

**Montgomery County Board Minutes**  
**For Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 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 11<sup>th</sup>, 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 14<sup>th</sup>, 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. 14<sup>th</sup> 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. 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup>, 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.