

Montgomery County Board

Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

**Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049**

6:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Members Present: Russ Beason, Chris Daniels, Andy Ritchie, Jesse Boehler, Vince Reincke

Members Absent: Chad Ruppert, John Lentz, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, SOA Office Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, Stan Jenkins of Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors, Illinois Realtors Government Affairs Director Ron Deedrick

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Beason.
2. Public Comments: None.
3. Supervisor of Assessments Office Update/Approval: Administrator Plunkett reported since the last meeting the SOA office has filled the part-time Field Assistant position and a full-time Deputy position. Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen has completed the four required classes for Certified Illinois Assessing Officer (CIAO) designation and anticipates completing the two electives and passing the required testing for Chief County Assessment Officer (CCAO) eligibility before the end of the year. Stan Jenkins of Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors reported he and the new part-time Field Assistant had viewed more than 180 properties and they are now working to input data. The SOA office is still awaiting assessment data from a Township Assessor and a Multi-Township Assessor that was statutorily due on June 15. Mullen reported mailing a letter setting a final deadline of Oct. 3 for data to be delivered to her office. In response to a question from Committee Member Boehler about the status of farmland reclassification going forward, Jenkins suggested the most prudent strategy may be to wait for sales sheets to trigger examination for possible reclassification going forward after Jan. 1, 2026.
4. Illinois Best Practices Recommendations Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beason read the list of Best Practices for the SOA office recommended by the committee and approved by the Montgomery County Board at their Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025 meeting. The committee discussed scheduling a final meeting to make recommendations to the state. Possible recommendations include requiring Truth in Taxation hearings when levies exceed the percentage of new EAV, educating taxpayers on the property tax process, educating taxpayers on the Board of Review process, and making recommendations on preferential assessments for wooded acreage.
5. Next Meeting Date Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beason set the final ad hoc committee meeting for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025 in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.

Motion to adjourn by Reincke and second by Boehler. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board
Coordinating Committee Meeting Agenda
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, September 25, 2025

Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: 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. 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: The committee reviewed a Cell Phone Policy drafted by Bushue HR. In addition to the policy, the committee would like to determine which employees need county cell phones. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Ruppert to recommend adoption of the Montgomery County Cell Phone Policy. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: 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: 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 Hughes to recommend adoption of the Five-Year Waste Management Plan. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: The ad hoc committee set its next meeting for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025, to finalize recommendations to the state. 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 sales sheets to trigger examination for possible reclassification going forward after Jan. 1, 2026
6. IDFPD Cemetery Relief Fund Grants Update/Approval: Lucas Nolan of County Board Administration has been researching and plans to apply for a grant.
7. Other Business: Due to the elevator outage, October committee meetings will likely need moved to the Courthouse Annex.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. Animal Control Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval: The committee will review and likely make a recommendation.
3. EMA Volunteer List Update/Approval: The committee will review.
4. Wind & Solar Application Rate Review Update/Approval: The committee will review and may make a recommendation.

5. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the bargaining unit has yet to approve.
6. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert reported negotiations should begin soon.
7. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
8. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee will continue to review and may make a recommendation.
9. Other Business: None

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review.
2. Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes reported the committee will hear a virtual presentation.
3. EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss a grant opportunity.
4. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Plunkett reported the board had \$10,000 in approved grant funds to utilize.
5. Court Complex ADA Grant Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Robbins is applying for a grant.
6. Other Business: Committee Chair Hughes reviewed the status of the elevator, likely out of service until mid-October.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Building Construction Update/Approval: Committee Chair Murzynski reported the project is still waiting for overhead doors to arrive.
2. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski reported the highway department will be working on cutting trees at the jail, making repairs at the Arches Rail Trail, and helping the health department with a culvert.

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. SOA Office Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
3. Parcel 13-06-179-001 in Witt Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
4. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
(NOTE: Chairman Donaldson left the meeting at 9:15 a.m. and Vice Chair Whitworth chaired the remainder of the meeting)
5. Transfer GIS from General Fund Update/Approval: Bellwether suggested the county consider transferring GIS from the General Fund.
6. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: The committee will review budget changes.
7. FY2026 Aggregate Tax Levy Update/Approval: Plunkett reported no public comments at Truth In Taxation hearings on Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025.
8. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee will review after input from the State's Attorney.
9. Insurance Request for Proposals Update/Approval: Bushue HR will solicit proposals next year.
10. Other Business: None

Motion to adjourn by Hughes and second by Murzynski. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board
Development & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, October 6, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Chief Deputy Treasurer Trish Roemelin, Tony Johnston of Assured Partners

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Health Insurance Renewal Update/Approval: Tony Johnston of Assured Partners 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. 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% with a bundle discount for continuing with the present vision and dental optional plans. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend Blue Cross Blue Shield Option 1 for FY2026 at a premium increase of 7.67%. All in favor, motion carried.** In response to a question from Committee Chair Ruppert, Johnston said the policy's loss ratio for the current fiscal year is running a 1.46.
4. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported seven dogs and 19 cats & kittens currently at the facility. She reported calls for the past month were up, and has scheduled an adoption event for Oct. 26 at Rural King in Litchfield.
5. Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the proposed Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual with revisions that Committee Chair Ruppert described as reflecting current Montgomery County operations. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to recommend approval of the Montgomery County Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. EMA Volunteer List Update/Approval: At the recommendation of Bushue HR, EMA will be providing a volunteer list for committee review and board approval.
7. Wind & Solar Application Rate Review Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert said he believes 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. The committee also discussed adding a one-year expiration date to solar siting approval similar to the wind ordinance. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to increase wind and solar application 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 to the solar ordinance. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the contract remains in the hands of the union.

9. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: County Board Administration has been in contact with the bargaining unit.
10. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: Plunkett reported that 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.
11. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: 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.
12. Other Business: Plunkett reminded the committee about the flu shot schedule and reviewed the BEAD map.

Motion to pay the bills by Jones and second by Beason. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn by Beason and second by Daniels. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board

Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting Agenda

Historic Courthouse Annex

201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: Evan Young

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst. Additionally, Patrick Ronayne and Morey Hill from Silicon Ranch attended virtually

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Maintenance Director Ernst
2. Public Comments: none
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: 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 on either October 17, 22, or 29; the elevator in the Historic Courthouse ceased operating on September 11 due to a faulty travel cable, a replacement was ordered on Sept. 19 with Otis Elevator Company anticipating the elevator returning to service sometime in mid-October. Ernst reported his department completed 47 work orders during the past month. The committee also discussed updating the south entry to the Historic Courthouse to a key fob system. **Motion by Beason and second by Beck 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.**
4. Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval: Patrick Ronayne and Morey Hill from Silicon Ranch, a solar developer based in Nashville, TN, presented a proposal to buy the remainder of the county farm (120 acres) to develop as a 10 Megawatt solar field. Mr. Hill stressed the fact they not only wish to purchase the land, but they intend to operate the solar field themselves, not intending to sell the project. Mr. Ronayne added that they are seeking a 3 year option agreement for \$10,000 which would allow them to establish an interconnect agreement with Ameren. Beason raised concern about eliminating productive farm land. The committee agreed that the State's Attorney needs to review the proposal and advise the committee on options for sale and leasing of county property.
5. EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes said Hillsboro City Commissioner Kendra Wright would like to install a grant funded EV Charging station on the east side of the Historic Courthouse. He state a detailed plan of operation will be reviewed at next month's committee meeting.
6. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: Plunkett reminded the committee they still have \$10,000 DCEO grant money to spend in the County Board Room. Plunkett agreed to explore several options for how the board could implement this money and will present them at next month's committee meeting.
7. Court Complex ADA Grant Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported he had gathered a majority of paperwork ready to apply for the grant. This grant would allow the Courthouse Complex to update restroom doors to meet handicap accessible requirements.

8. Other Business: The committee discussed the possibility of replacing the current elevator in the Historic Courthouse with a hydraulic elevator. Ernst expressed his pleasure with the hydraulic elevators at the Courthouse Complex, noting their low maintenance and reliability. The committee agreed to explore possible options for moving forward with replacing the current elevator with a hydraulic elevator.

Motion to pay the bills by Beason and second by Beck. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn by Hughes and second by Beck. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board

Roads & Bridges Committee Meeting Minutes

Conference Room, County Highway Dept.
11159 IL Rte 185, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 **Time:** 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

Members present: Ethan Murzynski, Bill Bergen, Patty Whitworth, Chad Ruppert, Keith Hancock, Rob Corso, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: None

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood and Lucas Nowlan of the County Board Admin

1. Public Comments: None
2. Resolution 2025-9 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement of Prange Ave., Walshville Township Update/approval: The committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Prange Avenue in Walshville Township. 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 Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of Resolution 2025-9 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay to pay one-half of an estimated \$25,000 project to replace a culvert on Prange Avenue. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported that brush had been cleared and that the trail has been leveled. Engineer Greenwood informed the committee that he 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, as it is intended to be a walking trail.
4. Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval: 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. It was noted that the extension project will be discussed at the next Nokomis City Council meeting on Oct. 27.
5. Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a road vacation plat for Zanesville (originally Leesburg), a never-developed village in Zanesville Township. Engineer Greenwood reported that the developers still intend to continue with the road vacation, however, he has not heard any further developments.
6. Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported that 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.

7. Other Items: Engineer Greenwood reported that the Highway Department intends to heat and insulate the new Heavy Equipment Shed. Insulation has been purchased, and the department plans to install it themselves later this fall.

Motion by Bergen, second by Whitworth to pay bills. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Hancock, second by Ruppert to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser

Montgomery County Board

Finance & Budget Committee Meeting Agenda

Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, October 9, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Chris Daniels, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, SOA Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath, James VanOstran

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by committee member Corso.
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: The committee reviewed reports from SOA Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen and from Gary Twist of Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors (PETA). Mullen added that a Township Assessor and a Multi-Township Assessor have both resigned; SOA and PETA staff were in the field catching up on that work. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser noted her office could give guidance to townships on the process to appoint replacements for the vacancies.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ritchie noted an August coal royalty payment of \$118,850.86 leading to a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,392,664.87.
5. Parcel 13-06-179-001 in Witt Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the City of Witt property that had been pulled from the trustee sale last month after Alderman James VanOstran raised questions about the potential buyer. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti advised the committee the County Board could either reject the sale or proceed. If the sale is rejected, the property goes back to the County Trustee. **Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to recommend the rejection of the transfer of parcel number 13-06-179-001 in Witt Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. Transfer Parcels from Trustee Sale Update/Approval: The committee reviewed and recommended transferring 17 parcels delinquent parcels sold at the trustee sale. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend the transfer of 17 parcels sold in the Trustee Sale. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: 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.
8. Transfer GIS from General Fund Update/Approval: During the budget hearing process, Bellwether recommended transferring GIS from the General Fund to a separate fund so the recording fees that fund 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 Beck to transfer GIS from the General Fund beginning in FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.**

9. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: Treasurer Nikki Lohman noted the only change from the budget presented last month that anticipated a General Fund surplus of \$96,805.96 is the potential transfer of GIS from the General Fund. The county board will take final action on the budget at their November meeting.
10. FY2026 Aggregate Tax Levy Update/Approval: The committee reviewed minutes from Sept. 24 Truth in Taxation hearings for the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service and the Veterans Assistance Commission during which no opposition was voiced. The committee recommended adopting the aggregate levies as estimated last month. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend adoption of aggregate tax levies as estimated last month. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The discussion on the need for a training reimbursement policy that would allow the county to collect training expenses from employees who leave county employment shortly after training continued. Since the primary training expense is in the Sheriff's Office, the committee discussed whether the policy should be county-wide or by department. Committee consensus was to request guidance from Bushue HR.
12. Insurance Request for Proposals Update/Approval: Bushue HR will handle the process and make recommendations for FY2027.
13. Other Business: Treasurer Nikki Lohman presented a county credit card request form which needed a signature from the committee chair, and noted travel vouchers which exceeded the GSA hotel per diem which will require a roll call vote at the full board meeting.

Motion to pay the bills and payroll by Ritchie and second by Corso. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn by Whitworth and second by Corso. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.