

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, June 11th, 2024 – 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 11th, 2024.

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 (arrived at 5:43 p.m.), Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson, Ken Folkerts, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, David Loucks, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Bob Sneed, Patty Whitworth and Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board Member Andy Ritchie.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval:

Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to approve the mileage and per diem.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, Whitworth and Young. (Beason absent for vote). **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting:

Motion by Sneed and second by Jones to approve the minutes of the previous regular county board meeting held on Tuesday, May 14th, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Animal Control Report** – Emily Gerl, report submitted.
- 2. Circuit Clerk’s Report** – Daniel Robbins, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 3. Coroner’s Report** – Randy Leetham, report submitted.
- 4. County Clerk and Recorder’s Report** – Sandy Leitheiser, report submitted. Leitheiser was present for questions, and she added her office is gathering names of election judges who will need to be commissioned by the Montgomery County Board for their service during the upcoming two year cycle. She stated the pay is \$205 for judges who attend training and \$185 for those who do not.
- 5. Enterprise Zone Report** – Christine Daniels, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 6. Environmental Protection Agency Report** – Christine Daniels, report submitted, was present for questions. Daniels added 12,672 pounds were collected at the recent April 27th, 2024 Electronic Recycling Drive in Litchfield.
- 7. Health & TB Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee, report submitted, was present for questions.

8. **Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood, report submitted, was present for questions.
9. **Information Services Report** – Curt Watkins, no report.
10. **Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst, report submitted, was present for questions.
11. **Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici, report submitted.
12. **Public Defender’s Report** – Erin Mattson, no report.
13. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman, no report.
14. **Sheriff’s Report** – Rick Robbins, report submitted.
15. **SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus, report submitted, was present for questions.
16. **State’s Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti, report submitted, was present for questions.
17. **Treasurer’s Report** – Nikki Lohman, report submitted, was present for questions.
18. **V.A.C. Report** – Cassandra Hampton, report submitted.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

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

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **708 Board** – Murzynski had nothing to report.
- **CEFS Board** – Beason was not present at the time of this report.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen had nothing to report.
- **Health Department** – Whitworth reported the next meeting will be held on July 16th, 2024.
- **IL Association of County Officials** – Bergen reported attending a meeting in Springfield recently.
- **MCEDC** – Hughes introduced Executive Director Bill Montgomery, who invited County Board members to the annual meeting beginning at 12 noon on Tuesday, June 18th.
- **Planning Commission** – Ritchie had nothing to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Folkerts reported the senior surveys are now available.
- **UCCI** – Ruppert had nothing to report.
- **U of I** – Beck reported the next meeting will be held on June 20th, 2024.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the organization is distributing flyers describing their services within the communities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service Board Member Dan Hough said the district’s new ambulance had just arrived the afternoon of the meeting and it was on display at the Historic Courthouse before the County Board meeting. He thanked the county for the ARPA funding used to purchase the ambulance.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said according to IS Director Curt Watkins, the redundant fiber ring is complete and equipment is in place. He stated Watkins’ office is making switch upgrades, upgrading security cameras

in the Court Complex, and is in the process of switching out 36 county PCs. Watkins asked the County Board to establish policies on security video recording and software/hardware/tech purchasing.

2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said EMA Director Kevin Schott reported to the committee on the recent Hazmat incident which shut down the northbound lanes of Interstate 55 for 11 hours. He also stated EMA Assistant Director Dan Hough continues to monitor the sink hole off Route 185.
3. **Labor Disaster Relief Team Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson reported Brad Schaivy of LiUNA attended the committee meeting and offered the services of highly-trained QRF (quick response force) LiUNA disaster response teams to deploy after disasters such as weather events. He said when requested by local EMA, LiUNA teams from Rock Island to Marion, including a new team headquartered at the Labor Local office in Hillsboro, can respond quickly with manpower, heavy equipment and highly-trained operators, as well as with light equipment such as chainsaws with highly-trained operators. Donaldson said the teams are licensed, insured, and work at no cost to the county. They deploy to remove downed trees and other structures from public and private property so utility and rescue work is not delayed. Donaldson stated State's Attorney Affrunti has reviewed and endorsed the MOU for county use and Schaivy will work with EMA Director Schott to set up the necessary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to begin the process.
4. **CO2 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting 4 pm Wednesday May 22 Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the committee discussed the ramifications of SB1289, which was recently approved by the state legislature.
5. **EZ Mayors Meeting 5 pm Wednesday May 29 Update/Approval:** Donaldson stated items discussed at the meeting included the county Small Biz Start-Up Grant, the Natural Hazard Mitigation siren grant, and potential municipal Animal Control contracts.
6. **Other Business:** Board Member Patty Whitworth said the local Christiana Tillson DAR Chapter is recognizing the 13 Revolutionary War veterans buried in Montgomery County with a traveling display honoring each one. She said the display was at the Hillsboro Veterans Memorial for Memorial Day, and she said the local DAR can to make it available "to every corner of the county" at upcoming events upon request.

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

1. **Animal Control Municipal Contract Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Chairman Donaldson reported at the Mayors Meeting on May 29th, mayors were dissatisfied with the proposed municipal contract requiring a per capita fee of \$2.50 and \$250 for after-hours calls. He said the committee then reconsidered and recommended changing the contract from \$2.50 per capita to \$2.00 per capita. Vice Chairman Young asked the difference in revenue between the two amounts. Chairman Donaldson said if all contracts are signed, the \$2.00 per capita would result in \$53,276 total county revenue, which is about \$13,000 less than \$2.50 per capita's result. Loucks asked about municipalities already under contract, and Ruppert confirmed their contracts remain in effect through November 2025. Vice Chairman Young expressed concern, stating signing new municipal contracts would result in more wear and tear on the Animal Control facility and vehicles. Board member Beason said the contracts are intended to

spread the cost of the animal control service as equally as possible to municipalities served. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to amend the Animal Control Municipal Contract from \$2.50 per capita to \$2.00 per capita. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Sneed, and Whitworth. Voting no: Loucks, Ruppert, and Young. **Motion carried 11-3.**

2. **Bushue HR Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Assistant County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett reported at a meeting with Travis Bushue on Thursday, May 30th. The HR consultant discussed how the county pays quarterly unemployment insurance, reviewed the current FOP contract, discussed new hire and 1099 portal reporting, and is developing standardized employment applications and new hire paperwork. Ruppert stated monthly meetings with Bushue will likely follow the monthly Coordinating Committee meetings.
3. **Hurst-Rosche Proposal to Review Anacott Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and discussed the proposal. Jeremy Connor was present to answer questions. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to approve the Hurst-Rosche proposal to review Anacott application for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 147-148).**
4. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the County Board Administration office learned on May 24th, 2024 the county has been selected to receive \$1,351,928 in the next round of DCEO Energy Transition Community Grant funding. Chairman Donaldson stated he scheduled an Ad Hoc Committee meeting for 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 12th, 2024 to discuss the county's application.
5. **Sheep Reparation Update/Approval:** Ruppert reported the county is statutorily responsible for a sheep killed and another one injured by a neighbor's pit bull on May 6th, 2022. The vet bill for the injured sheep was \$289.50 and Ruppert researched the average livestock value for the deceased sheep at the time of the incident. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Bergen to recommend the county pay \$600 in reparations from the Animal Control Fund for killed and injured sheep to Noah Gallion. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **UKA Virden Wind Project Update/Approval:** Ruppert displayed the permit application and transcript, and introduced special attorney for the county Andrew Keyt, who described the 18-turbine 122-megawatt Virden Wind project and the five-night public hearing process. Keyt said according to a January 2023 Illinois siting statute, if a project meets ordinance requirements it "shall be approved." Attorney Keyt suggested the County Board adopt an ordinance to approve the siting with conditions. Committee Chairman Ruppert detailed those conditions. Vice Chairman Young asked about shadow flicker, Board Member Loucks asked about enforcement of conditions, and Board Member Sneed asked about local homeowner participation. Chairman Donaldson commended the Development & Personnel Committee for the 12-15 hours spent in public hearings. Whitworth also commended the process and UKA's conflict resolution, and Beason commended UKA for proposing a project with greater setback distances than required, but said he could not support an alternative energy project. Vice Chairman Young asked if Hughes should abstain from voting due to a private renewable energy contract. After a brief out-of-the-room conversation with Hughes, State's Attorney Affrunti said Hughes has no conflict of interest. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to adopt Ordinance 2024-08 approving the application of Virden Wind LLC**

for the construction and operation of a commercial wind energy facility subject to the draft conditions provided by the Development & Personnel Committee. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes: Bergen, Donaldson, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Sneed, and Whitworth. Voting no: Beason, Beck, Folkerts, Loucks, Sneed, and Young. Motion carried 8-6. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 149-166).

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Bob Sneed:

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Sneed highlighted Maintenance Director Phil Ernst's report, including replacement of a leaking plastic diesel fuel tank at the Animal Control incinerator. Hughes asked if anyone knew who installed the plastic tank, but no answer was given.
2. **Chimney Liner Update/Approval:** Sneed reported Klein Chimney representatives returned on Saturday, June 8th, 2024, with a lift to install the new chimney liner at the Historic Courthouse.
3. **Courthouse Complex Roof Replacement Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Sneed said the county has been in contact with the insurance agent to request an adjuster determine if roofs at the Courts Complex, Historic Courthouse, and Jail had been impacted by hail damage. He said an adjuster has yet to arrive; but because of this possibility, the committee postponed opening the received Courts Complex roof bids until the July Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting.
4. **Surplus Old Jail Generator Bid Process Update/Approval:** Sneed said County Board Administrators Office staff has begun the process to advertise for bids to sell the surplus older jail generator. Sneed reported, and Ernst confirmed, the surplus generator works well. Bids will be opened at the next Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting.
5. **Interior Door Project for County Clerk's Office Update/Approval:** Sneed said work should begin mid-June or July.
6. **County Board Room Tech Grant Update/Approval:** Sneed said another walk-through was held on Tuesday afternoon, June 4th, and Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the meeting went well.
7. **New Outdoor Historic Courthouse Benches Update/Approval:** Sneed stated the committee expressed gratitude for four new outdoor benches at the Historic Courthouse, provided by the Big Dawg Dare through the City of Hillsboro. He said the committee informed the city the benches may now be bolted down at their present locations.

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

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Murzynski said UKA emailed a traffic analysis, County Engineer Cody Greenwood indicated he would be spending the next few months reviewing a potential road use agreement for the project.
2. **Resolution 2024-09 to appropriate funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Meisenheimer Ave., Irving Twp. Update/Approval:** Motion by Murzynski and second by Beason to approve Resolution 2024-09 to appropriate \$10,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 50/50 \$20,000 culvert replacement on Meisenheimer Avenue in Irving Township. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 167-168).

3. **Resolution 2024-10 to appropriate funds for 100% County culvert replacement on Walshville Tr. Update/Approval:** Motion by Murzynski and second by Loucks to recommend Resolution 2024-10 to appropriate \$21,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 100% county culvert replacement on Walshville Trail. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 169-170).
4. **Resolution 2024-11 to appropriate funds for 100% County culvert replacement on Walshville Tr. Update/Approval:** Motion by Murzynski and second by Whitworth to recommend Resolution 2024-11 to appropriate \$25,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 100% county culvert replacement on Walshville Trail. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 171-172).

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

1. **Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service Ambulance Update/Approval:** Ritchie reported the less-than-one-hour-old new Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service ambulance was available for inspection at the Historic Courthouse before the meeting. The new ambulance was funded through county ARPA.
2. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus affirmed farmland values are established by the Illinois Department of Revenue and not subject to county or Board of Review control. He said she stated any complaints must be filed at the state level. She also said her office now requires signatures for name and address changes as required by law, and she is working with County Board Administration to outline the process for assessing solar and wind farm projects. She is working with IS regarding a computer to enter data remotely from the field, and she said the pickup truck formerly used by her office may be declared surplus.
3. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** According to reports provided by Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Ritchie reported the April coal royalty payment was \$124,452.87 and the Capital Improvement Fund has a balance of \$1,436,867.20. Thus far this fiscal year, county coal funds have earned \$197,276.80 in interest.
4. **FY 2024 Audit & FY 2025 Budget Update/Approval:** Ritchie relayed auditors are working on a projected timeline for their report to be complete. He said Bellwether is preparing FY25 budget packets, which should be out by the end of June. Ritchie stated the Treasurer reported an overall 8% increase in county EAV to over \$630,000,000, and she anticipates more than one ambulance district will request levies higher than 5% over last year's, which will require a Truth-In-Taxation hearing process.
5. **Non-Union Salary Increases for FY 2025 Update/Approval:** Ritchie said after considering salary increases for non-union staff between 3% and 6% for FY 2025 and substantial discussion, the committee settled on recommending a 5% increase with an anticipated cost to the General Fund of \$128,521. Vice Chairman Young said the cost of living index is 2.8%, and any salary increases greater than this percentage is a disservice to the taxpayers. Jones said raises should be on top of Cost of Living Adjustments or they are not a raise. In response to a question from County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti said raises to salaries paid from special funds are up to the office holder who administers those funds. Bergen expressed concern and stated 5% increases might set a negative precedent for union negotiations. Whitworth stated at the Finance & Budget Committee meeting, Department Heads reported difficulty in

recruiting and retaining staff. Loucks said he preferred salary increases as dollar amounts rather than percentages. County Clerk Leitheiser said county offices are only as good as their staff, and Montgomery County is currently “behind the curve” pay-wise. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to budget 5% General Fund salary increases for non-union staff for FY 2025. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Murzynski, Ritchie, Sneed, and Whitworth. Voting no: Loucks, Ruppert, and Young. **Motion carried 11-3.**

6. **ARPA Ordinance Update/Approval:** Based on projects approved at the May meeting of the Montgomery County Board, the committee recommended adoption of the nine accompanying ARPA ordinances.

Motion by Ritchie and second by Murzynski to approve Ordinance 2024-09 authorizing \$50,000 of ARPA funds to be made available for Cellbrite Forensic software. ROLL CALL VOTE: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, Whitworth and Young **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 173).**

Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve Ordinance 2024-10 authorizing \$38,000 of ARPA funds to be made available for the Waggoner Baseball & Soccer Field Revitalization. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 174).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve Ordinance 2024-11 authorizing \$4,500 of ARPA funds to be made available for a Cress Hill Tower Camera. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 175).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to approve Ordinance 2024-12 authorizing \$50,160.60 of ARPA funds to be made available for Taylor Springs Generators. ROLL CALL VOTE: Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, Whitworth and Young **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 176).**

Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to approve Ordinance 2024-13 authorizing \$8,680 of ARPA funds to be made available for Witt Volunteer Fire Department Repeaters. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 177).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Sneed to approve Ordinance 2024-14 authorizing \$21,600 of ARPA funds to be made available for a Litchfield Police SUV. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 178).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones to approve Ordinance 2024-15 authorizing \$9,600 of ARPA funds to be made available for Raymond Water Maps. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 179).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve Ordinance 2024-16 authorizing \$1,800 of ARPA funds to be made available for a Montgomery County Health Department Culvert. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 180).

Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve Ordinance 2024-17 authorizing \$36,000 of ARPA funds to be made available for Litchfield Patrol Boat. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, page 181).

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **DCEO Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 12th, 2024**
2. **Long Term Recovery Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Thursday, June 13th, 2024**
3. **CO2 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 21st, 2024**

SCHEDULE CHANGES:

1. **Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, 8:30 a.m. Friday, July 5th, 2024**

APPOINTMENTS:

1. **Re-appointment of Tonya Flannery to the Montgomery County Housing Authority Board:** Motion by Sneed and second by Jones to re-appoint Tonya Flannery to the Montgomery County Housing Authority Board for a three-year term from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027. All in favor, motion carried.

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

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, July 9th, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Ritchie and second by Loucks to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:05 pm. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.