debating the \$20,000 cap. Matt Blankenship of Local 1084 told the committee according to his research, local labor initiatives have been utilized with success around the state, but suggested raising the cap to \$50,000. Roads & Bridges Committee Chairman Murzynski raised questions as to whether the Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative could apply to MFT-funded IDOT projects, and Ruppert replied affirmatively. Ruppert said it will be optional for local bidders to participate by utilizing this ordinance, which is simply a tool to promote local labor. Vice Chairwoman Whitworth said she fully supports local labor, but has heard questions from constituents if the Local Labor Initiative would be a disincentive for out-of-county companies to bid on county projects. Board member Jones said the point of the Local Labor Initiative is to encourage local bids. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Bergen to approve the Responsible Bidder Ordinance 2025-12 with “Montgomery First” Local Business Adjustment to Bid Award. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 222-225).**
9. **Montgomery County Wind Ordinance Update/Approval:** Ruppert said because the Montgomery County Wind Ordinance had no provision for extending the one-year deadline for construction to begin after siting approval, the committee discussed adding language allowing for an extension of up to two years, along with a \$250 per MW application fee for requesting the extension. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to amend the Montgomery County Wind Ordinance as presented, effective July 8, 2025, upon passage. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 226-249).**
10. **Secession Resolution Update/Approval:** Committee member Jeremy Jones is requesting an advisory referendum be placed on the March 17, 2026 ballot.
11. **Employee Handbook Distribution Update/Approval:** Before the full board meeting, Committee Chair Ruppert hosted a meeting between Bushue HR and Montgomery County department heads to explain changes in the newly adopted Employee Handbook, including new Bushue forms and the Illinois Paid Leave Act. Chairman Donaldson commended the committee for its work in producing an excellent handbook.
12. **Supervisor of Assessments Position Update/Approval:** With two resignations in the Supervisor of Assessments office along with two previous vacancies, Ruppert noted only

one person remains working in the office. Advertisements to fill the vacancies appeared in print on Monday, June 30, 2025, and were also posted on the website *Indeed*. The committee discussed contacting retired staff for short-term help and contracting with another county. Chairman Donaldson obtained a list of individuals who have already passed the qualifying SOA exam from the Illinois Department of Revenue, and a letter was mailed to each of them on Thursday, July 3, 2025. Chairman Donaldson said those who are leaving county employment need to give two weeks' notice excluding time off. Board member Young asked if the Farmland Assessment Review Committee needs to meet before their August 1 deadline, and Farmland Assessment Review Committee Chair Richard Lyons, who was present in the audience, said they have already met.

13. **National Primers Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted the committee reviewed a press release from the City of Litchfield dated June 19, 2025, regarding the announcement of a new primer ammunition manufacturing facility to be located in Litchfield's I-55 Commerce Center. Phase I of the project will begin in 2025, be operational in 2028, and create 85 jobs. Phase II will be operational in 2032 and create 75 more jobs.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Historical Marker Update/Approval:** Hughes shared a photo of the Illinois State Historical Society marker to be placed on the southeast corner of the Historic Courthouse lawn in Hillsboro. Jeff Dunn told the committee a dedication for the marker is planned for Friday and Saturday, Aug. 1-2.
2. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said the maintenance department completed 51 work orders in June, and Maintenance Director Ernst reviewed his report with the committee. The committee will advertise for Courts Complex boiler bids to be opened at the August committee meeting and be reimbursed through the DCEO grant. More recently, Hughes said the Maintenance department has been dealing with AC issues as well as plumbing issues at the Montgomery County Jail.
3. **DCEO Phase II Projects Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed the six items requested by Maintenance Director Ernst and funded by Phase II of the DCEO grant. Additionally, he said Ernst will take the lead in the VAC and ROE entrance repair and the Courthouse Annex rest room access.
4. **Elevator Update/Approval:** Hughes stated the committee reviewed a letter written by the County Board Administration to Otis Elevator detailing the issues encountered during the 10-week Historic Courthouse elevator outage.
5. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed three bids ranging from \$5,600 to \$8,400 for concrete pad improvements for the soon-to-arrive generator replacement at the Courts Complex, plus two bollards to protect it. The low bidder has agreed to include a third bollard at no extra cost. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to award the low bid of \$5,600 for 6x10 one-foot concrete pad plus three bollards to RL Construction of Butler. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Window Cleaning Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed a proposal to clean windows for \$2,205 at the Historic Courthouse and for \$2,750 at the Courts Complex, but took no action. Hughes said the need remains, so the committee may revisit the proposal.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Bid Opening for Section 23-07108-00-BR Harvel Township N. 26th Avenue Bridge Replacement Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee opened sealed bids ranging from \$314,955.03 to \$344,888. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Corso to award the low bid of \$314,955.03 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fielden for Section 23-07108-00-BR Harvel Township North 26th Avenue Bridge Replacement. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Harvel Drainage District #2 Drain Tile Improvements Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski said county policy regarding crossing county roads requires a bore, and cuts will only be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the situation and conditions. Harvel Drainage District #2 had asked for such consideration due to the substantial grade change required at Black Diamond Trail. Engineer Greenwood gave the district specific conditions, such as pipe specifications and saw cut and fill requirements, and shared plans with the committee indicating the conditions will be met. Murzynski stated Engineer Greenwood said he intends to approve the request. Harvel Drainage District #2 Commissioner Richard Lyons said in order to receive Rural Development financing terms, the \$2.3 million project must be completed by Dec. 31, 2025.
3. **Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters Avenue Intersection Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the first layer of asphalt was laid on July 1 and the second on July 2. Dirt work and striping should be completed the following week before the intersection is opened to traffic.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **Bruce Harris Proposal Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated Bruce Harris & Associates Illinois Account Manager Alex Simpson presented a proposal for the board to upgrade its public GIS website, noting Bruce Harris currently has 18 active websites and 5 more in development. Simpson demonstrated the product using the Vermillion County's website. The proposal included a cost not to exceed \$22,878.16 for building the new website, which would take about two months, and the monthly fee would be \$752, which is substantially less than the current Beacon contract. Simpson said work could begin when a contract is signed, and the county could negotiate payment terms. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to accept the proposal from Bruce Harris & Associates to build and maintain the Montgomery County public GIS website at a set-up cost not to exceed \$22,878.16 and a monthly maintenance cost of \$752. All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the resignation of the Supervisor of Assessments and Chief Deputy leaves one person in the office, and she is doing a great job. Vacancies have been posted, and the Illinois Department of Revenue allows a temporary SOA for 60 days. He stated the committee reached out to retired SOA Ray Durston to fill that temporary role, but he declined. He said another option is to contract

with a neighboring county for those services. The committee also discussed a possible stipend for the lone employee in the Supervisor of Assessments office and is requesting authority from the County Board to proceed. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to award a special stipend to the remaining Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments employee Michaela Gray. All in favor, motion carried.**

3. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** According to reports furnished by Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Ritchie noted the May coal royalty payment was \$98,165.83. Also in May, \$346,000 in coal interest was transferred to the General Fund per the County Board Resolution.
4. **FY2026 Budget Process Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Treasurer Lohman told the committee she has been working with Bellwether on the FY2026 budget process. She anticipates budget hearings to be held in August.
5. **COLA Salary Increase for State's Attorney Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Treasurer Lohman provided the committee with a Notice of Annual Salary Reimbursement Cost of Living Adjustment for State's Attorneys and Public Defenders setting a 6.1% COLA increase for state FY2026, which began on July 1, 2025. The notice set the State's Attorney's salary at \$169,865.81 and the Public Defender's salary at \$152,879.23. According to state statute, the Sheriff's salary is to be 80% of the State's Attorney's, or \$135,892.65. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to set the State's Attorney salary at \$169,865.81, the Public Defender's salary at \$152,879.23, and the Sheriff's salary at \$135,892.65 beginning July 1, 2025. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 22, pages 250-253).**
6. **County Office Drinking Water Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated per request from the Coordinating Committee, the Finance & Budget Committee was asked to reconsider the prohibition of office holders vouchering bottled water. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to allow Department Heads to voucher bottled water from Office Supplies budget line items. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval:** Ritchie said as recommended by the Finance & Budget Committee last month, the County Board Administrator, the Treasurer, the County Clerk, and the State's Attorney met to develop a plan to revamp the Pre-Paid Vendor List and report vouchers paid from the list. Ultimately, Ritchie said the list will be re-named the Pre-Approved Payment List and State's Attorney Affrunti will include statutory citations for special funds granting authority for payments from them. Additionally, committees will be furnished with monthly reports of payments made from this list.
8. **Animal Control Imprest Fund Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee discussed the need to reinstate an imprest fund with a \$500 cap at Animal Control for the more efficient purchase of dog food. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to reinstate the Animal Control Imprest Fund. All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Daniels and second by Hughes to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The next meeting of the Wooded Acreage Ad Hoc Committee will be on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 6:00 pm in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois.
2. The Rules Ad Hoc Committee will meet on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 1:00 pm in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois.
3. The Public Hearing for Montgomery IL Solar 1, on Route 16 east of Litchfield, will be held on Monday, July 28, 2025, at 6:00 pm in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois.
4. The next Mayors Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois.

APPOINTMENTS: None

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Bergen and second by Corso to pay all approved bills and Payroll.
ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Murzynski and second by Ruppert to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, August 12, 2025 – 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, August 12, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call: 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Moment of Silence: Chairman Donaldson deferred to County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser, who asked for a moment of silence in memory of Laura Cerven, an employee in her office who recently passed away at age 43. Leitheiser stated Laura Cerven began working in her office in December of 2022; and even though she served as a Deputy Clerk/Recorder for a short time, she was one of the most dedicated and proficient employees she's had the pleasure of working with in her 27 year tenure as Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder. Leitheiser said throughout Laura's brave battle with colon cancer, she consistently powered through her pain and chose to continue her work duties in the office until a few short weeks before her passing on Monday, July 21st, 2025. She said Cerven's work ethic and customer service qualities were second to none, and she was always willing to help her co-workers wherever she was needed. Leitheiser concluded by stating Cerven's legacy of strength and her dedication to service will be remembered by all who knew her, and her co-workers will be forever grateful for her service to the County Clerk/Recorder's office and to the citizens of Montgomery County. She extended her prayers to Cerven's family and friends. Members responded with a moment of silence in Cerven's memory.

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Ethan Murzynski.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Hughes and second by Young to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Corso and second by Murzynski to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, July 8, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions.

7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender’s Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** — Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff’s Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – filed by Michaela Gray. New Chief Deputy Assessor Tysha Mullen was present for questions.
15. **State’s Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was virtually present for questions.
16. **Treasurer’s Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was present for questions.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Whitworth and second by Bergen to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** - Beason reported due to funding cutbacks, Meals on Wheels is down \$50,000 in Montgomery County. He handed out a flyer soliciting donations.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the board met Aug. 11, 2025, to review applications.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** – Whitworth reported the board will meet on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025.
- **IL Association of County Officials** — Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** – Hughes reported the annual meeting was Monday, Aug. 11, 2025. He noted an increased affiliation with Rivers & Routes, an MCEDC bank balance of \$195,000, and added County Board member Christine Daniels is now the liaison to the economic development corporation since he is no longer on the Development/Personnel Committee.
- **Planning Commission** – Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Daniels reported DCEO Round 2 grant items for new carpet and kitchen updates are out for bids.
- **UCCI** – Corso reported information was given about wind and solar legislation and projects at the annual meeting.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported the 4-H season culminated in the Illinois State Fair.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the next meeting will be held on Aug. 21, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Bill Schroeder asked the County Board to consider forming an Ad Hoc Committee as they are doing now with the topic of Wooded Acreage Assessments for limiting the number of solar projects in the county. He suggested capping solar projects, either by number, acres, or megawatts to preserve farmland for farming use and stated Montgomery County is currently being taken advantage of by solar farm companies.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department is working on court grant improvements and the mapping move to ArcGIS Pro. He has begun the planning portion of the telephone system upgrade which he anticipates will take place in September. His department has also completed the annual PC swap and a test phishing campaign and will be replacing older switches soon.
2. **EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reported participating in a National Weather Service conference in St. Charles, MO. He said Hough is working on pursuing a mass alert system, and Hough reported to the board the county was recently turned down in the second phase of the siren grant application process.
3. **Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors Contract Update/Approval:** Donaldson said Tysha Mullen has accepted the position of Chief Deputy Assessor and has enrolled in classes to become certified as Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments. Ruppert added Mullen began work on Monday, Aug. 11, and has previously worked at the Montgomery County Housing Authority. Ruppert added after a meeting with Gary Twist and Stan Jenkins of Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors (PETA) for assessment field work and employee training, the committee voted to recommend a contract for their services. He expressed confidence PETA will keep the tax cycle on schedule. In answer to questions, Ruppert noted the cost of the contract will come from unspent funds in the SOA office salary line items. Donaldson added the monthly contract cost is \$14,583 and the contract can be terminated in less than six months if their services are no longer needed. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Beason to approve a six-month contract with Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors for a total of \$87,498. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 254-257).**
4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Committee Chairman Russ Beason reported a successful meeting was held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, which included several members of the public and the North Litchfield Township assessor. The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025, at 6 p.m. in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
5. **Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval:** Committee Chairwoman Connie Beck reviewed recommendations from a Thursday, July 17, 2025 meeting, including a procedure to be used in the event of the termination of a department head. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to approve the revised Montgomery County Board Rules of Order as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Mayors Meeting Update/Approval:** Donaldson reviewed a successful meeting held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025. Agenda items included municipal and county responses to derelict properties, a presentation about electronic mass notification, and presentations from elected officials and department heads.

7. **Bluewave Solar & Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval:** Donaldson said companies have reached out to discuss leasing the County Farm ground for potential solar projects. The State's Attorney will review any offers to determine if the county is allowed to consider the leases under Illinois law.
8. **Closed Session Minutes Review Update/Approval:** The committee discussed committee closed session minutes from March 3, 2025, March 31, 2025 and June 4, 2025 and recommends all remain permanently closed. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Daniels for executive session minutes from the March 3, 2025 Development & Personnel Committee meeting, the March 31, 2025 Development & Personnel Committee meeting, and the June 4, 2025 Roads & Bridges Committee meeting remain permanently sealed. All in favor, motion carried.**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin referenced her report and added the office had been on four calls that day.
2. **CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed the siting application findings and proposed conditions. Buzz Becker of Pivot Energy was present virtually. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve siting for CF IL Solar in Farmersville with 5 conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed the siting application findings and proposed conditions, including a plan to row crop around the array for a vegetative buffer. Young asked how big this solar farm will be, and Ruppert responded it will include 28 acres. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve siting for RDC IL N24th Solar in Harvel with six conditions. All in favor, motion carried (Young voted against).**
4. **Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed the siting application findings and proposed conditions, adding a "Good Neighbor" agreement had been signed earlier in the day. Keith Morel of Ironwood Renewables was present. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to approve siting for Atticus Solar on Route 127 south of Hillsboro with six conditions. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to approve siting for Finch Solar on Route 127 south of Hillsboro with six conditions. All in favor, motion carried (Young voted against).**
5. **Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted since the public hearing was the previous week on Monday, July 28, 2025, the committee should be ready to discuss and make a recommendation at their September meeting.
6. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported 83.1% of Round 1 reimbursements have been received totaling nearly \$1.9 million, and 1.1% of Round 2 reimbursements have been received totaling \$14,800. County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett added notification was received earlier that afternoon that the county was approved to move to the next phase of the Round 3 award.
7. **Montgomery First Community Solar Engagement Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee considered an initial draft specifying three community benefits: 1) the applicant will purchase as much as possible in Montgomery County; 2) the applicant will recruit project labor from Montgomery County; and 3) the applicant will make annual

payments to Montgomery County, the fire department who covers the project location, and the South Central Illinois Regional Workforce Training & Innovation Center in Litchfield. The committee discussed adding Montgomery County EMA for payments, as well as studying more Community Benefits Agreement templates. The current draft was forwarded to the State's Attorney for review.

8. **Secession Resolution Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the committee debated an advisory resolution to be on the ballot asking Montgomery County voters if they would like to secede from Illinois and form a new state with other downstate counties, or become a part of Indiana or Missouri. Ruppert stated County Clerk Leitheiser said voters could petition the advisory referendum to be placed on the ballot with 860 signatures, and Ruppert said it is not in the best interest of the board to make a statement.
9. **Schedule Change for September Update/Approval:** Due to the Labor Day holiday, the next meeting will be on Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025, beginning at 5 p.m.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Boiler Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the committee reviewed three sealed bids for a new boiler in the Courthouse Complex ranging from \$70,592 to \$103,929. Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the bids, noting the bid requested a specific make and model number. The county will be reimbursed \$47,152 through Phase 2 of the DCEO Energy Transition grant, and the apparent low bidder noted a \$3,500 grant available from Ameren. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to award the low bid of \$70,592 to Henson Robinson of Springfield. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**
2. **Jaytech Water Solutions Presentation Update/Approval:** Hughes said Jaytech suggested water treatment for closed-loop HVAC systems. He said the representative provided test results for water in the Courts Complex and Montgomery County Jail systems, and found an elevated copper level. The committee will continue to investigate.
3. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes summarized the Maintenance Report, noting three dying trees on the jail grounds need to be removed and said the committee is considering installing a split unit AC in Courtroom 3 at the Courthouse Complex.
4. **Ameren Illinois Energy Assessment Offer Update/Approval:** Hughes reported Alpha Electric in Litchfield is working on a proposal to replace inefficient lighting fixtures through an Ameren grant.
5. **NAGS Arches Rail Trail Request Update/Approval:** Hughes said NAGS representative Ray Luebbert reported a damaged area about 700-800 feet long unable to be mowed due to the deep ruts on the Arches Rail Trail between Hillsboro and Butler. NAGS has maintained the recreational trail through a 2011 contract with the county. Hughes said engineer Cody Greenwood is working on a remediation plan and estimated cost and the committee will continue the discussion next month pending cost information.
6. **Historical Marker Update/Approval:** Hughes said the Historical Marker was installed on Historic Courthouse grounds and dedicated on Saturday, Aug. 2, 2025. Rob Smith of RL Contractors installed the post, Hillsboro Rental donated a post-hole digger, and Jeff Dunn painted the pole, all at no cost. Donaldson said the marker is very impressive and encouraged members to visit it soon.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Resolution 2025-7 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Hill Circle, Fillmore Township Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Hill Circle in Fillmore Consolidated Township. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$26,000 with Montgomery County's share estimated at \$13,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Young to approve Resolution 2025-07 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay one-half of an estimated \$26,000 project to replace a culvert on Hill Circle. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 258-259).**
2. **Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval:** Murzynski said Engineer Cody Greenwood will visit the site and develop a remediation plan to be potentially implemented this fall. The committee also discussed an ordinance prohibiting motorized vehicles so violators could be prosecuted.
3. **Walshville Road Improvement Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the Illinois State Archaeological Survey has informed the county the proposed Walshville Bypass site needs shovel testing. He said the county will notify landowners by letter, and construction could begin in the fall of 2026 at the earliest, but more likely in the spring or summer of 2027.
4. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed a Road Vacation Plat for Zanesville (originally Leesburg), a never-developed village in Zanesville Township. When asked, State's Attorney Affrunti said the vacation plan will need a petition signed by two-thirds of the impacted landowners and will need to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the County Board to proceed.
5. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** Murzynski said wiring has been roughed in and most of the concrete has been poured on the new building. He said some carpentry work remains, as well as trim work, and installing downspouts and overhead doors. Murzynski reported a change order removed \$22,000 in cost from the project.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Office Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed SOA Deputy Michaela Gray's report, noting the 2025 payable 2026 Board of Review session has been opened, 105 Certificates of Error have been completed, and a contract with North Litchfield has been executed for DevNet access.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported according to reports provided by Treasurer Lohman, the June coal royalty payment was \$170,361.72.
3. **Bruce Harris Contract for GIS Website Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated after County Board approval of a proposal from Bruce Harris last month, the committee reviewed a contract calling for an initial fee of \$22,003.31 and a monthly maintenance fee of \$752. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve the contract with**

Bruce Harris and Associates for the county GIS public website. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 260-277). Ritchie stated the transition date to Bruce Harris for the county GIS public website will be in the next six weeks to two months.

4. **Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed changes to the Pre-Approved Payment List made by the State's Attorney. He added the Finance & Budget Committee is now reviewing monthly payments from the Pre-Approved Payment List. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to recommend approval of the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval:** According to Ritchie, the committee reviewed the Christian County pre-employment contract requiring a 24-36 month commitment or training costs must be reimbursed. MCSO training costs are \$7,000 to \$8,000 per employee; enforcing training reimbursement could require civil court action. The State's Attorney is reviewing the idea, and County Clerk Leitheiser will continue to research this topic as well.
6. **Assessment Contract with Grisham/Walshville/East Fork MTA Update/Approval:** The MTA is now officially under contract with an assessor. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to recommend voiding the assessment contract with the Grisham/Walshville/East Fork Multi-Township Assessment District. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **FY2026 Budget Process and Budget Hearings Update/Approval:** Ritchie said forms have been distributed and Bellwether has scheduled budget hearings to begin on Thursday, Aug. 28, 2025, at 8 a.m. He added he expects the General Fund budget to show a six-figure surplus for FY2026, noting most variables such as health insurance and pay increases have been decided. He noted the committee will look closely at over-appropriations.
8. **Supervisor Of Assessments Office Stipend Update/Approval:** Ritchie said a discussion on a stipend amount occurred in the Finance Committee's closed session. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Bergen to award Supervisor of Assessments Office employee Michaela Gray a \$3,000 bonus effective the next payroll. All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Hughes and second by Hancock to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The next meeting with Bushue HR has been rescheduled for 10 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 15, 2025 in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
2. The next Wooded Acreage Ad Hoc Committee meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025, in the Conference Room at the Historic Courthouse.
3. There will be a special Finance & Budget Committee meeting for budget hearings beginning at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 28, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

4. Due to the budget hearings, the Coordinating Committee meeting will be moved to Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2025, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
5. Due to the Labor Day holiday, next month's Development & Personnel Committee meeting will begin at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
6. The location of the fall Electronics Recycling Drive has changed to the former Montgomery County Highway Department at 1215 Seymour Avenue from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Amy Jeffers of Hillsboro, Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Hughes to appoint Amy Jeffers of Hillsboro to the Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service to fill the term of Braunda Hopwood. All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Leonard Rovey to the Farmersville Waggoner Fire Protection District Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Beck to reappoint Leonard Rovey of Farmersville to a three-year term on the Farmersville Waggoner Fire Protection District beginning in September, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.
3. **Brett Holliday to the 708 Board Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to appoint Brett Holliday of Litchfield to the 708 Board to fill the unexpired term of Cory Bilyeu. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Murzynski and second by Hancock to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, September 9, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 12 members present, 2 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Rob Corso, Keith Hancock

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Finance & Budget Committee Chairman Ritchie.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Daniels to approve the mileage and per diem.** **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, August 12, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was present for questions.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Bane Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen was present for questions.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions and reported she will be mailing delinquent property tax notices next week, and the tax sale is scheduled for the last Monday in October, 2025.
17. **VAC Report-** Cassandra Hampton was present for questions.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Jones and second by Young to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.
All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** – Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the committee met on Monday, Sept. 8, 2025 to begin the grant hearing process.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** – Whitworth reported more mosquitoes are testing positive for West Nile virus, particularly in the Nokomis area; and she added flu shots should be arriving soon.
- **IL Association of County Officials** – Hancock was not present.
- **MCEDC** – Daniels reported a meeting will be scheduled with new Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath. Chairman Donaldson recognized Fath, who introduced herself to the board.
- **Planning Commission** – Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Daniels reported collecting quotes for Phase II DCEO Energy Transition Grant projects.
- **UCCI** – Corso was not present.
- **U of I** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported a budget increase to \$1.5 million, distributed pamphlets explaining WCDC programs, and he added the Montgomery County unemployment rate is now down a percentage point to 3.7 percent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said IS Director Curt Watkins reported working on court grant items with some supply issues, performing server upgrades, updating DevNet sketching software, working on fire/panic alarm updates, planning the phone system upgrade, working on remote access for township assessors, and nearing completion of the ArcPro upgrade. Donaldson said he reported phishing campaigns remain up, and Watkins will soon begin planning the GIS website change.
2. **EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said Director Dan Hough reported a visit from the acting Illinois EPA Director on Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2025 and said Montgomery County, Illinois was asked to be a test site for new forms and processes. He also reviewed his monthly EMA activity report.
3. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson said during the Aug. 19, 2025, committee meeting the ad hoc committee recommended Best Practices for the Supervisor of Assessments office. The committee will meet again on Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025, to potentially recommend legislative changes to the state. **Motion by Beason and second by Ritchie to recommend the list of Best Practices as presented to the Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments office. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 278-281).**
4. **Cell Phone Policy Update/Approval:** Donaldson noted the committee discussed reviewing which county employees need a county cell phone.

5. **Workforce Development Month Proclamation Update/Approval:** Donaldson read a proclamation denoting September as Workforce Development Month in Montgomery County. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Beason to adopt the Workforce Development Month Proclamation. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 282).**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin's report, highlighting 21 calls over the past month and only eight dogs at the Animal Control Facility.
2. **Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee will consider making a recommendation next month after Animal Control Warden Papin has an opportunity to review the documents.
3. **UKA Virden Wind Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Jack Butler and Lindsey Workman of UKA informed the committee about the 100 MW Virden Wind project permitted in 2024 and granted a three-month extension that expires at the end of September, 2025. Butler said UKA had originally envisioned three wind projects: the 100 MW Virden Wind project already permitted, a 150 MW Grand Prairie Wind project, and a 100 MW Pawnee Wind project. He said due to subsurface risks with the permitted Virden Wind turbine locations, continued supply chain and subsequent financial risks, UKA has determined Virden Wind and Grand Prairie Wind are no longer feasible and will let the siting permit expire at the end of September, 2025. Instead, UKA intends to combine the Virden Wind and Grand Prairie proposed footprints and develop a new 100 MW Pawnee Wind project; and the company envisions they will apply for siting approval in 2027 or 2028 with the project to be constructed between 2029 and 2031.
4. **Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval:** Ruppert described the proposed 4.99 MW community solar project just east of Litchfield on the north side of Route 16, and introduced Chase Wittich of Summit Ridge Energy who was present at the meeting. Ruppert said because of the location of the project, the committee recommended no vegetative screening. He read five siting conditions, including a condition adding a fully executed Community Benefits Agreement. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to approve siting for Montgomery IL Solar 1 on parcels 10-36-300-013 and 15-02-200-029 with five conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported projects continue in Phase I and Phase II, and the county is still awaiting an award amount for Phase III.
6. **Small Biz Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed a spreadsheet of grant recipients showing most businesses are successfully operating. Most of the rest of the businesses continue to progress toward an opening date, and only two businesses have shown no signs of progress.
7. **Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted the committee would like the opportunity to compare the county draft of this document to one submitted by Summit Ridge Energy and discuss both drafts next month.

8. **2026 County Holiday Schedule Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed the schedule of holidays for 2026, which included one additional holiday for General Election Day. Because the County Board had added Christmas Eve as a holiday in 2025 with the absence of an Election Day holiday, the committee discussed whether General Election Day should be added. He said the committee discussed eliminating a different holiday from the 2026 schedule, such as Juneteenth. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti noted Christmas Eve was added as a county holiday in 2025 at the request of the Chief Judge's office and stated the Chief Judge could choose to make Juneteenth a court holiday. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to approve the 2026 county holiday schedule adding General Election Day and eliminates Juneteenth. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, page 283).**

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 39 items on his report with the committee.
2. **Courtroom Three Split Unit Update/Approval:** Hughes said after Maintenance Director Ernst performed repair on the air handler, the system has maintained a 71-degree temperature in Courtroom Three in the Courthouse Complex, so the split unit may not be necessary. He said the committee may reconsider adding a split unit as a back-up using grant funds.
3. **Jaytech Water Solutions Proposal Update/Approval:** Hughes reviewed proposals presented last month from Jaytech Water Solutions of Maryland Heights, MO, for a one-time closed loop treatment of the Montgomery County Courts Complex HVAC system and annual lab testing. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beason to accept proposals from Jaytech Water Solutions of Maryland Heights, MO, for \$4,549.22 for closed loop treatment of the Montgomery County Courts Complex HVAC system, and for \$882.90 for annual lab testing. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **NAGS Arches Rail Trail Request Update/Approval:** Hughes said the Montgomery County Highway Department has analyzed and will remediate the issue.
5. **Window Cleaning Proposal Update/Approval:** **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to accept proposals from Dominic Ellinger in Litchfield to clean windows at the Historic Courthouse for \$2,205 and the Courts Complex for \$2,750. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed the purchase option agreement. Hughes said he will discuss the proposal with Silicon Ranch Solar and report back next month.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Resolution 2025-8 appropriating funds for 100% County culvert replacement on Oconee Road Update/Approval:** Murzynski stated the committee reviewed the resolution and map for 100% County culvert replacement on Oconee Road in Audubon Township. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$25,000 with Montgomery County responsible for the entire cost from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Bergen to approve Resolution 2025-8 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay in full an estimated \$25,000 to**

replace a culvert on Oconee Road. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 22, pages 284-285).

2. **NAGS Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee discussed a plan to address deep rutting and washout on the Arches Rail Trail to be implemented later this fall. Engineer Greenwood said the remediation will likely include cutting brush to allow equipment access, cutting ditches, and crowning the trail.
3. **Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed a proposal allowing the existing county road running through the City of Nokomis on East Union Street to be transferred to the City of Nokomis. Additionally, the existing county road, County Road 2300 E, would be transferred from the jurisdiction of Nokomis Township to Montgomery County. Chairman Donaldson informed members the goals of the transfer are to ensure the safety of the residents and nearby school from heavy equipment. There had been a prior arrangement reached in 1979 that allowed for this transfer; however, due to the proper paperwork not being filed with the state, the prior arrangement is no longer valid. Donaldson said he recently attended a Nokomis City Council meeting to discuss the plan and was accompanied by Committee Chairman Murzynski, County Board member Ruppert and Engineer Cody Greenwood. Murzynski said the committee will continue to research the plan and will continue to communicate with the city and township.
4. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed a road vacation plat for Zanesville (originally Leesburg), a never-developed village in Zanesville Township. Due to the proper paperwork not yet being received, the committee will make a recommendation next month.
5. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** Murzynski deferred to Engineer Greenwood, who reported industrial sized overhead garage doors will arrive Sept. 22, 2025. Additionally, he said rock is being laid and tapped down in the parking lot and the greenspace is receiving fresh top soil and is being seeded.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Office Update/Approval:** Ritchie reviewed Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen's report, noting 119 Certificates of Error completed for tax year 2024. IT has provided remote access for the Property Evaluation & Tax Advisor consultants who have completed most of the field work. The office is still expecting work to be provided to them from two township assessors, and Mullen continues to complete classes with the goal of passing the SOA exam by the end of the year.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted the coal royalty payment was \$100,771.04 in July, resulting in a total coal fund balance of \$10,344,801.64.
3. **Trustee Sale Parcel 13-06-179-001 Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported James VanOstran of Witt appeared before the committee questioning the trustee sale of parcel 13-06-179-001 in the City of Witt to a bidder from California for \$8,000. VanOstran expressed doubts that if the sale proceeds, the buyer will clean up the property. Transfer of the property was held for review.

4. **Transfer 12 Parcels from Trustee Sale Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed the parcels, and after discussion, decided to recommend transferring all of the parcels except 13-06-179-001 to allow more time to research VanOstran's concerns. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcels 08-15-452-001 and 08-15-452-002 in Nokomis Township to Chausse Family LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 13-06-231-011 in Witt Township to the City of Witt. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 13-06-231-014 in Witt Township to the City of Witt. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to transfer parcel 17-07-129-023 in East Fork Township to PJ Properties USA LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 08-22-427-003 in Nokomis Township to Andrew Graden. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 08-22-427-007 in Nokomis Township to Andrew Graden. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to transfer parcel 10-33-477-016 in North Litchfield Township to Piggy Bank Investment Properties, LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 12-22-437-001 in Irving Township to the Village of Irving. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 12-22-455-003 in Irving Township to Piggy Bank Investment Properties, LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 13-06-381-003 in Witt Township to Rocky Bay, LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to transfer parcel 17-35-360-004 in East Fork Township to Stone Way LLC, Valeria Espinoza. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to transfer parcel 20-22-383-034 in Grisham Township to Piggy Bank Investment Properties, LLC. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies of all Resolution transfers, see Resolution Book 22, pages 286-297).**
5. **Circuit Clerk Fee Resolution Update/Approval:** Ritchie said according to Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, language in the resolution had changed, but not fees. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti indicated he had reviewed and approved the recommended language changes. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beason to approve the updated Circuit Clerk Fee Resolution. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy of Resolution, see Resolution Book 22, pages 298-311).**
6. **FY2026 Tentative Budget Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Treasurer Nikki Lohman provided a working tentative FY2026 budget predicting a General Fund surplus of \$71,805.96. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to place the tentative FY2026 budget on display for public review. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **FY2026 Estimated Tax Levy Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported Mandy Myers of the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service came to the committee with a handout detailing her board's request for a tax levy of \$149,000 representing a 67.9% increase over last year. VAC Superintendent Cassandra Hampton described to the committee her board's request for a levy of \$127,997 representing a 13.17% increase over last year. Both will require a Truth in Taxation public hearing. Treasurer Nikki Lohman reviewed the county levy, and the committee recommended reducing the IMRF levy by \$132,358. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to approve an estimated FY2026 Montgomery County Tax Levy of \$5,081,785 which would result in a 4.999%**

increase from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve an estimated FY2026 Veterans Assistance Commission Tax Levy of \$127,997 which would result in a 13.1756% increase from FY2025 and require a Truth in Taxation Public Hearing. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve an estimated FY2026 Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$149,000 which would result in a 67.9029% increase from FY2025 and require a Truth in Taxation Public Hearing. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve an estimated FY2026 Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$438,943 which would result in a 4.999% increase from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve an estimated FY2026 Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$119,700 which would result in a 4.8130% increase from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve an estimated FY2026 Hillsboro Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$300,000 which would result in a 0.0006% decrease from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an estimated FY2026 Community Mental Health 708 Tax Levy of \$992,410 which would result in a 4.9687% increase from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an estimated FY2026 Senior Social Services Tax Levy of \$120,794 which would result in a 0.8386% increase from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to approve an estimated FY2026 Extension Tax Levy of \$157,000 which would result in a 0.0293% decrease from FY2025. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies of levies, see Resolution Book 22, pages 312-320).

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Murzynski and second by Daniels to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The fall Electronics Recycling Drive will be Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the former Montgomery County Highway Department at 1215 Seymour Avenue in Hillsboro.
2. Truth In Taxation public hearings are scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025, at the Raymond Ambulance Garage beginning at 6:00 p.m. for the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service and at 6:30 p.m. for the VAC.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Tyson Holshouser to the Montgomery County Board of Health Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Whitworth to appoint Tyson Holshouser to the Montgomery County Board of Health. All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Phil Speiser to the Mutual Drainage District No. 1 of Irving, Witt, Nokomis and Rountree Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to appoint Phil Speiser to the Mutual Drainage District No. 1 of Irving, Witt, Nokomis, and Rountree through September 2028. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Beason and second by Murzynski to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to enter executive session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss pending litigation. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Daniels, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.
Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to return to open session at 6:53 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Hughes and second by Jones to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, October 14, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. at the Montgomery County Farm Bureau in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, October 14, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Vice Chairwoman Dr. Patty Whitworth at 5:30 p.m.

Roll call was taken – 13 members present, 1 member absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by member Chad Ruppert.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was not present, but Chief Deputy Stephanie Keiser was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions and reported the one-day Christian County household hazardous waste collection set for Saturday, Nov. 1, 2025 in Taylorville. He also reported he has completed EPA landfill training and has learned from the National Weather Service about the possibility of returning local weather radio service to a county tower.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present and supplied a total of 3 months' reports.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – filed by Tysha Mullen, who was present for questions.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions, and added it has been an honor to represent Montgomery County and work with members of the County Board. He introduced First Assistant State's Attorney Brian Shaw and recommended his appointment.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.

17. VAC Report – Cassandra Hampton was present for questions and said the county will again be participating in Operation Green Light Nov. 4-11.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Murzynski and second by Jones to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** — Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski had nothing to report, but he said this board will meet next Monday evening.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen reported 911 staff has been replacing the building at the Cress Hill Tower.
- **Health Department** — Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** — Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** — Daniels reported Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath has been meeting with municipalities, training to write grants, and working on marketing and tourism for Montgomery County. She said the MCEDC board will meet next on Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025.
- **Planning Commission** — Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** — Daniels reported the board anticipates awarding bids funded by the DCEO Energy Transition Grant next month.
 - **UCCI** – Corso reported he will graduate from UCCI Leadership Academy soon, and stated he learned about abandoned cemetery grant opportunities at a Sept. 22, 2025, meeting.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported a meeting will be held soon.
- **WCDC** – Jones had nothing to report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: ProBilt Buildings owner Dean Lessman of Hillsboro described concerns about the quality of work at the new nearly-complete Highway Department building. He gave three examples of work at the building he believes does not meet specifications, and he said he feels the contractor is not qualified and the taxpayers are not getting their money's worth. He also expressed concerns concrete was purchased outside of Montgomery County and electrical work was done using out-of-county crews.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Vice Chairwoman Dr. Patty Whitworth:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Whitworth said Director Curt Watkins reported working on access control for court grant items, continuing server upgrades, working with DevNet, and completing finishing work on the ArcPro upgrade. She said Watkins also reported panic alarms have been moved from analog phone lines and phone system upgrades are on track to be completed by the end of October.
2. **Cell Phone Policy Update/Approval:** Whitworth reported the committee reviewed a Cell Phone Policy drafted by Bushue HR. In addition to the policy, the committee will be reviewing which employees need county cell phones. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to adopt the Montgomery County Cell Phone Policy. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 1-2).**

3. **EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval:** Whitworth said Director Dan Hough reported the drone had arrived and has been placed in service, and he continues to complete EPA training and respond to numerous open dumping complaints.
4. **Five-Year Waste Management Plan Update/Approval:** Whitworth stated the committee reviewed the Five-Year Waste Management Plan update drafted by the county with input from DC Waste. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to pass the resolution adopting the Five-Year Waste Management Plan. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, page 3).**
5. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Whitworth reported the ad hoc committee set its next meeting for 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025, to finalize recommendations to the State. She said Stan Jenkins of Property Evaluations & Tax Advisors indicated after the two-year moratorium on woodland acreage classification changes, the most prudent strategy may be to wait for property ownership change documents to trigger examination for possible reclassification going forward after Jan. 1, 2026.
6. **IDFPR Cemetery Relief Fund Grants Update/Approval:** Whitworth said Lucas Nowlan of the County Board Administration office has been researching and plans to apply for grants for Neece Cemetery in Audubon Township as well as the County Farm Cemetery before the Oct. 24, 2025 grant deadline. Board members briefly discussed which government level has responsibility for abandoned cemeteries.
7. **Resignation & Appointment of State's Attorney Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett read a letter of resignation submitted on Monday, Oct. 13, 2025 by State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti and effective at 3:59 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17, 2025. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Young to accept the resignation of Andrew Affrunti as Montgomery County State's Attorney effective 3:59 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17, 2025. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Whitworth and second by Jones to appoint Brian Shaw as temporary State's Attorney, effective at 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17, 2025 until a replacement is appointed. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 4-6).** Shaw, who has been First Assistant State's Attorney in Montgomery County since April 2025, was present at the meeting and said he currently lives in Litchfield. He has been a prosecutor for 20 years, and briefly described his employment history. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser said the resignation will result in an election for the two-year unexpired term during the 2026 General Election cycle and stated petition packets for the March 17, 2026, Primary Election may be filed in her office beginning Monday, Oct. 27, 2025, through Monday, Nov. 3, 2025.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Chad Ruppert:

1. **Health Insurance Renewal Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported Assured Partners representative Tony Johnston said Blue Cross Blue Shield's proposal to meet the 8% rate cap was to change to plans from a \$1500 deductible to a \$2000 deductible on two of the four county plans. Ruppert stated he recommended an option that maintained the \$1500 deductible in the two plans at a 9.86% increase; however, that increase dropped to 7.67% due to a bundle discount for continuing with the present vision and dental optional plans. Ruppert also relayed information from Johnston stating the county's loss ratio was currently at 1.46 and to inform the board the county should expect major premium

increases next year. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Ritchie to approve Blue Cross Blue Shield Option 1 for FY2026 at a premium increase of 7.67%. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 7-8).**

2. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported seven dogs and 19 cats & kittens at the facility to the committee. She reported calls for the past month were up; and she has scheduled an adoption event from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Oct. 25, 2025 at Rural King in Litchfield.
3. **Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and recommended the proposed Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual with revisions reflecting current Montgomery County operations. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve the Montgomery County Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 9-40).**
4. **Wind & Solar Application Rate Review Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted the current fees for wind and solar application review have fallen behind the standard. Currently, both application fees are \$2,500/MW with a cap of \$250,000. He said the committee also discussed adding a one-year expiration date to solar siting approval similar to the wind ordinance. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to amend the Montgomery County Ordinance Regulating the Siting of Wind Energy Conversion Systems to increase fees to \$5,000/MW with a cap of \$500,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 41-64).** **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to amend the Ordinance for Solar Energy Farm and Solar Garden Installations in Unincorporated Montgomery County to increase fees to \$5,000/MW with a cap of \$500,000 and to add the one-year expiration date and extension request provisions from the wind ordinance. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 65-83).**
5. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported Phase 1 of the grant is 90% complete, Phase 2 is 32% complete, and the county is still awaiting the award amount for Phase 3.
6. **Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee discussed the proposed language from Summit Ridge, the timing of donations, and other potential terms of an agreement. County Board Administration will revise proposed language and the committee will continue the discussion next month.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chair Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 41 items on his report, including repairing the brick wall of the County Clerk's record storage in the basement of the Historic Courthouse. He said window cleaning for both the Historic Courthouse and Courthouse Complex is expected to commence this month; the elevator in the Historic Courthouse ceased operating on Sept. 11 due to a faulty travel cable and a replacement was ordered on Sept. 19, 2025, with Otis Elevator Company anticipating the elevator returning to service sometime in mid-October. Vice Chairwoman Whitworth noted the committee discussed the possibility of replacing the current elevator in the Historic Courthouse with a hydraulic elevator.

2. **Historic Courthouse South Entry Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the committee discussed updating the south entry to the Historic Courthouse to a key fob system, similar to the north door entry. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beason to accept Wareham Security's proposal for \$5,235 to update the security hardware on the south double door entrance to the Historic Courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval:** Hughes said Silicon Ranch, a solar developer based in Nashville, TN, presented a proposal to the committee for an option to buy the remainder of the county farm (120 acres) to develop as a 10 Megawatt solar field. They are seeking a 3-year option agreement for \$10,000 which would allow them to establish an interconnect agreement with Ameren. Since the committee meeting, the State's Attorney has reviewed the proposal and advised against an option sale and stated this county owned real estate must be put out for bid prior to being sold.
4. **EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval:** Hughes said there has been a request to install a grant funded EV charging station on the east side of the Historic Courthouse. He stated a detailed plan will be reviewed at next month's committee meeting.
5. **DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval:** Hughes said the county has \$10,000 in DCEO grant money to spend in the County Board Room. Options for how the board could best utilize this money will be discussed at next month's committee meeting.
6. **Court Complex ADA Grant Update/Approval:** Hughes said Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported to the committee he is applying for a grant to allow the Courthouse Complex to update restroom doors to meet handicap accessible requirements.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Resolution 2025-9 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement of Prange Ave., Walshville Township Update/approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Prange Avenue in Walshville Township. He stated the total cost of the project is estimated at \$25,000 with Montgomery County responsible for half the cost and Walshville Road District responsible for the other half. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Bergen to approve Resolution 2025-9 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay one-half of an estimated \$25,000 project to replace a culvert on Prange Avenue. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 84-85).**
2. **Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval:** Murzynski said brush has been cleared and the trail has been leveled. He stated County Highway Engineer Greenwood is investigating a possibility of IDOT providing the county with road millings to surface the trail. Additionally, Greenwood asked the committee to explore possible options to restrict personal vehicles from using the trail. Murzynski said the board viewed photos of the work, and member Hughes congratulated the Highway Department on the excellent work performed.
3. **Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee continued to discuss the possibility of allowing the existing County Road (which runs through the City of Nokomis on E. Union Street) to be transferred to the City of Nokomis.

4. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed a road vacation plat for Zanesville (originally Leesburg), a never-developed village in Zanesville Township. Engineer Greenwood reported the landowners still intend to continue with the road vacation and are working on an updated plat.
5. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the industrial-sized overhead garage doors have been installed on the new Highway Department building. Additionally, several windows which broke during installation are being replaced, several of the pedestrian doors are also being replaced, and the floor will soon be sealed. He stated the Highway Department intends to heat and insulate this new Heavy Equipment Shed. Insulation has been purchased, and the department plans to install it themselves later this fall. Both Murzynski and Greenwood said they will address every issue raised by taxpayer Dean Lessman in his public comments made earlier in the meeting, and Greenwood said final payment for the project will not be issued until work on the punch list is completed.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Office Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed reports from SOA Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen and from Gary Twist of Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors (PETA). It appears a Township Assessor (Hillsboro Township) and a Multi-Township Assessor (Bois D'arc, Pitman, Harvel, Zanesville, Raymond Townships) have both resigned; SOA and PETA staff were in the field catching up on this outstanding need. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser noted her office could give guidance to townships on the legal process required for townships to appoint replacements for the vacancies.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported an August coal royalty payment of \$118,850.86 leading to a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,392,664.87.
3. **Parcel 13-06-179-001 in Witt Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed the City of Witt property pulled from the trustee surplus parcel sale last month after local citizen James VanOstran raised questions about the potential buyer. Ritchie said State's Attorney Affrunti advised the committee the County Board could either reject the sale or proceed. He said if the sale is rejected, the property goes back to the County Trustee. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to reject of the transfer of parcel number 13-06-179-001 in Witt Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Transfer 17 Parcels from Trustee Sale Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and recommended transferring 17 delinquent parcels sold at the trustee sale. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to transfer parcel 04-33-402-002 in Harvel Township to Harold Cantrall Jr. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 16-11-203-004 in Hillsboro Township to Cheryl Arthur. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to transfer parcel 17-35-328-004 in East Fork Township to 4Forty Solutions, LLC, Stonebridge Jouxmen Group LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 22-23-178-004 in Fillmore Consolidated Township to Philip Mitchell. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 10-36-100-011 in North Litchfield Township to Danny Eickhoff. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer mineral rights parcel 03-19-100-301 in**

Pitman Township to the Bobby Smith & Carolyn D. Smith Trust. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 15-04-231-016 in South Litchfield Township to 4Forty Solutions, LLC, Stonebridge Jouxmen Group LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to transfer parcel 10-33-388-004 in North Litchfield Township to Triple C Holdings. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 16-01-204-035 in Hillsboro Township to Caleb Miller. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 09-05-277-001 in Audubon Township to Kristi Campbell. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 12-22-451-007 in Irving Township to Shawn Isaacs & Eli Isaacs. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Bergen to transfer parcel 15-04-207-019 in South Litchfield Township to Christopher Bates. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 17-35-384-003 in East Fork Township to Nikolas W. Kunz & Mindi J. Kunz. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to transfer parcel 20-24-452-014 in Grisham Township to Eli Isaacs. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hancock to transfer parcel 06-18-100-018 in Raymond Township to Poggenpohl LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to transfer parcel 20-22-335-018 in Raymond Township to Fatmir Dzabiri. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to transfer parcel 22-23-178-003 in Fillmore Consolidated Township to Conway McElroy. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 23, pages 86-102).

5. **County Starting Salary Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee discussed the starting salary, set at \$1 above the current \$15/hour minimum wage (\$16/hour). In the past, the next year's starting salary had been set at the same time the salary increases were set. The committee discussed the need for discretion based on the experience of the applicant and the requirements of the job. The committee will seek guidance from Bushue HR.
6. **Transfer GIS from General Fund Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated during the budget hearing process, Bellwether recommended transferring GIS from the General Fund to a separate fund so the recording fees funding the office can be used for GIS mapping services. For FY2026, GIS has budgeted revenues at \$94,000 and budgeted expenses of \$82,762. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beason to transfer GIS from the General Fund to a separate fund beginning in FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **FY2026 Budget Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported Treasurer Nikki Lohman learned earlier that day Bellwether's tally sheet on the front of the tentative FY2026 budget had not included \$1,071,650 in budgeted General Administrative expenses. After correcting this error, the \$96,000 General Fund surplus became a \$920,000 deficit. He stated a special Finance & Budget Committee meeting is set for Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse to address this newly found deficit, and the county board will take final action on the budget at their November meeting.
8. **FY2026 Aggregate Tax Levies Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed minutes from Sept. 24, 2025 Truth in Taxation hearings for the Raymond-Harvel Area

Ambulance Service and the Veterans Assistance Commission during which no opposition was voiced. He said the committee recommended adopting the aggregate levies as estimated last month. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to approve an FY2026 Montgomery County Tax Levy of \$5,081,785 (a 4.999% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve an FY2026 Veterans Assistance Commission Tax Levy of \$127,997 (a 13.1756% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve an FY2026 Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$149,000 (a 67.9029% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to approve an FY2026 Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$438,943 (a 4.999% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve an FY2026 Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$119,700 (a 4.8130% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an FY2026 Hillsboro Area Ambulance Tax Levy of \$300,000 (a 0.0006% decrease from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to approve an FY2026 Community Mental Health 708 Tax Levy of \$992,410 (a 4.9687% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to approve an FY2026 Senior Social Services Tax Levy of \$120,794 (a 0.8386% increase from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve an FY2026 Extension Tax Levy of \$157,000 (a 0.0293% decrease from FY2025). All in favor, motion carried.**

9. **Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee continued discussion about the need for a training reimbursement policy to allow the county to collect training expenses from employees who leave county employment shortly after training was completed. He said since the primary training expense is in the Sheriff's Office, the committee discussed whether the policy should be county-wide or by department. The committee consensus was to request guidance from Bushue HR.
10. **Insurance Request for Proposals Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Bushue HR will handle this process and make recommendations for FY2027.
11. **Travel Voucher Update/Approval:** Ritchie said two travel vouchers exceeded the GSA Peoria hotel per diem of \$110 by \$33, and according to the Travel Ordinance, approval of these vouchers requires a roll call vote. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve a travel voucher for Cassandra Hampton for \$890.37. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to approve a travel voucher for Rachael Kuhl for \$864.11. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Jones and second by Murzynski to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES: Given by Vice Chairwoman Patty Whitworth:

1. The next meeting with Bushue HR will begin on Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
2. In advance of the upcoming Veterans Day holiday, Montgomery County plans to once again illuminate the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro green from November 4-11, 2025 as part of Operation Green Light for Veterans, a nationwide effort intended to unite counties to support military veterans. The initiative, led by the National Association of Counties (NACO), raises awareness around the unique challenges faced by many veterans and the resources available at the county, state, and federal levels to assist veterans and their families. In addition to the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, county residents, businesses and community organizations are encouraged to participate in Operation Green Light by changing one light to a green bulb. By shining a green light, we let our veterans know they are seen, appreciated, and supported.
3. The Illinois EPA and Christian County Solid Waste are hosting a one-day household hazardous waste collection from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 1, 2025 at the Christian County Fairgrounds in Taylorville. The collection is open to Montgomery County residents. Call 217-287-2334 to sign up.
4. Due to the Veterans Day holiday, next month's County Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025 beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse.

APPOINTMENTS:

Joy Lewis to the Fillmore Glendale Cemetery Board Update/Approval: Motion by Whitworth and second by Young to appoint Joy Lewis to the Fillmore Glendale Cemetery Board. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Beason and second by Hughes to pay all approved bills and payroll. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.

RECESS:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. **Motion by Beck and second by Ritchie to recess the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting recessed at 6:56 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Wednesday, November 12, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Vice Chairwoman and Veteran Patty Whitworth in honor of Veterans Day.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser. **Motion by Corso and second by Hughes to approve the mileage and per diem. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Beason and second by Ritchie to approve the minutes of the previous regular County Board meeting held on Tuesday, October 14, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was present for questions.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was not present.
14. **SOA Report** – Tysha Mullen was present for questions.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Brian Shaw was present for questions.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was present for questions.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Murzynski and second by Hughes to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the committee met Nov. 10, 2025 to sign award documents, and he will announce the winners next month.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen deferred to 911 Director Ed Boyd, who reported progress on the DCEO grant-funded Cress Hill tower building.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth reported the Health Department has no jurisdiction over water quality.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Daniels reported working with the Executive Director on numerous projects.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported awarding DCEO grant-funded bids.
- **UCCI** – Corso reported attending a meeting on Oct. 24, 2025.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported the Oct. 16, 2025 meeting focused on SNAP benefits and determining 2026 priorities.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported a meeting is set for Nov. 20, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson said IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department has been working on security and audio updates funded by the court grant, updating servers, working on remote DevNet access for Township Assessors, and working at the Cress Hill Tower building replacement. He said the department has also converted fire and panic alarms to IP or cellular and eliminated the unneeded phone lines. Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins noted a problem with the jury 800 number that took the phone company two weeks to repair. As a result, his office is replacing this number to alleviate the problem.
2. **Appointment of Montgomery County State's Attorney Update/Approval:** Donaldson read a letter from the Montgomery County Republican Central Committee recommending Brian Shaw. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Jones to appoint Brian Shaw as the Montgomery County State's Attorney. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** The Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled to next meet on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025, to finalize their recommendations to the state.
4. **IDFPR Cemetery Relief Fund Grants Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported Assistant County Board Administrator Lucas Nowlan applied for a \$20,000 grant to make improvements to the County Farm Cemetery and Neece Cemetery in Audubon Township.
5. **2026 Meeting Dates & Times Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported the committee reviewed meeting dates for 2026. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Whitworth to approve the 2026 Montgomery County Board meeting dates. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **Kane County Juvenile Detention Intergovernmental Agreement Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Ruppert to approve the intergovernmental agreement with Kane County for juvenile detention services. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 103-110).

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **MCEDC Update/Approval:** Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath provided board members with a booklet and described the 501(c) 3 corporation's history since 2004, member benefits, program of work, and foundation, pointing out that economic development includes improving quality of life.
2. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden Tricia Papen reported many cats and long-term fosters have been adopted, and calls were down for the month. She continues to research fees and solicit proposals for enclosing the front of the facility. She also is considering changing facility hours to Tuesday through Saturday beginning Jan. 1, 2026 to better serve the public on the weekend.
3. **SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval:** County Board Administration received a wage proposal on Monday, Nov. 3. Ruppert said he will reach out to the union to continue negotiations.
4. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** DCEO informed the county it had been awarded \$1,092,450.34 in the third phase of the Energy Transition Grant. An ad hoc committee meeting was held on Monday, Nov. 10, 2025 with grant writer Dan Rogers to begin determining projects to include in the grant.
5. **UCCI Summary of HA3 to SB25 (Energy Omnibus) Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed a summary from UCCI regarding House Bill Amendment 3 to SB 25, an energy omnibus piece of legislation requiring changes to the county solar and wind ordinances, including a cap on application fees. The proposed legislation would also create a uniform assessment method for commercial energy storage.
6. **Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee reviewed changes to the proposed Montgomery First Community Solar Benefits Agreement suggested by Summit Ridge Energy. He said the committee requested feedback from Local 1084 and the Montgomery County State's Attorney.
7. **Employee Health Insurance Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed communication from Assured Partners stating Blue Cross Blue Shield and HSHS are currently in negotiations for a new contract and have not yet reached an agreement. He added Assured Partners notified the county later in the week after the committee meeting on Friday, Nov. 7, 2025 that due to "considerable progress in the negotiations, both parties have agreed to extend the deadline."
8. **Appointment of Supervisor of Assessments Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported Tysha Mullen has passed the required examination to become Supervisor of Assessments on the first try with an extremely high score, and the committee recommended her appointment. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to appoint Tysha Mullen as Montgomery County Supervisor of Assessments to a four-year term beginning Dec. 1, 2025, at a starting salary of \$72,500. All in favor, motion carried.** County Clerk Leitheiser administered the oath of office.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes said Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 43 items on his report, including cleaning the County Clerk's record storage in the basement of the Historic Courthouse after flooding. The gutter pipes had collapsed due to tree branches, causing repeated flooding. The line needs to be replaced and rerouted to prevent future collapse. Hughes also reported Gardner Glass installed a panic bar, as well as a new full length door-hinge, on the south double door entrance to the Historic Courthouse.
2. **EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval:** Hillsboro City Commissioner Kendra Wright has a proposal to install grant-funded EV charging stations around Hillsboro, including one on Courthouse Square. Wright asked if the county would be willing to allow use of county internet to process payments. Whitworth added there is only one public charging station in the entire county (located in Litchfield), and she said adding more stations is important for tourism. Hughes said his committee will continue to consider options.
3. **Cinric Painting South Porch Estimate Update/Approval:** Hughes presented a proposal from Cinric Paining for \$17,900 to repair and paint the south porch of the Historic Courthouse. This will include the repair and repainting of the front porch columns, molding, trim, handrails, and second story corbels and soffit/fascia. **Motion by Hughes and second by Young to approve a proposal from Cinric Painting and Remodeling for \$17,900 to repair and paint the south porch of the Historic Courthouse in FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval:** Hughes reported County Board Administration met with Double E Upholstery on Nov. 3, 2025, for a quote to have cushions made for the bench-style seating in the back of the County Board Room, and has since met with Cinric Paining about possible work on the judge's bench and railing. These expenses will be paid by the \$10,000 DCEO grant. He said the committee will review quotes next month.
5. **County Farm Lease Update/Approval:** Hughes said the lease of the County Farm is set to expire on April 30, 2026 and County Board Administration will update the lease to advertise for bids early next year.
6. **City of Hillsboro Request to Move Electric Service Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the City of Hillsboro would like to remove the power pole on the Courthouse Square and move the electric services behind the VAC building.
7. **DAR Plaque Honoring Gen. Richard Montgomery Update/Approval:** County Board member Whitworth (who is also a member of the local Daughter of the American Revolution chapter) asked the County Board to approve the installation of an 18x24 inch bronze plaque to honor Revolutionary War veteran General Richard Montgomery, in whose honor Montgomery County was named. The plaque will be mounted on the south side of the Historic Courthouse west of the doorway. **Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to allow the DAR to install a plaque honoring Gen. Richard Montgomery. All in favor, motion carried.**

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Pattern Energy – Shoals Renewable Wind/Solar Farm Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported North American energy developer Pattern Energy reached out to Engineer Cody Greenwood to begin discussion on installing a wind farm near the Raymond/Nokomis area. He said Pattern plans to start in 2026, apply for permitting in 2027, and begin construction in 2027.
2. **Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee continued to discuss the possibility of allowing the existing County Road (which runs through the City of Nokomis on E. Union Street) to be transferred to the City of Nokomis. Chairman Donaldson said he reached out to the Mayor of Nokomis to inquire about the progress on the extension project with no response to date.
3. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the committee received an updated plat showing the vacated streets of Zanesville. The updated plat map was sent to Kevin Brink of GIS to review. He said the committee should have the accompanying petition at next month's meeting.
4. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** In response to public comments at the last county board meeting, Murzynski reported Engineer Greenwood reviewed the certified drawings signed by the structural engineer and verified the building meets all requirements.
5. **Resolution 2025-10 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for FY2026 Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the state recommendation was a 3% salary increase, and the committee discussed raises between 3% and 5% and ultimately recommended a compromise at 4%. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Bergen to approve Resolution 2025-10 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's salary of \$137,546 for FY2026, a 4% increase. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 111-112).**

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Office Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported after a tax cycle meeting was held on Nov. 5 with the Supervisor of Assessments office, Treasurer, and County Clerk; and work is on schedule for assessment changes to be published Dec. 1.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted a coal royalty payment of \$180,946.23 in September, resulting in a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,564,728.
3. **Insurance Package Renewal Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Eric Braasch of Dimond Brothers Insurance presented property/casualty/liability, work compensation, and cyber insurance renewal packages at an increase of \$35,000 (7.18%) for FY2026. Treasurer Lohman added the renewal premiums were within the anticipated budget. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to approve of the FY2026 insurance package for a total of \$523,001. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

4. **Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval:** Ritchie said County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser presented an amended Pre-Approved Payment List with the addition of the Village of Taylor Springs at the request of the Montgomery County Highway Department for sewer utility services at the new building. He said the County Clerk will also review vendors on the list for possible updates next month. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to add the Village of Taylor Springs to the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Bellwether Quarterly Variance Report Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the third quarter report from Bellwether.
6. **FY2026 Budget Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated at last month's meeting the board learned we had a \$900,000 General Fund deficit because Bellwether's spreadsheet did not pick up \$1,017,650.80 "General Administrative" expenses from Page 10 of the draft budget and include them in the "General Government" expense totals by department on Page 6. This resulted in General Fund expenses on Page 1 being under-reported by \$1,017,650.80 throughout the entire budget process. A special Finance & Budget Committee meeting was held on Oct. 23, 2025 to address the problem, and at that meeting the committee recommended increasing Solar Permit Fees revenue from \$75,000 to \$110,000; decreasing Professional Services expenses from \$21,600 to \$9,600; transferring \$322,692 in ARPA interest to the General Fund; and in the Coal Fund moving \$550,000 in contingencies to Transfer Out-General Fund. Further changes were made at the Nov. 6, 2025 regular Finance & Budget Committee meeting to more accurately reflect expenses in the Supervisor of Assessments' office and the addition of a Victim/Witness Advocate position in the State's Attorney's office. Since then, both the County Board Administration office staff and Treasurer Lohman have double and triple-checked Bellwether's spreadsheets and found other errors. After correcting those mistakes, the result is the FY2026 budget presented at this meeting anticipates a \$212,472.28 General Fund surplus. Bellwether representative Justin Greeley was present and told board members his company is not happy with the budget process this year and he apologized for the errors. Because of these errors, Greeley said Bellwether has waived the final \$6,000 payment but will continue to provide variance reports. Lohman reported she had received written approval from all county officeholders stating their portion of the recommended budget was accurate. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve FY2026 County Board Budget Ordinance 2025-15. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **FY2026 Budget Appropriations/Levies/Resolutions Update/Approval:** **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to adopt the FY2026 Appropriation Ordinance. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to adopt the General Corporate Fund Levy Resolution 25-16 for \$949,636. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to adopt the County Health Department Levy Resolution 25-17 for \$901,292. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to adopt the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund Levy Resolution 25-18 for \$665,645. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to adopt the Social Security Fund Levy Resolution 25-19 for \$649,818. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to adopt the Insurance Premium Fund Levy Resolution 25-20**

for \$618,982. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Corso to adopt the County Highway Fund Levy Resolution 25-21 for \$643,000. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hancock to adopt the County Highway Federal Aid Matching Fund Levy Resolution 25-22 for \$335,912. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Bergen to adopt the Special Aid to County Bridge Fund Levy Resolution 25-23 for \$321,500. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to adopt the Montgomery County Community Mental Health Board Levy Resolution 25-24 for \$992,410. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to adopt the Hillsboro Special Service Area Levy Resolution 25-25 for \$300,000. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to adopt the Nokomis-Witt Special Service Area Levy Resolution 25-26 for \$438,943. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to adopt the Raymond-Harvel Special Service Area Levy Resolution 25-27 for \$149,000. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to adopt the Farmersville-Waggoner Special Service Area Levy Resolution 25-28 for \$119,700. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to adopt the County Extension Service Levy Resolution 25-29 for \$157,000. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to adopt the Senior Citizen Social Services Levy Resolution 25-30 for \$120,794. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to adopt the Veterans Assistance Levy Resolution 25-31 for \$127,997. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beason to adopt the Resolution 25-32 to Set Certain Salaries for the Supervisor of Assessments (\$72,500), Probation Officer (\$122,966), and Assistant Probation Officers (\$308,587.73). All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to adopt the State's Attorney Appellate Prosecutor Resolution for \$12,000. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies of Budget and Levies, see County Budget on Montgomery County website).

8. **Transfer Parcel from Trustee Sale Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed a parcel sold at the trustee sale. Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to transfer parcel 20-22-333-015 in Grisham Township to Fatmir Dzabiri. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 113-114).

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Hancock and second by Daniels to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The monthly meeting with Bushue HR has been scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 13, 2025 beginning at 1 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
2. The next Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025 at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
3. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the next Coordinating Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Darin Beckman, William Bergen, James Holliday to the Emergency Telephone Systems Board Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to appoint Darin Beckman, William Bergen, & James Holliday to the Emergency Telephone Systems Board. All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Dennis J. Uhrig to the Harvel #1 Drainage District to a three-year term from November 2025 through November 2028 to fill the seat vacated by John Richard Lyons Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Beck to appoint Dennis J. Uhrig to the Harvel #1 Drainage District to a three-year term from November 2025 through November 2028 to fill the seat vacated by John Richard Lyons. All in favor, motion carried.
3. **Joyce Matthews to the Montgomery County Housing Authority Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Whitworth to reappoint Joyce Matthews to the Montgomery County Housing Authority Board for a five-year term. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Corso and second by Hughes to pay all approved bills and payroll. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN: The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, December 9, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, December 9, 2025. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken – 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Patty Whitworth, Evan Young.

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by board member Evan Young.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Claims for mileage and per diem were read by County Clerk Leitheiser. **Motion by Hughes and second by Corso to approve the mileage and per diem.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: Motion by Whitworth and second by Bergen to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. **All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Animal Control Report** – Tricia Papin was present for questions.
2. **Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions.
3. **Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was not present.
4. **County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions.
5. **Enterprise Zone Report** – Mike Plunkett was present for questions.
6. **EMA & EPA Reports** – Dan Hough was present for questions.
7. **Health Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was not present.
10. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present.
11. **Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present.
12. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** -- Julie Wollerman was not present.
13. **Sheriff's Report** – Tyson Holshouser was present for questions.
14. **SOA Report** – Tysha Mullen was present for questions and added the last day to file a complaint with the Board of Review is Jan. 5, 2026.
15. **State's Attorney Report** – Brian Shaw was present for questions and added he will introduce a new Assistant State's Attorney at the next meeting.
16. **Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions.
17. **VAC Report** – Cassandra Hampton was not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **CEFS Board** -- Beason had nothing to report.
- **708 Board** – Murzynski had nothing to report.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen congratulated Ed Boyd on his recent retirement.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** -- Daniels reported MCEDC Executive Director Fath was present and provided members copies of the corporation's FY2026 budget and other material.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Daniels reported much of the DCEO grant work had been completed.
- **UCCI** – Corso had nothing to report.
- **U of I** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported learning at a Nov. 20 meeting the organization is meeting its goals.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson noted IS Director Curt Watkins reported responding to a power outage the day of the committee meeting, prohibiting him from compiling a report. He reported Watkins said he is proud of the work his department has accomplished in the past 15 years, during which time the department has grown beyond expectations.
2. **EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval:** EMA/EPA Director Hough described a hazardous material emergency plan grant agreement.
3. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported the committee provided five recommendations for the study to evaluate the property tax system required by Public Act 103-1002, and Committee Chairman Beason read the recommendations:
 - *Regarding the local and state appeal process, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends legal notice publication of the process is included with the required annual assessment change publication and quadrennial publication.*
 - *Because variability in assessments hampers economic development, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends a statewide assessment process that is less reliant on market values.*
 - *Because in rural areas increases in assessed value are usually driven more by market values rather than economic development, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends required Truth in Taxation*

public hearings when the percentage levy increase exceeds the percentage of assessed value increase from new construction.

- *The State of Illinois should reexamine the requirements for units of local government to extend and increase debt ceilings.*
- *The State of Illinois should statutorily lessen the reliance of education funding on local property tax levies.*

He reported the committee had been very productive, and he was honored to have chaired it. Donaldson added positive outcomes can occur when government and members of the public work together. **Motion by Beason and second by Young to make five recommendations to the State of Illinois for the study to evaluate the property tax system as required by Public Act 103-1002. All in favor, motion carried.**

4. **Mayor's Meeting Date Update/Approval:** Donaldson reminded the board a Mayor's Meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, at 5:00 PM in the County Board room of the Historic Courthouse.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported to the committee 11 dogs, 2 pups, 4 cats, and 6 kittens at the facility. He said she and her staff responded to 25 calls in November. He said the committee reviewed and discussed two estimates for DCEO grant work at the facility and asked the Animal Control Warden to solicit three separate proposals: one for the enclosure, one for the eye-wash station, and one for fencing.
2. **Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed the signed four-year contract negotiated by the Circuit Clerk with Circuit Clerk employees, calling for wage increases of 5.5% in FY2026, 5% in FY2027, 5% in FY2028, and 5% in FY2029, along with an entry level salary of \$17/hour. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Circuit Clerk of Montgomery County and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 148, effective Dec. 1, 2025, through Nov. 30, 2029. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee discussed salary and starting wage issues for a three-year contract with Union Local 1084 representatives Matt Blankenship and Mike Young. He said the union discussed the county offer with members and agreed to a three-year contract calling for wage increases of 5.5% in FY2026, 5% in FY2027, and 5% in FY2028, along with an entry level salary of \$16.88/hour in FY2026, \$17.50/hour in FY2027, and \$18/hour in FY2028. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Montgomery County and the Laborers' International Union of North America Local #1084, effective Dec. 1, 2025, through Nov. 30, 2028. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the committee reviewed and discussed items to be included on the Award #3 DCEO Energy Transition Grant totaling the award amount of \$1,092,450.34. Dan Rogers of First Due Consulting will have the grant application completed by the Dec. 19 deadline.

5. **Energy Omnibus Legislation Update/Approval:** Ruppert said state legislation recently passed requiring changes in the county wind and solar ordinances and also laying the framework for battery storage regulation and assessment.
6. **Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the committee has an agreement in principle with Summit Ridge, but would like to wait until the developer or contractor has made contact with local labor before signing an agreement.
7. **County Starting Salary Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed starting salary language suggested by Bushue HR to institute pay grades for county positions. The committee will continue to work on the proposal.
8. **Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the committee reviewed a Training Repayment Agreement policy drafted by Bushue HR requiring employees to reimburse for county out-of-pocket training expenses if the employee resigns before completing three years of employment. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Ritchie to approve the Montgomery County Training Repayment Agreement. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, page 115).**
9. **Hurst-Rosche Proposal to Review Montgomery County Solar Update/Approval:** The committee discussed a proposal from Hurst-Rosche for review of construction documents for Montgomery County Solar on Route 16 east of Litchfield for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve the agreement with Hurst-Rosche to review construction documents for Montgomery County Solar for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 116-117).**

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes reported Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 49 items on his report, including Bondurant Plumbing replacing a broken drainage pipe on the west side of the Historic Courthouse. This should relieve the continuous flooding in the County Clerk's record storage in the basement of the Historic Courthouse. Ellinger Window Cleaners finished cleaning the windows of the Courthouse Complex. Central Roofing repaired the gutters on the roof of Historic Court House's porch.
2. **DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee reviewed Double E Upholstery's quote of \$4,023.85 to fabricate cushions for the bench style seating in the back of the County Board Room, to be paid from the DCEO grant. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to award Double E Upholstery's quote of \$4,023.85 to fabricate cushions for the bench style seating in the back of the County Board Room. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **County Farm Lease Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee is advertising for a new three-year lease for the County Farm and will open bids at the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2025.
4. **127 N. Main Street Property Update/Approval:** Hughes reported 127 North Main Street, currently RehabEdge, was recently listed for sale on the market. Chief Probation Officer Banee Ulrici and Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins are researching potential county

use for the building and will develop a proposal. If feasible, the committee may wish to walk through the building next month.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Irresponsible Contractor on Township Bridge Projects Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed a list of past and continuing issues observed with a contractor currently working on three bridges affecting project performance, compliance, and overall trust.
2. **Resolution 2026-01, 2026 County MFT Resolution Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed and recommended the resolution appropriating \$1.2 million in County Motor Fuel Tax, the same amount as last year. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Ruppert to recommend approval of the 2026 County Motor Fuel Tax Resolution 2026-01 for \$1.2 million. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 118-120).**
3. **Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee continued to discuss the possibility of improving the road to Route 16 to divert truck traffic from city streets. In hopes of receiving grant funding from the state, the committee agreed to move forward with a proposal from an engineering firm to increase the capacity of the road to present at next month's committee and full board meetings.
4. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported the committee reviewed the approved petition showing the vacated streets of Zanesville. Greenwood sent the petition to the State's Attorney for final review. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Corso to approve the Petition to Vacate Streets and Alleys in Zanesville on the contingency the States Attorney has no objections to the petition. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 121-127).**
5. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** Murzynski said Engineer Greenwood hopes to finalize a punch list of jobs needing to be completed.
6. **Section 23-05122-00-PV – Fillmore Consolidated Township E. 24th Road Improvement Project – Preliminary Engineering Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported Fillmore Consolidated Township received Rebuild Illinois funding to improve Township East 24th Road, which routinely floods as it runs along a creek bottom. Engineer Greenwood will have an engineering agreement ready for review next month.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Andy Ritchie:

1. **SOA Office Update/Approval:** Ritchie told members Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen reported her office is caught up on the 2025 payable 2026 tax cycle; assessment change notices were published and mailed on Dec. 4, 2025; a Township Assessor meeting had been scheduled for Dec. 15, 2025; and a Board of Review meeting has been scheduled for Jan. 9, 2026. She also informed the committee she has promoted Michaela Gray to the Chief Deputy position in the Supervisor of Assessments office.

2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie noted an October coal royalty payment of \$188,383.16 and a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,778,950.36.
3. **2026 IRS Mileage Rate Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported the new IRS mileage rate had not been published by meeting time.
4. **Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval:** Ritchie said County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser presented the committee with the results of her requested review of the Pre-Approved Payment List, with 12 items suggested for removal for non-use, and the addition of several notes of explanation. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to approve changes to the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, pages 128-129).**
5. **Coal Fund Voucher Process Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee discussed the issue created when Department Heads vouchers money from Coal Fund 375 in the final week of FY2025. All Coal Fund vouchers used to go through the Finance & Budget Committee, and the committee expressed a desire to return to the previous procedure. The committee also discussed establishing a procedure for Department Heads and Office Holders to request budgeted expenses from Coal Fund 375, and County Clerk Leitheiser suggested including the procedure to the County Board Rules of Order for better clarity. Chairman Donaldson said the next Rules of Order Committee meeting to establish this procedure will likely occur in January 2026. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to require all Coal Fund 375 requests to be approved by the Finance & Budget Committee and vouchers presented for payment before the committee's November meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to recommend a Coal Fund 375 expense procedure be established in the Montgomery County Board Rules of Order. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **PTAX-451 Form for Supervisor of Assessments Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported a PTAX-451 form needing approved by the County Board for partial reimbursement of the Supervisor of Assessments' salary. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve the PTAX-451 form for partial reimbursement of the Supervisor of Assessments salary. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 23, page 130).**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Hughes and second by Hancock to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. The monthly meeting with Bushue HR has been scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025, at 1:00 PM in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse.
2. Hillsboro Health Therapy Services has invited the board to a ribbon cutting on Friday, Dec. 12, 2025, at 4:15 PM on the hospital campus at 1200 E. Tremont Street in Hillsboro, followed by an open house.
3. Due to the Christmas holiday, the next Coordinating Committee meeting will begin on Friday, Dec. 26, 2025, at 8:30 AM in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Mark Meisner to the Pitman-Zanesville #2 County Zone #33 Drainage District Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to reappoint Mark Meisner for a three-year term to the Pitman-Zanesville #2 County Zone #33 Drainage District beginning Jan. 1, 2026. All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Greg Weitekamp to the Zanesville #3 County Zone #15 Drainage District Update/Approval:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Beck to reappoint Gregory Weitekamp for a three-year term to the Zanesville #3 County Zone #15 Drainage District beginning Jan. 1, 2026. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to pay all approved bills and payroll. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Whitworth, Young. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Chairman Donaldson said 2025 had been a good year, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. Board member Beason recognized Treasurer Nikki Lohman for her recent selection as President of the Illinois County Treasurers Association to a round of applause. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Hughes to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.