

Montgomery County Board Minutes **For Tuesday, September 8, 2026 – 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 8, 2026. The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 p.m.

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

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Doug Donaldson, Cody Gudgel, Keith Hancock, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, Ethan Murzynski, Chad Ruppert, Roy Schieferdecker, 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 Schieferdecker to approve the mileage and per diem. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Corso, Daniels, Donaldson, Gudgel, Hancock, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ruppert, Schieferdecker, Whitworth, Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: **Motion by Hancock and second by Murzynski to approve the minutes of the previous regular County Board meeting held on Tuesday, August 11, 2026. 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 and reported Route 185 had just reopened.
9. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst was present for questions.
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 not present.
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 not present.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso 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** – Hancock had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** — Whitworth had nothing to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** — Hancock had nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** — Gudgel had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** — Daniels reported on a recent meeting held with CEFS at the Senior Citizens Center.
- **UCCI** – Corso had nothing to report.
- **U of I** – Ruppert reported the levy request was presented to the Finance & Budget Committee.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported a new contract with employees was recently signed and provided a 3% COLA increase.

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 security door work has been completed at the Courthouse Annex. He also said Watkins' department is working on upgrades for land records work stations, phone system implementation, inventory, and e-citations. Donaldson said phishing attempts remain high, and he is still looking for a candidate to fill the new position in the IS Department.
2. **EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson noted the committee reviewed Director Dan Hough's report, as well as a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to inspect the Cress Hill Tower for \$6,000. He said after debating the cost for the drone inspection, the proposal was forwarded to the Buildings & Grounds Committee for a recommendation.

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

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Ruppert highlighted Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin's report noting eight dogs/pups and 18 cats/kittens at the facility and two upcoming adoption events.
2. **MCEDC Update/Approval:** Ruppert summarized MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath's report which highlighted housing surveys, commercial site selection, tourism ads, the Hillsboro grant to provide utility and road access at the former Eagle Zinc site, and an Economic Development course she will be taking in October.
3. **Wind & Solar Ordinance Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee continues to review proposed new wind and solar ordinances. Regarding the proposed wind ordinance, Ruppert said he is awaiting answers to questions from Attorney Andrew Keyt about turbine density and highway setbacks. The committee also asked Keyt whether the

federal Executive Order 14420, signed by President Trump on Aug. 26th, 2026, should be addressed in both ordinances. Work will continue next month.

4. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported agreement for the third round of DCEO Energy Transition Grant funding is still pending.
5. **Pattern Energy Update/Approval:** Ruppert noted Pattern had issued invitations to a field trip to a Mason County wind project on Sept. 2 and again on Dec. 10. He said the committee also discussed another potential wind project company named Reveille X from New York, New York that is signing leases in the former UKA footprint in the northern part of Montgomery County.
6. **Elm Lawn Solar Project Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the Public Hearing for Elm Lawn Solar has been rescheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026, in the County Board Room.
7. **Other Business:** Ruppert stated a special meeting for Development and Personnel and the Finance Committee pertaining to county employee health insurance was discussed at the recent Finance Committee, and Finance Chairwoman Connie Beck will have more information in her report.

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

1. **Cress Hill Tower Inspection Agreement Update/Approval:** Hughes said the committee discussed a proposal to inspect the Cress Hill Tower, but instead opted to begin the process of replacement.
2. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the Maintenance Department completed 30 work orders during the past month. HE said Henson Robinson began boiler replacement work at the Historic Courthouse on Aug. 31, 2026, and Cinric Painting began repair and painting work on the south porch at the Historic Courthouse on Sept. 1, 2026.
3. **Animal Control Roof Report Update/Approval:** Hughes reported the contractor has test-replaced some of the washers and long screws on the roof at the Animal Control Facility with positive results. He said the work will be completed when new vents arrive.
4. **Historic Courthouse South Porch Lighting Update/Approval:** Hughes said he would prefer the committee consider the matter when Cinric Painting has completed their repair and painting work.
5. **127 N. Main Update/Approval:** Hughes stated HRC has completed repairing the porches and ramps. He said the committee has postponed considering a new concrete ramp.

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

1. **Route 185 Closure Update/Approval:** Murzynski reiterated Route 185 had reopened that day ahead of schedule.
2. **Current Projects Update/Approval:** County Engineer Cody Greenwood gave a Power Point presentation highlighting recent repair work completed by county and Hillsboro township forces on the Red Bridge in Hillsboro Township. Greenwood stated the bridge has been closed since Feb. 4, 2026, due to substantial piling deterioration and a 50/50 project with Hillsboro Township began on Aug. 24, 2026 to drain and dam the waterway, attach steel supports to deteriorated pilings, and replace concrete protection around the

steel supports. Murzynski reported the work has now been completed, and IDOT will give the final word when the bridge can be reopened.

3. **Potential Future Projects Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed and discussed potential future projects.
4. **Funding/Levy/Budget Discussion Update/Approval:** Murzynski reported Engineer Greenwood gave the committee a detailed description of how each of the Highway Department levies is used.

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

1. **Extension Budget Presentation Update/Approval:** Beck said County Extension Director Sara Marten described Extension services over the past year, which reached 5,403 people. She also shared the budget proposal, which requests the same \$157,000 levy as the previous year.
2. **Hope Trust Presentation Update/Approval:** Beck reported Brent Williams and Kevin Kern of Hope Trust, a self-funded health insurance pool founded 15 years ago with four counties with 34 local government members, appeared before the committee. She said Williams and Kern described their plans, one of which includes waived co-pays and deductibles for in-network services and includes \$20,000 life coverage. Beck stated Assured Partners is now anticipating a rate increase between 20% and 24% for the current Blue Cross coverage. She said because county open enrollment is in October, the committee set a tentative joint special meeting with the Development & Personnel Committee for 2 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15, in the County Board Room. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to authorize the joint Development & Personnel and Finance & Budget Committee to select health insurance plans for FY2027 at a cost not to exceed 24% over FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Beck reported a July coal Royalty payment of \$214,778 and a total Coal Fund 375 balance of \$10.9 million.
4. **Resolution 2026CO10 Amending Fees and Assessments Collected by the Circuit Clerk Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed the Resolution as requested by Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins and required by new state statute. Robbins said the resolution has the approval of the Resident Judge and State's Attorney. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to approve of Resolution 2026CO10 Amending Fees and Assessments Collected by the Circuit Clerk. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 24, pages 31-44).**
5. **FY2027 Budget Update/Approval:** Beck reported the committee made changes to the salaries line items in the Information Services General Fund Office 043, reduced General Fund Office 047 expenses to reflect a worst-case 24% increase in health insurance cost and moved administrative fees to the Tort Fund, and increased General Fund Office 000 revenues by \$491,000 as a result of redistributing the tax levy. The result is a tentative anticipated General Fund deficit of \$437,000 with final health insurance and property/liability insurance premiums yet to be determined. Further changes will be presented at the October County Board meeting, and the Finance & Budget Committee will recommend a final FY2027 budget in November. **Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to place the tentative FY2027 budget on display for public review. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **FY2027 Estimated Tax Levy Update/Approval:** Beck reported the committee redistributed levy funds resulting in an increase in the Corporate General levy of \$491,918 but an overall decrease in the levy percentage from over 18% to 4.9% by decreasing levies for IMRF, Social Security, Liability Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, and Workers Comp. **Motion by Beck and second by Murzynski to approve an estimated FY2027 Montgomery County Tax Levy of \$6,580,750 for an increase of 4.9909%. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hughes to approve an estimated FY2027 Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service Tax Levy of \$312,000 for an increase of 3.9994%. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Jones to approve an estimated FY2027 Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service Tax Levy of \$141,000 for a decrease of 5.3691%. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Jones to approve an estimated FY2027 Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Service Tax Levy of \$125,600 for an increase of 4.9244%. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Ruppert to approve an estimated FY2027 Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Service Tax Levy of \$438,943 for an increase of 4.9998%. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Daniels to approve an estimated FY2027 Extension Service Tax Levy of \$157,000 for a decrease of 0.0293%. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Fund 375 Purchases Update/Approval:** Beck said the committee reviewed two Fund 375 invoices for work completed at 127 N. Main Street; and two requests for Fund 375 expenses, one for \$18,167.58 to Hillsboro Electric for variable speed motor starters on chiller pumps and air handlers, and a request for up to \$50,000 for a new maintenance vehicle. **Motion by Beck and second by Hancock to approve Fund 375 vouchers of \$3,100 and \$2,919 to HRC, and requests to spend \$18,167.58 for variable speed motor starters and to advertise for bids for a new maintenance truck from Fund 375. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Transfer of Parcels from Trustee Sale Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed 13 parcels sold at the Trustee Sale and asked for more information about three potential buyers. **Motion by Beck and second by Jones to transfer parcel 03-28-205-004 in Pitman Township to Connie Haslett. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Schieferdecker to transfer parcel 08-14-385-001 in Nokomis Township to Situs Cultivation LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Corso to transfer parcel 08-23-128-010 in Nokomis Township to Situs Cultivation LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 13-06-259-009 in Witt Township to Matthew Jagosh. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Beason to transfer parcel 15-04-258-020 in South Litchfield Township to Robert Plowman Jr. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to transfer parcel 15-04-403-003 in South Litchfield Township to Curtis Glover. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 16-01-380-008 in Hillsboro Township to Erica De Almeida. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Schieferdecker to transfer parcel 16-13-314-006 in Hillsboro Township to Terry Swick. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to transfer parcel 17-05-183-004 in East Fork Township to Rockstar Cribs LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hancock to**

transfer parcel 17-35-334-002 in East Fork Township to Erica De Almeida. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Corso to transfer parcel 17-35-340-008 in East Fork Township to Situs Cultivation LLC. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hughes to transfer parcel 17-35-340-009 in East Fork Township to Illinois Building Rehabilitation Limited. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Schieferdecker to transfer parcel 18-28-332-002 in Fillmore Consolidated Township to Philip Mitchell. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies of Resolutions, see Resolution Book 24, pages 45-70).

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES: Motion by Murzynski and second by Hughes to approve the committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. At the Illinois Clerk & Recorders Association State Conference on Thursday, Sept. 3, 2026 in Springfield, Illinois Montgomery County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser earned the 2026 Illinois Clerk & Recorder of the Year Award after winning the Zone 2 2026 Clerk & Recorder of the Year Award on Aug. 10, 2026. Those accomplishments were applauded by the County Board, and Leitheiser said she appreciated all the support over the years.
2. The next meeting with Bushue HR has been scheduled for 1 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2026, in the County Board Room.
3. A joint Development & Personnel and Finance & Budget Committee special meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2026, beginning at 2 p.m. in the County Board Room.
4. The next Electronics Recycling Drive will be from 9 a.m. until 12 noon on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2026 at the former Highway Department on Seymour Avenue in Hillsboro.
5. The Public Hearing for Elm Lawn Solar, on Clark Street east of Litchfield, has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026, in the County Board Room.

APPOINTMENTS: Motion by Donaldson and second by Jones to reappoint Robert G. Wagahoff to a three-year term at Trustee to the Farmersville-Waggoner Fire Protection District from September 2026 through September 2029. All in favor, motion carried.

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

ADJOURN: The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Murzynski and second by Beck to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.