

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

Date: Thursday, December 26, 2024

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call - Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, and Dr. Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Ethan Murzynski

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Board member Chris Daniels

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Curt Watkins was not present.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Dan Hough reported one volunteer has spent 78 hours working in the EMA office, and another has spent 46 hours. Hough said he will be at a conference Jan. 5-8.
3. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Committee member Ritchie described an Open House he attended on Dec. 18.
4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said the committee will act in an advisory capacity to give input into the process described by SB3455, and will not have any personnel input. He said an initial meeting date is still pending. Donaldson said he intends to appoint County Board members Chad Ruppert, Christine Daniels, Andy Ritchie, and Russell Beason to the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee, along with public members John Lentz, Jesse Boehler, and Ron Deedrick.
5. **Property Insurance on New Construction Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman suggested committees check with the property insurance agent during the new construction and bidding process to make sure ongoing insurance costs are known. Chairman Donaldson asked the item to be placed on the Buildings & Grounds and Roads & Bridges committee agendas.
6. **ARPA Treasurer's Office Carpet Bids Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson opened carpet bids from Quality Flooring of Litchfield for \$5,710.11 and from Petroski Door, Window & Flooring of Donnellson for \$6,620.20 to replace carpet in the Treasurer's Office, and one bid from Greg Chambers for carpet installation for \$4,930. Remaining ARPA funds will be used for the project. Motion by Hughes and second by Ritchie to award bids of \$5,710.11 to Quality Flooring of Litchfield and \$4,930 to Greg Chambers for carpet replacement in the Montgomery County Treasurer's Office and Break Room. All in favor, motion carried.
7. **Litchfield TIF 4 Update/Approval:** Committee member Ritchie reported he voted in favor of a new Litchfield TIF district as he represented the County Board at a Taxing District meeting on Dec. 18 in Litchfield for a new residential TIF district that seeks to provide new single-family and multi-family developments near St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield.
8. **National Law Enforcement Day (Jan. 9) Proclamation Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson will present a resolution at the January County Board meeting.
9. **Nextlink Update/Approval:** County Clerk Leitheiser reported Mike Johnson of Nextlink visited and she introduced him to County Board Administrator Plunkett. Johnson asked the project manager to update the county, and his report was provided to committee members, and reported that due to staffing difficulties there are no Montgomery County customers yet.
10. **Other Business:** County Clerk Leitheiser said she has reviewed Mental Health Board member terms and found several reappointments are necessary.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** The committee will meet with several more new applicants.
2. **County Project Labor Agreement (PLA) Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to review.
3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
4. **Plains Solar Update/Approval:** The committee will review revisions made after the Dec. 16 public hearing, and discuss a recommendation to the County Board.
5. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Plunkett said all monthly reports to date have been approved and a reimbursement check of nearly \$1.2 million is anticipated.
6. **City-Wide Clean-Up Grant Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert asked Treasurer Lohman to suggest policy and procedure for re-implementation.
7. **TIF District Update/Approval:** Public hearings have been scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 16, for the proposed new Litchfield TIF, and for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27, for the proposed new Nokomis TIF.

8. **Post-Employment Final Payment Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
9. **Rivers & Routes Tourism Resolution Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
10. **Other Business:** None

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. **Courthouse Chiller Bid Opening Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss bids.
2. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss the report.
3. **Courthouse Annex Table Request Update/Approval:** Regional Superintendent Julie Wollerman would like to replace tables in the Annex and has submitted photos. The committee will review and discuss the request.
4. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Court AV upgrades in the County Board Room are scheduled for Committee Week in February. Meetings will likely be switched to the Courthouse Annex.
5. **Green Diamond Bike Trail Update/Approval:** A Quit Claim deed remains pending.
6. **Other Business:** None

Roads and Bridges Committee:

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** In the absence of Committee Chair Murzynski, Chairman Donaldson said the County Engineer continues to review the submitted Traffic Impact Analysis.
2. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** At last word, paperwork from the State of Illinois was still pending.
3. **Other Business:** None

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **MCSO Vehicle Bid Award Update/Approval:** The committee will open and review bids.
4. **Unified Child Advocacy Network (UCAN) Update/Approval:** Sheriff Holshouser said UCAN has asked to address the committee.
5. **IRS Mileage Rate Effective Jan. 1 Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported the IRS mileage rate will increase to 70 cents a mile on Jan. 1.
6. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman asked for a county credit card policy to be placed on the agenda, and Chairman Donaldson asked for education incentives for township assessors to be placed on the agenda.

Appointments: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:42 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

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM – County Board Room

Roll Call - Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Animal Control Warden April Pier, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell.

- 1. Public Comment:** Donna Yeske expressed concerns about the performance and professionalism of the Supervisor of Assessments (SOA), referencing a radio interview and email discussions among other issues. She reviewed discussions with the Illinois Department of Revenue regarding statutory authority over the SOA. Yeske said she feels the County Board is not doing enough to help the people of the county, and requested the board reprimand or remove the SOA. Documentation provided by Yeske is included in the board packets. Brandi Lentz said the SOA has made issues raised by Lentz personal, including accusing Lentz of lying on a radio interview. Lentz said those remarks merit discipline. She also questioned the 2023 Farmland Review Committee notice process, the 2024 Farmland Review Committee timeline, and the SOA's responsibility of certification of education. Documentation provided by Lentz is included in the board packets.
- 2. Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** The committee heard business proposals from Korenne Mesnard of Drape's Lounge, John Casterline of Bobo's Tough Toys, Cody and Jennifer Gudgel of Gudgel Ranch Saloon, John R. Gwinn of Dirt Doctor Hobby Shop, Angie Eickhoff of White & Associates and AEJE Holdings, and David Kalaher and Jeff Compton of Miss Kitty's Goldmine. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend awarding Small Biz Grants of \$5,000 to Drape's Lounge in Schram City; \$7,500 to Bobo's Tough Toys in Fillmore; \$20,000 to Gudgel Ranch Saloon in Litchfield; \$7,500 to Dirt Doctor Hobby Shop in Raymond; \$7,500 to White & Associates and AEJE Holdings in Hillsboro; and \$7,500 to Miss Kitty's Goldmine in Litchfield.** All in favor, motion carried.
- 3. Plains Solar Update/Approval:** The committee discussed the revised site plan with developer Rebecca Cheatham virtually present by telephone. The committee was assured the vegetative buffer would be outside the fence, and Committee Chair Ruppert requested a copy of the interconnect agreement. Committee member Jones said he was pleased with the changes in the revised plan, and felt all concerns had been addressed. Ruppert requested another 30 days to develop siting permit conditions, and Cheatham said she would propose language for the requested conditions.
- 4. Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** The committee was notified Apex Clean Energy submitted a permit application for Montgomery Springs Solar, as well as the application fee, on December 19th, 2024. Committee Chair Ruppert suggested waiting until after a City of Hillsboro zoning hearing on the parcel before setting a permit Public Hearing date. The committee also discussed a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to review the permit application. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend accepting a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to review the permit application for a fee not to exceed \$3,500.** All in favor, motion carried.

5. **SOA Elected Position Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert referenced the concerns raised about the Supervisor of Assessments' performance, but said the committee would be making no recommendation at this meeting. Chairman Donaldson said the SOA could only change from an appointed to an elected position by voter referendum, and that referendum could be placed on the ballot in one of two ways: by county board action or by petition. He said he would be asking the county board to consider a voter referendum at the January meeting.
6. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Warden Pier reported 10 dogs at the animal control facility after an adoption event on December 26th at Rural King. She said she is researching a cremains processor. Committee Chair Ruppert said he will ask the committee to review and potentially change adoption fees at the next committee meeting.
7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Plunkett said the county received a nearly \$1.2 million reimbursement check on Tuesday, January 7th, which catches the grant up with all submissions of request for payment to date. DCEO continues to review the next phase grant application, and a grant agreement is expected soon.
8. **City-Wide Clean-Up Grant Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed an application for re-instituting city-wide clean-up grants to municipalities and townships. The grant would reimburse eligible municipalities or townships up to \$750 per year for landfill costs from the Montgomery County Board Trustee Fund. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to recommend reinstating the City-Wide Clean-Up Grant. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. **TIF District Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported a public hearing for a proposed new Litchfield TIF has been set for 6 p.m. Thursday, January 16th, at Corwin Hall, and a public hearing for a proposed new Nokomis TIF has been set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, January 27th, at Nokomis City Hall.
10. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Bushue HR has been working with the county on updating the Employee Handbook, and the next meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, January 9th.
11. **Post-Employment Final Payment Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to work with Bushue on a policy to change the employee post-employment final payment to avoid IMRF penalties.
12. **Rivers & Routes Tourism Resolution Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed an annual resolution in support of participation in Rivers & Routes Tourism at no cost to the county. **Motion by Bergen and second by Daniels to recommend adoption of the resolution in support of Rivers & Routes Tourism. All in favor, motion carried.**
13. **Other Business:** The committee reviewed and discussed the HRA report.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 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
Development & Personnel Committee
Hearing Minutes**

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

Date: Monday, December 16, 2024

Time: 6:02 PM

Roll Call - Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Russell Beason, Chris Daniels arrived at 6:12 p.m.,
Jeremy Jones

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett of County Board Administration, and on behalf of Plains Solar Rebecca Cheatham, attorney Nicholas Standiford, and landowner Jack Tosetti.

- 1. Identification of Application and Project Overview:** Committee Chair Ruppert reconvened the hearing that had been recessed on July 1st, 2024, and reviewed the purpose of the hearing to discuss the proposed solar project application for Plains Solar, LLC, submitted by Cypress Creek Renewables, LLC, as outlined in the Montgomery County Solar Energy Farm and Solar Gardens Installations in Unincorporated Montgomery County, Illinois Ordinance. The project application is to install 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. A verbatim record was taken by a court reporter; transcripts are available at the County Board Administration office.
- 2. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert detailed rules and procedures.
- 3. Presentation by Applicant:** Rebecca Cheatham of Cypress Creek Renewables described the project, which is a 4.99 MW community solar project called Plains Solar on Witt Avenue, and attorney Nicholas Standiford testified that the application meets the Montgomery County Solar Ordinance. Via telephone, Erin Bowen testified on property value studies and Trevor McClanahan testified on the storm water plan.
- 4. Questions for Applicant:** In addition to members of the Committee, questions were asked by KC Rhodes, Kathleen Rhodes, Glenn Bishop, Ken Manzer, Dionne Manzer, Melissa Bell, and Jesse Boehler. During the course of the questions and answer period, Committee member Jones suggested moving 5-6 rows of panels from the west side of the project, where it is the closest to a residence, to the north side. Landowner Jack Tosetti did not object, and Cheatham said engineers would develop a new map.
- 5. Presentation by Independent Consultants for Montgomery County:** None
- 6. Public Comment:** Jesse Boehler and Kathleen Rhodes both offered comments.
- 7. Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application:** None
- 8. Closing Comments by Applicant:** None
- 9. Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert closed the public hearing and said deliberation and a decision will be made at the Monday, January 6th, 2025, Development & Personnel Committee meeting, scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.
- 10. Adjournment Update/Approval:** Motion by Beason and second by Bergen to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm. 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 Minutes**
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Time: 8:33 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call - Members Present: Mark Hughes (virtually), Connie Beck (virtually), Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young (at 8:38 a.m.), Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Hillsboro City Planner Sarah McConnell

The meeting was called to order by Committee Vice Chairman Beason. To ensure there was a quorum, Vice Chairman Beason temporarily appointed Chairman Donaldson to the committee.

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **Courthouse Chiller Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Committee Vice Chairman Beason opened six bids with four bidders present. Due to the inclement weather, Maintenance Director Ernst said he had telephoned all six bidders on Monday, Jan. 6, to waive the requirement that they be present at the bid opening. Bids were received as follows: \$139,498 from Daikin-TMI of Chesterfield, MO; \$125,800 from Entec of Peoria; \$161,955 from Bickle Electric of Edwardsville; \$132,000 from Henson Robinson of Springfield for the requested Diakin chiller and \$125,000 for a Carrier; \$124,868.90 from Kane Mechanical of East Alton; and \$108,889 from Loellke Plumbing of Jerseyville. The committee discussed lead time, and all four bidders present said 16-18 weeks. **Motion by Beason and second by Donaldson to recommend awarding the apparent low responsible bid to Loellke Plumbing of Jerseyville for \$108,889 pending review. All in favor, motion carried.** After a discussion about proposals for electric work and controls for the new chiller, the committee agreed separating the awards could lead to warranty problems and preferred a “turn-key” bid. **Motion by Young and second by Hancock to reconsider the previous motion. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Young and second by Hancock to reject all bids and rebid as a turn-key project. All in favor, motion carried.** Maintenance Director Ernst will meet with Hurst-Rosche and solicit a proposal for writing bid specs and overseeing installation.
3. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst reviewed the 78 items on his monthly report. The committee thanked his department for snow removal efforts. Ernst presented a bid for \$2,103.12 to improve entrance lighting at the Historic Courthouse. The committee agreed to hold off until closer to the end of the fiscal year to make sure funds are available. Ernst also presented a bid from Weiss Construction for \$4,500 to remove and replace a section of flooring in the Montgomery County Courthouse to allow for plumbing repairs, and from Heise Plumbing for \$1,491 to make the repairs. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to accept bids from Heise Plumbing for \$1,491 and Weiss Construction for \$4,500 to correct a plumbing issue in the new courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **New Courthouse Cleaning Contract Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the current contract with National Maintenance & Cleaning, which calls for a rate of \$22.50 per hour for 4-6 hours per day for cleaning the Montgomery County Courthouse, and requires a 30-day termination notice. Maintenance Director Ernst said he will meet with Committee Chair Hughes, Sheriff Holshouser, and custodial staff to see if the building can be cleaned utilizing county staff with the possible addition of part-time help.

5. **Courthouse Annex Table Request Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported that Regional Superintendent Julie Wollerman had offered to replace tables in the Courthouse Annex meeting room with smaller rolling tables. A photo was provided. The committee gave consent.
6. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Circuit Clerk Robbins reported AV work in the County Board Room to equip it as a backup court room will be conducted Feb. 3-7. Committee meetings will have to be moved to either the Conference Room or the Courthouse Annex to accommodate the work.
7. **Green Diamond Bike Trail Update/Approval:** A quit claim deed to turn the property over to the Village of Waggoner remains pending.
8. **Property Insurance on New Construction Update/Approval:** Treasurer Nikki Lohman had suggested to the Coordinating Committee the County Board research property insurance costs before the bidding process for adding structures. The committee agreed, and Young recommended making sure new structures were insured when construction begins.
9. **Other Business:** None

Motion to pay the bills by Hancock and second by Young. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn by Hancock and second by Young. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 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, January 8th, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

The committee met today to discuss the following:

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported he has a draft road use agreement, and requested committee input on how to proceed. Outside legal counsel as assisting. Committee Chair Murzynski said he would like the roads to be left in better shape when the project is completed than they were when it started. After continued discussion on the process, the committee concluded Greenwood will continue to work on the draft, and hopes to have it ready by the February committee meeting. The committee will then review it for 30 days before making a recommendation.
3. **Horseshoe Solar Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood presented a road use agreement for Horseshoe Solar at the intersection of Fillmore Trail and Schoolhouse Road. The solar project has the same developer as previous neighboring project Anacott and Blue Star, and Greenwood said the road use agreement is also the same. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of a Road Use Agreement with Horseshoe Solar. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Resolution 2025-1 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Updated/Approval:** Information for the resolution has not yet been provided by the state.
5. **Other Items:** Engineer Greenwood gave a number of updates, including his department's response to the 8-10-inch snow event. He said county forces logged 314 hours plowing 7,100 miles and assisting 21 stranded drivers. The highway department used 1,750 gallons of diesel fuel and spread 660 tons of salt, sand and grit mixture. The committee also watched a video on the effectiveness of segmented snow plow blades in use by the highway department. Greenwood reported the stand-by generator is up and running, the solar project is complete and awaiting Ameren's inspection, and the committee discussed getting property insurance quotes as part of the new construction bidding process. Greenwood provided the committee with a list of current and ongoing projects, and a map of county highways.

Motion by Whitworth, second by Hancock to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as Deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

**Montgomery County Board
Finance & Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

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

Date: Thursday, January 9, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call - Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, EMA Director Dan Hough, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Undersheriff Jeff Roach, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Hillsboro Community Developer Sarah McConnell, UCAN Executive Director Tammy Lercher, UCAN Family Advocate Kathy Norris

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by County Board Administrator Plunkett
2. **Public Comment:** Treasurer Lohman introduced Katelin Feldmann of Scheffel Boyle, who is working in the county with her staff on the audit.
3. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus provided intergovernmental agreements with the Audubon-Nokomis MTA and the Fillmore Consolidated-Witt MTA which will needed to be approved by the county board. She also provided State of Illinois sales ratio information and subsequent township multipliers to the committee, adding the because of the sales ratio and multiplier process, under-assessed property impacts every other property owner. She reported the process has rolled to the Board of Review level, who can make changes as they see fit.
4. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie reported a November coal royalty payment of \$61,776.04 and coal interest earned through the end of November of \$417,254.59.
5. **MCSO Vehicle Bid Award Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie opened one lone bid for two 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit AWD police vehicles from Victory Lane Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Carlinville. The first bid was \$45,709 less \$9,000 trade in for a 2020 Ford Police Interceptor Utility with 99,120 miles for a net price of \$36,709. The second bid was \$45,709 less \$19,000 trade in for a 2020 Ford Explorer with 41,291 miles for a net price of \$26,709. During the course of the meeting in response to a request by the committee, Sheriff Holshouser obtained proposals from GTSI of Greenville to equip the new vehicles for \$8,318.31 each. The total to purchase and equip the two vehicles is \$80,054.62 and the amount budgeted from coal reserves was \$135,000. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Daniels to recommend awarding the low bids of \$36,709 and \$26,709 for two new 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit AWD vehicles to Victory Lane of Carlinville. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Unified Child Advocacy Network (UCAN) Update/Approval:** UCAN Executive Director Tammy Lercher and Family Advocate Kathy Norris addressed the committee to request funds for their organization which provides forensic interviews of abused children. Norris said UCAN is a non-profit organization that receives state and federal funding, plus funding from all five counties covered. The main office is in Jerseyville. Undersheriff Roach added that he has worked approximately 80 cases with UCAN over the last five years, and Sheriff Holshouser said the organization helps immensely and, sadly, is needed far too often. In the past, UCAN has been locally funded through the 708 levy for amounts ranging from \$7,800 to \$16,500 per year but this year they missed the application deadline. Former 708 Board member Dan Hough said the organization is still eligible for an any time walk-in “Tier 2” application for up to \$12,000. Treasurer Lohman said ARPA interest could also be

used. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend donating \$10,000 from ARPA interest to UCAN. Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to amend the motion to \$15,000. All in favor, motion carried.

7. **IRS Mileage Rate Effective Jan. 1 Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported the IRS mileage rate increased to 70 cents effective January 1st, 2025. Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to set the county mileage reimbursement rate at .70 effective January 15th, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.
8. **County Credit Card Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman said due to past county credit card charge amounts for a conference in Philadelphia that exceed the limits on the Montgomery County travel ordinance, she believes the county needs to develop a credit card policy. She has developed one using Champaign County as a template, and has researched it with our county auditors. County Clerk Leitheiser added that the county travel ordinance also needs updated to reflect current rates. In order for reference material to be copied, Committee Chair Ritchie recessed the meeting at 9:43 a.m. and called it back to order at 9:56 a.m. Committee members reviewed the credit card bill, the voucher to pay the bill from the Forfeiture Fund, receipts, travel ordinance, and the draft credit card policy. Sheriff Holshouser said a MCSO county credit card was also used to pay for air fare to the same conference. Committee Chair Ritchie said special funds, such as the Forfeiture Fund, may be spent per statute at the office holder's discretion. Motion by Whitworth and second by Ritchie to pay the credit card bill and subsequent late fees and interest from the Forfeiture Fund. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to place on next month's committee agenda reviewing the bill for possible reimbursement to the Forfeiture Fund, to review and recommend a credit card policy, and to review and update or revise the county travel ordinance. All in favor, motion carried.
9. **Education Incentive for Township Assessors Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman reported that Chairman Donaldson has asked the county to research financial incentives that would pay for the education required for individuals to seek the office of Township Assessor. The committee discussed, and the Supervisor of Assessments will provide a list of training requirements and the cost for the next committee meeting.

10. Other Business: None

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:47 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
Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049**

Date: Thursday, January 30, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

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

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, State's Attorney Andrew Affranti, EMA Director Dan Hough, IS Director Curt Watkins, County Board member Christine Daniels, Chief Deputy Lance Weitekamp, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell.

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson, after which he asked for a moment of silence in memory of those who died in the Washington DC air collision.

Public Comments: Chairman Donaldson called upon Jason Talley, Carson Ortiz, and Tommy Lanthrip of Nextlink to provide an update on broadband service. Ortiz said the company has ten active towers in the area with more planned. He said the company plans to market through direct mail and a food truck promotion, and Nextlink has some customers signed up. Talley added new towers are planned in the southern part of the county, which should be covered by the end of the year. In response to questions from County Clerk Leitheiser, Talley said Nextlink should have completed approximately 40% of work required by the federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) grant by the end of the year, and added that the \$100,000 DCEO grant from Montgomery County has helped speed up the process by a couple of years. At the request from Chairman Donaldson, Nextlink will make a presentation to the Development & Personnel Committee at their Monday, March 3rd, meeting.

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** IS Director Curt Watkins reported he is working on archiving 2024 information and has implemented two-factor authentication throughout most of the Courthouse Complex, Historic Courthouse, and Jail, and 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 reported he is scheduling CPR/AED training and paid for tourniquets for each AED box. He has responded to calls about fly ash being transported by truck through the county and is researching whether his office has any local jurisdiction. He attended Emergency Housing training, was scheduled to begin state EPA training on Jan. 30, will host the Illinois EMA Director for a visit on Feb. 20, has scheduled a storm spotter training class at Lincoln Land Community College in Litchfield on March 18, and is working to schedule a tire collection.
3. **CIPT IGA and Ordinance Update/Approval:** The board will be asked to consider and approve an annual ordinance and intergovernmental agreement for public transportation at their February meeting.
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said the council met on Jan. 16 and continues to meet goals.
5. **Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson provided committee contact information to Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Chair Russ Beason and anticipates the first meeting will be scheduled near the end of February.

6. **Closed Session Minutes Review Update/Approval:** There have been no closed session minutes in the last six months to review.
7. **Broadband Breakthrough Program Update/Approval:** 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.
8. **Other Business:** Chairman Donaldson noted that the City of Hillsboro plans to discontinue leasing the building where the county baler is located to DC Waste. He also noted a complimentary letter from Jack Tosetti of Nokomis about county snow removal.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** The committee will meet with applicants and review applications.
2. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said the committee will review fees.
3. **Plains Solar Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said he will have siting permit conditions ready for committee review.
4. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** The committee will set a date for a public hearing, likely near the end of March.
5. **County Project Labor Agreement (PLA) Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
6. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Administrator Plunkett reported the current grant is up to date, and the next phase remains under review by DCEO.
7. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Committee Chairman Ruppert said the committee will review the draft handbook, which is close to completion.
8. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert expressed an interest in a notary available at the Historic Courthouse, and will ask the committee to recommend a policy.
9. **Other Business:** None

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes said he asked Maintenance Director Phil Ernst to condense his reports.
2. **Courthouse Chiller Project Update/Approval:** Last month, the committee rejected all bids in favor of rebidding a turn-key project. The committee will open and review new bids.
3. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins said court grant-funded AV work is scheduled to be completed in the County Board Room Feb. 3-7. Buildings & Grounds and Finance & Budget meetings will be scheduled at the Courthouse Annex.
4. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes said he would like the committee to consider replacing the company contracted to clean the Montgomery County Courthouse with a potential new part-time county position.
5. **Green Diamond Bike Trail Update/Approval:** State's Attorney Affrunti said he will have the quit claim deeds ready for committee review.
6. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Hughes said he would like the committee to consider solutions to lighting issues on the first floor of the Historic Courthouse.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to review and discuss, working toward a potential recommendation.
2. **County & Township MFT Rock Letting Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski anticipates the lettings will be on the committee agenda.

3. **County Culvert Letting Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski anticipates the lettings will be on the committee agenda.
4. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** If the state has supplied the resolution, the committee will review and discuss.
5. **Other Business:** None

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Township Assessor Education Incentive Update/Approval:** Working with the Supervisor of Assessments, Administrator Plunkett found evidence that townships and multi-townships are responsible for the cost of assessor education.
3. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
4. **Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval:** County Clerk Leitheiser anticipates a few changes for the committee to review.
5. **Bellwether Budget Contract Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman said a budget contract is not needed until spring.
6. **Ambulance Service Agreements Update/Approval:** Three of the four ambulance service agreements are ready for action.
7. **County Credit Card Policy Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
8. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
9. **Other Business:** Hughes said recent county credit card issues need to be discussed at the full board meeting. Chairman Donaldson said he will ask the state's attorney to address these issues during the consent agenda.

Appointments:

1. **Jen Carron, Raymond, to 4-year term on 708 Board Update/Approval:** The full board will be asked to confirm the appointment.

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**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Monday, February 3, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason, Dr. Patty Whitworth **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Animal Control Warden April Pier, Circuit Clerk Daniels Robbins, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Kevin Brink of GIS, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Maggie Poteau of UKA.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** 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 Jones and second by Whitworth to recommend awarding 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.
4. **City-Wide Clean-Up Grant Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed applications from nine municipalities. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to recommend awarding \$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, and City of Coffeen.** All in favor, motion carried.
5. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Animal Control Warden Pier reported 13 dogs and three kittens at the facility. She has been following up on over 60 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.
6. **Plains Solar Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the revised project map and discussed five proposed conditions for siting approval. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend approval for Cypress Creek Renewable to site Plains Solar, a 5 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 stormwater 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.

7. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** The committee set a public hearing date of 6 p.m. 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.
8. **County Project Labor Agreement (PLA) Update/Approval:** The committee continued a discussion regarding a resolution adopted in February 2011 requiring a Project Labor Agreement attached to all county projects with an estimated cost over \$100,000. Committee member Jones said he believes PLAs make a difference in the amount of taxpayer money required to complete a project, and committee member Bergen said PLAs take away options. State's Attorney Affrunti said any project can be bid using specifications that require local labor, and committee member Daniels said she will research bid language encouraging local labor. **Motion by Beason and second by Whitworth to recommend repealing the 2011 Montgomery County Resolution requiring Project Labor Agreements on projects over \$100,000.** All in favor, motion carried.
9. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Plunkett 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. He anticipates a grant agreement for the next phase at any time.
10. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed changes recommended by Bushue HR as well as by Committee Chair Ruppert. State's Attorney Affrunti also had questions about the contract language paragraph, asked for a definition of "under the influence," the concealed weapons language, and employee time off. Circuit Clerk Robbins questions jury duty, inclement weather, and language on solicitation and distribution. The issues will be discussed with Bushue at a meeting scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13.
11. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert questioned why county offices that require notarized documents do not have a notary on staff. County Clerk Leitheiser said she used to require employees to be notaries, but due to recent legislative changes there could be a personal liability to staff. State's Attorney Affrunti added notarizing documents on county time could bring liability onto the county. The committee will continue to research the issue.
12. **Nokomis TIF District Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported he and Plunkett attended a public hearing on the proposed Nokomis TIF district on Monday, Jan. 27. Ruppert said 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.
13. **Other Business:** None

Motion to pay the bills by Whitworth 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 7:06 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 Minutes**
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Custodian Amanda Bergman, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by committee member Russ Beason.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Courthouse Chiller Bid Opening Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes opened four bids for replacing the chiller in the New Courthouse: \$127,598 from Loellke Plumbing of Jerseyville; \$118,901 from Henson Robinson of Springfield; \$155,780 from Bickle Electric from Edwardsville; and \$137,913 from Daikin-TMI of Chesterfield, MO. 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. The other bidders said they could not install a chiller until they had it, and expected 16-18 weeks lead time. Both Maintenance Director Ernst and Committee Chair Hughes expressed concern that the chiller needed to be operating by the first week of May. Chairman Donaldson said he understood Daikin-TMI was holding a place in line for the county regardless of the contractor and requested the company work with contractors in supplying the chiller. **Motion by Young and second by Beason to recommend awarding the low bid of \$118,901 to Henson Robinson Company of Springfield.**
ROLL CALL: Voting yes: Beck, Beason, Hancock, Young, Hughes. All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst reviewed a condensed monthly report, including completing 44 work orders. The committee endorsed a \$257.64 proposal from Quality Flooring of Litchfield to replace flooring in the New Courthouse basement where plumbing repairs have been completed.
5. **Historic Courthouse First Floor Lighting Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes reported 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. County Clerk Leitheiser added she has heard complaints from members of the public. Maintenance Director Ernst obtained a proposal from Hillsboro Electric for \$2,103.12 to address the problem by adding lighting that will be controlled by the main hallway switch. **Motion by Beck and second by Beason to approve proposal for \$2,103.12 from Hillsboro Electric to address first floor lighting issues at the Historic Courthouse.** All in favor, motion carried.
6. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes reported work began on Monday, Feb. 3, as scheduled.
7. **Green Diamond Bike Trail Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes reported State's Attorney Affranti will have a quit claim deed document and resolution ready for the full board meeting, and asked the Finance & Budget Committee to determine from where to pay resurfacing fees related to the transfer.

8. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes referenced a Jan. 22 meeting about cleaning issues at the New Courthouse during which 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 with Maintenance Director Ernst and Custodian Bergman. **Motion by Beason and second by Beck to recommend giving 30-day notice to terminate the contract with National Maintenance & Cleaning.** All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Beason 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.
9. **Other Business:** Chairman Donaldson said Treasurer Nikki Lohman had asked him to relay to the committee the Maintenance Department and Information Services provided excellent services during her office carpeting project.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 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, February 5th, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, Bev Seamon, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** After conversations with consultant Brown, Hay & Stevens, Engineer Greenwood suggested an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for third-party review to make recommendations on pre-construction road improvements based on the Traffic Impact Analysis.
3. **2025 Township MFT Rock Letting Results Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood explained that the annual township rock letting is required for any township that anticipates expending over \$30,000 on rock material. Greenwood opened bids from Nokomis Quarry and Louis Marsch in Morrisonville and Bev Seamon recorded results. **Motion by Bergen and second by Ruppert to recommend awarding low bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **2025 County MFT Rock Letting Results Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood opened bids from Louis Marsch of Morrisonville, Beelman Truck Company of East St. Louis, Nokomis Quarry, and Miller's Lime Service of Fillmore, and Bev Seamon recorded results. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hancock to recommend awarding low bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **2025 Pipe Culvert Letting Results Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood opened a lone bid from Metal Culverts, Inc. of Jefferson City, MO, and Bev Seamon recorded results. Greenwood noted municipalities and townships can purchase using the per-foot approved county bids. **Motion by Corso and second by Hancock to recommend awarding the low bid as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Section 20-00145-00-PV Coffeen Rd/Seven Sisters Ave Intersection Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood informed the county that the Illinois Department of Transportation had awarded the low bid of \$512,832.10 to Illinois Valley Paving of Springfield for Section 20-00145-00-PV 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 that includes on-site inspections. **Motion by Hancock and second by Ruppert to recommend approving 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.**
7. **Section 15-00138-00-BR Red Ball Trail – White Town Bridge Supplemental Engineering Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood said after inaccuracies were discovered in construction elevations at the work site, IDNR was contacted and determined the likelihood of mine subsidence from the old Coffeen Mine since 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 Corso to recommend approval of a supplemental engineering agreement with WHKS & Company of Springfield for an amount not to exceed \$29,983. All in favor, motion carried.**

8. **Resolution 2025-1 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025**

Updated/Approval: Engineer Greenwood said paperwork from the state is still pending. Other county engineers have the same issue.

9. **Other Items:** None

Motion by Ruppert, second by Hancock to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as Deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

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

Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young **Members Absent:** Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Undersheriff Jeff Roach, Chief Deputy Lance Weitekamp

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Was led by Committee Chair Andy Ritchie.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reviewed her report, noting that 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 would be ready for county board approval.
4. **Township Assessor Education Incentive Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reported township assessor qualifications include four core classes and two electives, ranging in 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.
5. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie reported a December coal royalty payment of \$145,099.44.
6. **Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed potential changes to the Pre-Approved Vendor List presented by County Clerk Leitheiser. Committee member Young questioned whether the Montgomery County Highway Department needed to be on the list for fuel billing, and Vice-Chair Whitworth questioned whether Hillsboro Advanced Veterinary Care needed to be on the list for emergency vet services. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to add “Montgomery County Highway Fuel Bills” to the Pre-Approved Vendor List.** All in favor, motion carried (Young voted no). **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to delete Hillsboro Advanced Veterinary Care from the Pre-Approved Vendor List.** All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend changes to the Pre-Approved Vendors List as presented, 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.
7. **Ambulance Service Agreements Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Plunkett reported FY 2025 Ambulance Service agreements were mailed out on Jan. 2, and three of the four have been signed and returned. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to recommend approval of ambulance special service area agreements with Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Service, Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Service, and Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service.** All in favor, motion carried.

8. **County Credit Card Policy Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie said he could find no improvements needed to the policy drafted by Treasurer Lohman, except the addition of a “Credit Card request form” referenced in Paragraph I. County Clerk Leitheiser referred the committee to two credit cards on the Pre-Approved Vendor List, and state the County Board needs to do an inventory of all county credit cards in use. Ritchie agreed to do so before the next meeting. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of the County Credit Card Policy with a Credit Card Request Form. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie referenced a travel issue from last month’s meeting that has since been resolved after the traveler repaid the county for expenses exceeding the travel ordinance. The committee discussed possible revisions to the ordinance, such as the need to roll call travel vouchers in excess of allowable travel expenses, and if that requirement applies to all funds. County Clerk Leitheiser volunteered to update the county travel ordinance, and the committee will review it next month.
10. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman said a private party is interested in acquiring mined-out mineral rights property tax parcels through the County Trustee, and told the committee at the request of the auditor she will begin supplying the committee with a list of monthly journal entries and fund transfers. At the request of the Buildings & Grounds Committee relayed through County Board Administrator Plunkett, the committee expressed a willingness to reimburse the Village of Waggoner for the cost of oiling and chipping the Green Diamond bike trail one time after the village assumes ownership.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:01 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
Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Time: 6 p.m., County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Russ Beason, Chris Daniels, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Jesse Boehler, John Lentz, Doug Donaldson **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Illinois Realtors Government Affairs Director Ron Deedrick

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Beason
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **SB3455 Review and Discussion Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson thanked committee members for serving, and said he anticipated appointing a third public member. He said the committee's purpose is to review SB3455 and HB1496 and make a final report to the Montgomery County Board, who will then send that report to legislators. Committee Chair Beason will update the county board on the process by reporting to the Coordinating Committee. Beason provided the committee with information about SB17, the wooded acreage legislation enacted in 2007, as well as SB3455 which he read. Plunkett provided synopsis of both SB3455 and HB1496. Regarding SB17, Deedrick said the original intent for timberland was different 17 years ago and focused on wooded acreage that potentially produced revenue. The committee spent substantial time discussing how woodland management plans can be submitted without the certification of a State Forester, the difference between state and federal Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) requirements, and the higher standard required for subsidies in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).
4. **HB1496 Review and Discussion Update/Approval:** According to the synopsis provided by Plunkett, HB1496 was introduced by Rep. Brad Halbrook on Jan. 21 and assigned to the Revenue & Finance Committee on Feb. 18. It provides that, beginning with the 2026 assessment year, the valuation of property in any general assessment year may not exceed 101% of the value of the property in the previous tax year if it is residential, or 102% if the property is not residential.
5. **Committee Goals Update/Approval:** The committee spent substantial time discussing goals. Boehler recommended researching best practices to submit to the Supervisor of Assessments (SOA) office. Before the next meeting, Ritchie will research SOA practices in Macoupin County, Lentz will research Bond County, and Daniels will research Logan County and Williamson County. The committee will also research each of the six items to be studied by the Illinois Department of Revenue according to SB3455. To begin, Daniels will research the Cook County classification system, Ruppert will research preferential assessments and their economic impact, and Plunkett will provide local data on the state's reliance on property taxes and the historical growth in levies.
6. **Next Meeting Date Update/Approval:** The committee scheduled the next meeting for 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.

Motion to adjourn by Ruppert and second by Daniels. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: Board members Russ Beason and Christine Daniels, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Engineer Cody Greenwood, IS Director Curt Watkins, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, EMA Director Dan Hough, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** IS Director Curt Watkins reported Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins had secured \$132,925.51 from a court grant that will be used to improve security cameras, monitors, PCs, and server cooling systems. He also reported county board room tech work is complete pending tweaks, he is working on video camera and server upgrades, and is continuing multi-factor token installation.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EMA Director Dan Hough reported over 50 county employees had thus far completed the ongoing AED/CPR training. He has met with Buildings & Grounds Committee Chair Mark Hughes regarding the block building at the highway department, met with IEMA directors in his office, and was told by Deer Run mine officials that no fly ash was entering from off site.
3. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** The next meeting is in April.
4. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson reported the first meeting was on Feb. 19, and public member Ron Deedrick cannot be a committee member because of his lobbyist job description. Donaldson is working on a replacement, and noted the next meeting scheduled for March 19 will need to be rescheduled. He also referenced new pending legislation SB2320, HB3217, and Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus added HB3747. Ad Hoc Committee Chair Beason reported the committee is working on two goals: a list of best practices for property owners with wooded acreage, and recommendations for the state.
5. **Resolution in Support of National Ag Day March 18 Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the resolution of support.
6. **Other Business:** County Clerk Leitheiser drew the committee's attention to the new voting booth on display at the meeting that will be used for the April 1 Consolidated Election. Leitheiser added that 130 of the 170 booths had been delivered so far.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss six new applications received to date.
2. **Nextlink Update/Approval:** The committee anticipates an update from Nextlink.
3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported the power washer at animal control is not working, the Ford vehicle was involved in an accident, and the Department of Ag was recently at Animal Control and gave a positive report. Chairman Donaldson noted the county does not make personnel decisions based on allegations.
4. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss application forms.
5. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** The committee will review three new applications received to date.
6. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** The public hearing has been set for Monday, March 24, beginning at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room.

7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss any updates.
8. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Chairman Ruppert asked Plunkett to inquire from Bushue HR if the next draft will be available for the March 3 committee meeting.
9. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to discuss.
10. **Other Business:** None

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Tuck-pointing Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes believes further work may be needed in the VAC building basement and on the east wall of the Historic Courthouse. The committee will review photos and discuss.
3. **Generator Waiting List Update/Approval:** The committee will discuss a recommendation from Maintenance Director Phil Ernst.
4. **Cinric VAC Wall Painting Proposal Update/Approval:** The committee will discuss a recommendation from Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, and would like to have input from Jeff Dunn.
5. **Solar on Earth Proposal Update/Approval:** The Finance & Budget Committee will review two proposals for participating in a community solar project.
6. **Old Highway Department Property Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes will invite the Hillsboro School District to the committee meeting to discuss.
7. **County Board Room AV Work Feb. 3-7 Update/Approval:** Work is complete.
8. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** The committee expects to review multiple applications.
9. **Other Business:** None

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski reported Engineer Greenwood is reviewing a draft.
2. **County & Township MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** Lettings will be in April.
3. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** The resolution from the state remains pending.
4. **Other Business:** None

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **Ambulance Service Agreements Update/Approval:** All were signed last month.
4. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss the updated ordinance drafted by County Clerk Leitheiser.
5. **Resolution to Transfer Coal Rights Parcel 01-07-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
6. **Other Business:** An ARPA ordinance for the ETSB data room will also be on the committee agenda. County Clerk Leitheiser reported the new Litchfield TIF has been filed using 2023-2024 tax values as the base year, and the Nokomis TIF remains pending due to the submitted legal description including parcels outside city limits.

Appointments:

1. Daniel Fenton as Shoal Creek Fire Protection District Trustee from May 1, 2023, through May 5, 2026
2. Donald Sturgeon Jr. as Shoal Creek Fire Protection District Trustee from May 1, 2024, through May 3, 2027

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 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
Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson. **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Hillsboro School Board President Matt Lentz, Hillsboro Superintendent David Powell, Hillsboro Curriculum Director Hope McBrain, Hillsboro School District Maintenance Director Fred Butler, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, VAC Superintendent Cassandra Hampton, Illinois State Historical Society Director Jeff Dunn, Information Services Director Curt Watkins

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Maintenance Director Phil Ernst.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst reviewed his report, noting 71 work orders completed last month and an elevator entrapment in at the Historic Courthouse on Monday, March 3. The new elevator service contractor, Otis, has been notified, however Ernst said Schindler did not leave keys to the elevator control box or schematics.
4. **Tuck-pointing Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes shared photos and major concerns with the condition of the north wall of the VAC building basement where mortar up to two inches deep is gone, and a few areas on the Historic Courthouse where bricks were out and areas had been caulked but not tuck-pointed. Maintenance Director Ernst shared a proposal from RL Construction of Butler for \$12,400 total; \$7,550 for VAC work and \$4,850 for Historic Courthouse work. Ernst said the funds are budgeted, and Rob Smith of RL Construction said work would be completed within three weeks when weather allows. **Motion by Beck and second by Beason to recommend awarding \$12,400 proposal from RL Construction of Butler for brick and tuck-point work at the VAC and Historic Courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Generator Waiting List Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst expressed concern that since the DCEO grant agreement for Phase II remains pending, the price of the Cat generator he applied for will increase beyond the grant amount. He requested permission from the committee to place the county on a no-obligation waiting list, much the same as the chiller process, and was given permission.
6. **Cinric VAC Wall Painting Proposal Update/Approval:** The committee discussed whether or not the proposal to paint the north wall of the VAC building in preparation for a mural was still needed. Illinois State Historical Society Director Jeff Dunn reported that he had been acting as a go-between for The Walldogs mural artists and the City of Hillsboro. He said Walldogs walked away from the project and the in-place funding because the city's Historical Preservation District needed to approve the project. The committee agreed the wall did not need to be painted if there is no mural. Dunn said funding could be raised again, but Walldogs artists do not disclose their plans prior to their work.
7. **Old Highway Department Property Update/Approval:** Hillsboro School District Maintenance Director Fred Butler said the district remains interested in the entire former highway department property on Seymour Avenue and University Street in Hillsboro for potential building trades house sites and a possible day care facility. Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus estimated each house built on the property would generate \$6,000 per year in property taxes. Chairman Donaldson said asbestos

abatement has been completed, and the county could consider turning the property over to the school district as-is after EMA has vacated the building. Discussions will continue.

8. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed four applicants for a New Courthouse part-time cleaning position. Committee Chair Hughes, Personnel & Development Committee Chair Chad Ruppert, and Maintenance Director Ernst will interview all four and offer the position to the best qualified candidate. National Maintenance & Cleaning remains under contract for cleaning through March 14.
9. **Other Business:** Ernst suggested making contact with Imagine Hillsboro about maintaining summer flowers on the Courthouse Grounds. Committee Chair Hughes will do so.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 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**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Monday, March 3, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: Russell Beason

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Chief Deputy Lance Weitekamp

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Small Biz Grant Application Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed applications and heard presentations from Kevin Kirby of Kirby Painting, Caleb Reynolds of War Turtle Meadery, Dylan Richter of The Sweet Spot, Scott Merano of Sam's Services, Becky Stolte and Ryan Follis of Curbside Cravings, and Luleta Rushiti of The Old Y Diner, and reviewed the application of Steve's Repair. **Motion by Jones and second by Bergen to recommend Small Biz Grant awards of \$2,500 to Kirby Painting in Hillsboro; \$1,000 to War Turtle Meadery of Hillsboro; \$1,000 to The Sweet Spot in Hillsboro; \$1,000 to Steve's Repair in Coffeen; \$1,000 to Sam's Services in Hillsboro; \$3,500 to Curbside Cravings in Nokomis; and \$11,594.55 to The Old Y Diner in Taylor Springs. All in favor, motion carried.** The awards finishes the DCEO funds for Small Biz grants, and committee members expressed interest in renewing the program with future grants.
4. **Nextlink Update/Approval:** Karson Kinard of Nextlink reported 10 active towers and six active users, with 11 more towers planned by the end of 2025. A presentation will be made to the full board on March 11.
5. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and approved the annual Tourism Grant Application. Completed applications must be submitted by March 28 and will be awarded in April. Applications are available on-line and in the County Board Administration office.
6. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed three more applications. **Motion by Jones and second by Bergen to recommend awarded \$750 City-Wide Clean-Up grants to the Village of Schram City, City of Litchfield, and Village of Taylor Springs. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reminded the committee the public hearing for the project will begin at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 24, in the County Board Room.
8. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** The Phase II grant application remains pending, and a Grant Agreement is anticipated soon.
9. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed changes in the latest draft, and added that Bushue HR will be on site at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 13, for the next meeting. The draft will remain under review until next month.

10. Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval: The committee continued a discussion that began last month about the possible need for notaries in the Historic Courthouse. After discussion about the need Daniels suggested checking with each office on the number of documents requiring notary services. Plunkett will do so and report next month.

11. Animal Control Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert reported the Animal Control Warden has been suspended pending the result of criminal charges. In the meantime, the facility is operating as usual. **Motion by Daniels and second by Bergen to enter executive session at 6:25 p.m. to discuss personnel issues. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to re-enter open session at 7:13 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.**

12. Other Business: Committee Chair Ruppert shared electronic recycling dates of Saturday, May 3, in Litchfield and Saturday, Sept. 13, in Hillsboro. Jones asked the committee to consider a session proclamation next month, and Daniels asked to share the research she has done on requiring local labor next month.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 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
Roads & Bridges Committee Meeting Minutes**

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

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

The committee met today to discuss the following:

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported the consulting attorney has provided a draft road use agreement. Greenwood will continue to review it and anticipates asking the committee to review a draft next month.
3. **Resolution 2025-1 appropriating funds for 100% county culvert replacement at multiple locations Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed maps with the locations of 13 pipe culverts to be installed under county highways this year when weather permits. Two of the locations are in Bois D'Arc Township, three in Grisham, three in North Litchfield, three in Walshville, one in Witt, and one is in Zanesville. The total cost for all 13 is \$101,500 to be paid from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to recommend approval of Resolution #2025-01 appropriating \$101,500 from County Aid to Bridge Fund 235 for 13 pipe culverts. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Resolution 2025-2 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Updated/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood said still no word from the state.
5. **Other Items:** Engineer Greenwood reported Stutz Excavating anticipates beginning work on the new building at the highway department the week of March 24. The committee also viewed a video on the Stepp SPHD 3.0 hot box pothole patcher, a towable piece of equipment Greenwood said he had anticipated budgeting \$60,000 next year to purchase new. He has discovered, however, a used 2015 available in Indianapolis for \$29,000. His department has inspected the equipment and reports it is in "like new" condition. The committee consensus was positive, and Committee Chair Murzynski requested the purchase be on the full board agenda for consideration.

Motion by Whitworth, second by Bergen to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as Deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder, Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board
Finance & Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025

Time: 8:31 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young **Members Absent:** Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by committee member Young.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reviewed her report, noting 907 senior homestead exemptions have been received and processed so far, and 146 disabled person and disabled veteran exemptions have been received and processed so far. She added the Montgomery County has earned a tentative multiplier of 1.0000% from the Illinois Department of Revenue, noting assessments are 33.09% of market value up from 30.92% last year. Niehaus said she is working with Information Services Director Curt Watkins on the possibility of township assessors entering their own information into the DevNet software from the field.
4. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the reports, and Committee Chair Ritchie noted a \$162,645.73 coal royalty payment in January.
5. **Community Solar Proposals Update/Approval:** The committee heard a proposal from Nathan McCarthy of Solar on Earth that would allow the county to save between 12% and 20% on electric bills through community solar credits. The Solar on Earth proposal would require a 10-year commitment but allow for an opt-out with 180 days notice. McCarthy estimated the deal would save the county \$16,000 in electric charges. County Board Administrator Plunkett said he anticipates another community solar proposal. McCarthy said he could not guarantee the same terms for his proposal next month. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to forward the non-binding application and Solar on Earth proposal to the full board. Motion carried 4-2 (Beck and Young voted against).**
6. **ARPA Ordinance for ETSB Data Room Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the ordinance for ARPA funds previously assigned. **Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of the ordinance to appropriate \$25,000 ARPA funds for ETSB Data Room upgrades. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed possible changes to the County Travel Ordinance, and County Clerk Leitheiser described the changes printed in bold, including referencing the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) for maximum allowable reimbursement rates, referencing local transportation expenses, and defining to whom the ordinance applies. The committee discussed a request by committee member Young to add a pre-travel approval process, and ultimately decided to do so by referencing the process in Illinois statute. At the recommendation of Leitheiser, the committee will continue the discussion next month when the State's Attorney is available to participate.

8. **Resolution to Transfer Coal Rights Parcel 01-07-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township**
Update/Approval: The committee reviewed and discussed the resolution. Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend a resolution to transfer Coal Rights Parcel 01-07-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township to Keyrock Energy. All in favor, motion carried.

9. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Ritchie announced the next Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee meeting has been set for 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 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
Hearing Minutes**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Monday, March 24, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason,
Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert
2. **Identification of Application and Project Overview:** Committee Chair Ruppert said the purpose of the hearing is to discuss the proposed solar project application for the construction and operation of Montgomery Springs Solar, an approximately 5-megawatt alternating current ground-mounted solar facility on private land, spanning two parcels in Montgomery County, Illinois. The applicant is the owner of the proposed Montgomery Springs Solar project. The project will be located across two parcels, 29-acre (PRN# 16-24-176-004) and 1-acre (PRN# 16-24-127-007) in Taylor Springs that is owned by Dorothy Race, who has leased the property to the applicant. Located just east of the Village of Taylor Springs along IL Route 127, the property is currently in agriculture production and is bordered on three sides by parcels currently used for agriculture. A village community building lies to the northwest of the project area.
3. **Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures and informed those present a verbatim transcript will become part of the hearing minutes.
4. **Presentation by Applicant:** After Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed the qualifications of Apex Clean Energy Development Manager Sido Shira, she testified as an expert under oath about the history of the company, community solar, the project location and site plan, solar panels, the project impact and economic benefits, interconnect, and decommissioning. Shira was assisted by Apex representative Cady Merrick.
5. **Questions for Applicant:**
 - a. **Members of the Development & Personnel Committee** Each member of the committee asked questions covering every aspect of the project plan. Committee Chair Ruppert admitted proof of certified mail service to neighboring property owners as Exhibit A.
 - b. **Members of Units of Local Government** None
 - c. **Other Interested Parties** Dionne Manzer asked questions regarding the site map, and questioned the validity of property value studies
 - d. **Counsel/Consultants for Montgomery County** None
 - e. **Members of the Development & Personnel Committee Follow-Up** Committee Chair Ruppert said the project site seems to be well-chosen, and encouraged the developer to have discussions with organized labor representatives present at the hearing. Committee member Jones expressed concerns about the tightness of the site with a minimum of nine feet between panel supports.
6. **Presentation by Independent Consultants for Montgomery County:** None

7. **Public Comment:** None

8. **Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application:** None

9. **Closing Comments by Applicant:** None

10. **Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval:** The committee will begin deliberations at their regular meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31. Committee Chair Ruppert anticipates attaching conditions to the recommendation, and informed the applicant those conditions may not be ready by the March 31 meeting.

11. **Adjournment Update/Approval:** Motion by Beason and second by Daniels to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 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
Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Time: 6:03 p.m., County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Russ Beason, Chris Daniels, Chad Ruppert, Jesse Boehler, Vince Reincke
Members Absent: Andy Ritchie, John Lentz, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Illinois Realtors Government Affairs Director Ron Deedrick, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Property Tax Consultant Stan Jenkins, Brandi Lentz

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Beason, who then read a statement requesting the committee consider suggesting practices that could be initiated to mitigate the impact of wooded acreage reassessment. Beason also introduced Property Tax Consultant Stan Jenkins, who has served as the Champaign County Supervisor of Assessments, on the Champaign County Board of Review, and worked for the Illinois Department of Revenue.
2. **Public Comments:** Brandi Lentz reported on information she had received from Sales Ratio Studies in 2021, 2022, and 2023, reporting that she believed there were sales such as timber, foreclosures, new construction, auctions, mobile homes, and commercial properties that should not have been included in the study. She said she would like to look at 2024 sales. During substantial discussion that followed, Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus indicated that required real estate closing forms are not always filled out accurately, and Jenkins pointed out that the DOR would pull any invalid sales from the study and only include valid sales. In response to a question from committee member Boehler, Jenkins reported no problems in Champaign County with woodland acres, and then distributed excerpts from DOR Publication 135, particularly noting program participation requirements.
3. **New Legislation Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed SB2320 sponsored by Sen. Steve McClure, HB3217 sponsored by Rep. Wayne Rosenthal, and HB3747 sponsored by Rep Ryan Spain that would eliminate township assessors in counties with populations less than 50,000.
4. **Best Practices Review Update/Approval:** The committee will review reports on Macoupin, Bond, Logan and Williamson counties next month. Committee member Boehler reported Sangamon County does not require annual recording of leases for owner-occupied exemptions on rented property. SOA Niehaus reported Montgomery County doesn't either, but a notarized application must be completed annually. Boehler also said notification for the postponed woodland reclassification in 2026 (payable 2027) should begin this summer, and pledged his help to do so. The committee reviewed a notification letter drafted by SOA Niehaus, and discussed the possibility of public meetings. **Motion by Boehler and second by Daniels to request the Finance & Budget Committee budget \$5,000 for notification expense. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **SB3455 Review and Discussion Update/Approval:** Daniels will report on Cook County Classification next month, as will Ruppert on Preferential Assessments. Plunkett presented a spreadsheet on the historical growth of local property taxes compared to budgets, pointing out the notable growth in the Hillsboro School District levy occurred between 1997 and 2016 before the 10-year range of the state study.
6. **Next Meeting Date Update/Approval:** The next meeting was scheduled for 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Thursday, March 27, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Ethan Murzynski, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Mark Hughes, Andy Ritchie

Others Present: Buildings & Grounds Vice Chair Russ Beason, Finance & Budget Vice Chair Connie Beck, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Engineer Cody Greenwood, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, IS Director Curt Watkins, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department has begun working on court grant projects, has ordered 31 PCs and begun routine replacement, and finished implementing multi-factor log-in. He anticipates needing more internet bandwidth, a possible price increase on the new telephone system due to tariffs, and a switch to ArcPro for GIS.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Director Dan Hough expressed gratitude for a \$3,700 rural development grant awarded to his office by the Montgomery County Farm Bureau for a radio network. He also reported nearly 50 county employees completed AED/CPR training, and the need for an EPA office administrative assistant.
3. **DCEO Grant (East Fork, Drug Endangered Children, Project Third Day) Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported three DCEO grant sub-recipients, East Fork Township, 708 Board for Drug Endangered Children, and Project Third Day, still had substantial unrequested grant funds available.
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said the next CEO Board meeting was scheduled for April 17 in Carlinville.
5. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Beason reported Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus did an excellent job explaining procedures during the committee meeting on March 26, and Stan Jenkins, a former SOA from Champaign County, contributed a lot of information and offered support. The next committee meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, in the County Board Room.
6. **National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (April 13-19) Resolution Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the resolution, and 911 Director Ed Boyd along with Sheriff Tyson Holshouser will be invited to the full board meeting for a presentation.
7. **Other Business:** Treasurer Nikki Lohman advised counties may want to offer an opinion on potential township consolidation legislation, and Engineer Cody Greenwood added that he will include the discussion on the Roads & Bridges Committee agenda, although he has been advised that legislation will likely not move forward.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said because the facility is over capacity with 19 animals, Animal Control Warden April Pier is back at work. He said he will inform county board members with an email letter.

2. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee will review applications and recommend awards.
3. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** The committee will review applications.
4. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said the committee hosted a public hearing on March 24 and will draft siting approval conditions.
5. **Litchfield Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
6. **Bushue Background Screening Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee, along with the State's Attorney, will review and make a recommendation. Ruppert said the cost is approximately \$45 per request.
7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
8. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** The committee will review the latest revisions being made by Bushue.
9. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to discuss the possible need for a notary.
10. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported committee member Chris Daniels is researching this initiative.
11. **Other Business:** None

Buildings and Grounds: Russ Beason, Vice Chairman

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss. Vice Chair Beason reported a \$15,198.10 expense to replace two circuit boards.
2. **New Courthouse Chiller Update/Approval:** The new chiller is expected to ship in April.
3. **Historic Courthouse Flower Bed/Pots Update/Approval:** Vice Chair Beason reported Imagine Hillsboro has agreed to maintain them.
4. **Hillsboro Market Update/Approval:** Imagine Hillsboro would like to use the parking lot south of the New Courthouse to host weekend markets this summer.
5. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Beason reported the new part-time employee began work on Monday, March 24, in the New Courthouse.
6. **Other Business:** None

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **County & Township MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** The committee will review results and recommend awarding bids.
3. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski reported no action from the state.
4. **Other Business:** Engineer Cody Greenwood said the committee will also consider action on township and county culverts.

Finance and Budget Committee: Connie Beck, Vice Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **University of Illinois Extension Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee will review the agreement and make a recommendation.
4. **County Audit Presentation Update/Approval:** Treasurer Nikki Lohman said the presentation will not occur in April.
5. **Budget Hearing Schedule Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman said Bellwether will schedule hearings this summer.

6. **Solar Credit Proposals/Contracts Update/Approval:** State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti said he has reviewed two contracts and proposals, and would prefer the county develop its own solar rather than enter into a solar credit agreement.
7. **Electric Bids Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported a request for proposals has gone out, and the committee will review and recommend in May.
8. **County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
9. **Mobile Home Delinquent Tax Sale Fee Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
10. **UCCI Salary & Benefits Survey Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
11. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman said she has applied for the federal solar tax credits for completed highway department and health department projects.

Appointments:

1. Robert Matli as Trustee to the Raymond Community Fire Protection District from March 2025 to March 2028 Update/Approval:

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 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

Date: Monday, March 31, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM – Courthouse Annex

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason, Doug Donaldson **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, County Board Member Ethan Murzynski, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Undersheriff Jeff Roach, Maggie Poteau and Charles Wilson of UKA

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert
2. **Public Comment:** Mike White of Irving Township told the committee the county board works for the public. He expressed concerns the assessor got a pay increase, and another issue has arisen with the dog catcher. He said he has gotten fired, and questioned how the animal control warden can continue to work given the lack of public trust.
3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Animal Control Administrator Ruppert reported 22 animals at the facility with three scheduled to go to foster. He said Litchfield has approved a contract with Animal Control, and anticipates Hillsboro considering action soon. Personnel issues at Animal Control were discussed in executive session.
4. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** Fourteen applicants have requested \$11,750 and \$5,000 has been budgeted. Committee Chair Ruppert asked committee members to score applications according to the rubric and be ready to discuss awards at the May committee meeting.
5. **City-Wide Clean-Up Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed applications from the villages of Harvel and Ohlman. **Motion by Beason and second by Bergen to recommend awarding City-Wide Clean-Up Grants of up to \$750 to the Village of Harvel and the Village of Ohlman. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** After a public hearing on Monday, March 24, Committee Chair Ruppert reported a good map, complete application, and no comments from neighbors. He anticipates working with the applicant to develop a set of conditions to be reviewed by the committee next month before making a recommendation. Committee member Jones expressed concern over the planned panels being too close together and the impact that might have on the land. He would like to reach out to Hurst-Rosche for an opinion.
7. **Litchfield Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** A public hearing has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, April 28. The committee reviewed the proposal from Hurst-Rosche. **Motion by Daniels and second by Jones to recommend approval of a proposal from Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the proposed Litchfield Solar project for a fee not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Bushue Background Screening Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the background screening proposal from Bushue HR for a base price of \$50 per applicant as needed. State's Attorney Affrunti said he found no issues in his review of the contract. **Motion by Beason and**

second by Jones to recommend approval of a background screening agreement with Bushue HR. All in favor, motion carried.

9. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported Phase I remains on schedule, but a grant agreement for Phase II remains pending. Sarah McConnell agreed to share contact information for a status update.
10. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed updates and said he is still working with Bushue on tech language. Bushue will be on site for a meeting on Thursday, April 10.
11. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed a partial list of forms required in the Historic Courthouse that need notarized. State's Attorney Affrunti said county employees should be able to notarize documents needed for county business, but not on behalf of the public because it placed the county in a position he advises against when county employees notarize documents to be filed with the county. The committee hopes to review a complete list of documents requiring notarization next month.
12. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** Committee member Daniels said she has met with labor leaders, and is researching language with other sources for a packet she intends to have ready next month.
13. **Other Business:** Chairman Donaldson pointed out the Casey's General Store in Witt has just closed, and the one in Irving has been closed for several years. The Irving property is listed for sale on the Casey's website at a reasonable price (\$40,000), but has been unsold because of restrictions on what the new owner can do with the property for 15 years. Donaldson will approach the corporation to inquire if there is any flexibility in those requirements. Maggie Poteau and Charles Wright of UKA informed the committee that planned wind projects are still ongoing. They are completing title and sub-surface work, and waiting to hear from the FAA. **Motion by Beason and second by Bergen to enter executive session at 5:54 p.m. to discuss personnel issues. All in favor, motion carried.** **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to return to open session at 6:30 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.**

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 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**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson
Members Absent: Mark Hughes

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Health Department Administrator Hugh Satterlee

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Vice Chair Beason
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the items on his report, including 35 work orders completed in the last month. Regarding the elevator at the Historic Courthouse, after replacing the power supply for \$5,920.46, two circuit boards needed replaced totaling \$15,198.10. Otis Elevator said the parts were to be shipped overnight over the weekend. Rob Smith of RL Construction finished repair on Monday, March 31, of the block that fell out of the tower on the northeast corner of the Historic Courthouse. Central Roofing should begin roof replacement at the Historic Courthouse soon, and Ernst shared an estimate for pad work for the new generator of \$6,500.
4. **New Courthouse Chiller Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst confirmed the new chiller is scheduled to ship from Mexico on April 14.
5. **Historic Courthouse Flower Bed/Pots Update/Approval:** Committee Vice Chair Beason reported Imagine Hillsboro volunteers have agreed to maintain the flower pots on the Historic Courthouse lawn and the flower bed on the south side. They have already been on the job.
6. **Hillsboro Market Update/Approval:** Imagine Hillsboro has requested to move their monthly Saturday morning summer markets to the parking lot south of the New Courthouse. Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the judges have no issues as long as the grounds are left clean. **Motion by Young and second by Beason to allow Imagine Hillsboro to host monthly Saturday morning markets on the parking lot south of the New Courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Both Maintenance Director Ernst and Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the new custodian at the New Courthouse is doing an excellent job, but it appears four hours per day is not enough time for the work. The committee discussed allowing Ernst to schedule him for up to five hours a day as needed, then revisit in a month. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to allow the Maintenance Director to schedule new courthouse cleaning for up to five hours per day. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Other Business:** Health Department Administrator Hugh Satterlee said he was approached by the owner of the building next door to his Litchfield location about purchasing the property for \$325,000. Neither Satterlee, nor the Buildings & Grounds Committee, expressed any interest. The State's Attorney is continuing to analyze whether a transfer in ownership of the health department solar array property is necessary.

Motion to pay the bills by Hancock and second by Young. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 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, April 2nd, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

- 1. Public Comments:** None
- 2. County 2025 MFT Oil Letting Results Update/Approval:** The lone bid from Louis Marsch of Morrisonville was opened and reviewed by Engineer Greenwood, and recorded by Bev Seamon. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend awarding low 2025 county MFT oil bid to Louis Marsch. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 3. Township 2025 MFT Oil Letting Results Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood opened and reviewed bids from Litchfield Bituminous of Hillsboro and Louis Marsch of Morrisonville. Bids were recorded by Bev Seamon. **Motion by Bergen and second by Hancock to recommend awarding low 2025 township MFT oil bids to Litchfield Bituminous and Louis Marsch. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 4. UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported he will meet with attorneys before the next committee meeting to continue developing the road use agreement. Committee member Ruppert said he had met with UKA officials, who reported experiencing timing delays with federal approval.
- 5. Resolution 2025-2 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail, South Litchfield Township Update/Approval:** The committee discussed the resolution and reviewed the map for a pipe culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail in South Litchfield Township. The anticipated \$60,000 cost would be split 50/50 between the county and the township, with the county portion coming from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Bergen and second by Hancock to recommend approval of Resolution 2025-02 appropriating funds for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Crabtree Trail in South Litchfield Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 6. Resolution 2025-3 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025 Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported no action from the state.
- 7. SB2504, SB2217, and HB2515 – Township Consolidation and Low Population Township Dissolution Discussion Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood shared the status of three pieces of proposed state legislation that would eliminate or consolidate various township functions. SB2504 would eliminate township and multi-township assessors in counties with populations less than 50,000. SB2217 would dissolve all townships with a population less than 5,000, and HB2515 would dissolve all townships with a population of less than 500. Greenwood said all three bills are opposed by the County Engineers Association, which believes the bills are stalled. Committee Chair Murzynski said he has been assured Rep. Wayne Rosenthal is opposed to the bills, and Committee member Chad Ruppert added that the Illinois Farm Bureau is also opposed. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Ruppert to recommend Montgomery County express opposition to SB2504, SB2217, and HB2515. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 8. Other Items:** The committee discussed construction that had begun on the new equipment shed.

Motion by Corso, second by Hancock to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

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

Date: Thursday, April 3, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Board Room

Roll Call: Members Present: Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young,
Members Absent: Andy Ritchie, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by committee member Young.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reported Board of Review hearings were conducted on Monday, March 31. She has begun advertising for a vacant part-time data collection position, and has a full-time employee who will be retiring in June. Niehaus reported an MTA district under contract to the county may be considering signing another contract with an assessor. She also told the committee she filed an incident report for a senior citizen who fell while coming up the south stairs to the Historic Courthouse.
4. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Committee Vice Chair Beck noted a February coal royalty payment of \$160,901.92.
5. **University of Illinois Extension Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the annual agreement with the University of Illinois Extension service, for which the county has agreed to levy \$157,000 in property taxes. **Motion by Daniels and second by Young to recommend approval of the agreement with University of Illinois Extension. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Coroner Mutual Aid Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the statewide mutual aid agreement submitted by Montgomery County Coroner Randy Leetham. **Motion by Young and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of the Coroner Mutual Aid Agreement. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Mobile Home Delinquent Tax Sale Fee Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed a resolution presented by Treasurer Nikki Lohman that will allow her office to collect a \$10 sale and error fee on delinquent mobile homes beginning with the tax sale in October 2025. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to recommend approval of a resolution authorizing a \$10 fee to be imposed on the sale of delinquent mobile home taxes. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Transfer 5 Coal Rights Parcels to Keyrock Energy Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed five mined coal parcels in Bois D'Arc and Pitman Township sold by the trustee to Keyrock Energy. **Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to recommend transferring parcels 01-27-100-301, 01-26-100-301, and 01-35-100-301 in Bois D'Arc Township, and 03-04-300-302 and 03-02-100-302 in Pitman Township to Keyrock Energy, LLC. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. **Dispersal of Redemption/Reconveyance Default Funds Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the resolution for parcel 13-06-179-001 in Witt, sold on Oct. 25, 2021 for \$7,206.16. To date, the redemption party has paid only \$1,326. After several attempts by the trustee to collect the

balance, the party has defaulted and the collected funds should be disbursed. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to recommend the resolution disbursing \$1,326 on parcel 13-06-079-001 in Witt. All in favor, motion carried.**

10. UCCI Salary & Benefits Survey Update/Approval: The committee reviewed and discussed the UCCI Salary & Benefits Survey, which will be available on file in the County Board Administration office.

11. Other Business: Motion to recess at 8:52 a.m. by Whitworth and second by Corso. All in favor, motion carried. Motion to reconvene by Corso and second by Young at 9:03 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.

12. Solar Credit Proposals/Contracts Update/Approval: State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti said he has reviewed proposals and contracts from Solar on Earth and Nexamp for solar credits, explained the process for buying solar credits, and said he believes it would be in the county's best interest to build its own solar arrays to power county buildings. Committee member Young agreed. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to reject solar credit proposals from Solar on Earth and Nexamp. All in favor, motion carried.**

13. County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval: State's Attorney Affrunti reported after reviewing the proposed amendments to the Montgomery County Travel Ordinance, he does not believe the statute allows the county board to pre-approve overnight travel as suggested in recommended changes to Section II. He did agree with the Section III change that references the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) website for travel location reimbursement rates. The state's attorney reiterated the ordinance does not apply to funds that are not under county board control. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend approval of the amended Montgomery County Travel Ordinance after striking paragraph (1) of Section II referencing prior written approval. All in favor, motion carried (Young voted against).**

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 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
Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, April 24, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell.

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 was not present.
2. **North Litchfield Township DevNet Access Update/Approval:** The State's Attorney has been asked to develop an intergovernmental agreement.
3. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EPA/EMA Director Dan Hough reported completing a lot of training, including training three volunteers who were trained on EOCs. The committee discussed Hough's recommendation to use community service workers through Montgomery County Probation along with City-Wide Clean-Up funds to abate an issue at a residence on Highland Avenue in Hillsboro that is subject to be deeded to the county trustee through a tax deed.
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson reported the committee met on April 17 and discussed moving the Jacksonville office, a current program underway with Dometic in Litchfield, and falling Montgomery County unemployment numbers.
5. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Due to the inoperable Historic Courthouse elevator, the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, was cancelled and will be rescheduled before the May board meeting.
6. **National Correctional Officers Week (May 4-10) Resolution Update/Approval:** The resolution will be on the county board agenda.
7. **Mental Health Awareness Month Proclamation Update/Approval:** The proclamation will be on the county board agenda.
8. **Nextlink Communication Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed answers to questions posed by MCEDC Executive Director William Montgomery. Administrator Mike Plunkett reported Nextlink is negotiating for a tower location in Donnellson.
9. **Interstate Interdiction Intergovernmental Agreement with Monroe County Update/Approval:** Sheriff Tyson Holshouser reported the IGA will allow Monroe County to supply resources to work in Montgomery County. The IGA will be on the county board agenda.
10. **Termination of MCSO Employee Update/Approval:** Sheriff Holshouser reported a correctional officer at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has been terminated, and an investigation by the Illinois State Police is ongoing.
11. **Other Business:** Chairman Donaldson said he would like to ask the board to consider a resolution in opposition to increasing the impoundment dam height at Deer Run Mine in Hillsboro.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported the application period for Animal Control Warden closed on Monday, April 21, and he has conducted interviews.
2. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee has been asked to score applications and will recommend awards.
3. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** Proposed permit conditions have been sent to the developer, and the committee will review and make a recommendation.
4. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** The public hearing has been set for 6 p.m. Monday, April 28, at the Historic Courthouse.
5. **CF IL Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
6. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported Phase 1 reports are now due quarterly instead of monthly.
7. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported he believes final revisions have been made, and the committee will review and make a recommendation.
8. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to research.
9. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** The committee will review research conducted by Plunkett and committee member Chris Daniels.
10. **Secession Resolution Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said the board has been asked to consider a resolution. The committee will review and discuss.
11. **Other Business:** The committee will review and discuss the potential need for an EMA/EPA office administrative assistant.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes reported roof work on the Historic Courthouse is complete, and the contractor also replaced gutters where they were leaking. Tuckpointing and replacing bad brick continues. Two more circuit boards have been ordered for the inoperable Historic Courthouse elevator. Hughes said he believes the board may need to revisit the contract with Otis.
2. **New Courthouse Chiller Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes reported a delay in shipping the chiller out of Mexico.
3. **DC Waste Recycling Baler Move Update/Approval:** DC Waste has requested to move the baler to a new location; Plunkett said the lease does not prohibit the move. The committee will discuss the ultimate disposition of the baler when the lease has expired.
4. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss the change from a four-hour work day to a five-hour work day.
5. **Other Business:** None.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. **UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** The committee will re-evaluate the pending agreement given staffing changes at UKA.
2. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski reported no action from the state.
3. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Murzynski reported progress on construction of the equipment storage building.

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **County Solar Project Update/Approval:** After rejecting two solar credit contracts, the committee will review and discuss the possibility of solar arrays at county buildings.
4. **Electric Bids Update/Approval:** The committee will review electric rate bids and make a recommendation.
5. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** The committee will discuss recommended wage changes, and Treasurer Nikki Lohman will develop a spreadsheet with previously negotiated union wages for FY2026.
6. **IPRF Work Comp Refund Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman reported a refund of over \$9,000 in workers comp premiums after Trish Roemelin in her office completed reclassification work.
7. **IMRF Invoice Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman reported IMRF has issued a \$95,000 penalty after the state increased the sheriff salary before the previous sheriff retired. The county can apply for an extension, which will allow budgeting for the expenditure
8. **Pre-Paid Vendor List Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss pulling special funds from the pre-paid vendor list and make a recommendation.
9. **Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss before making a recommendation.
10. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman said three items need to be added to the committee agenda: a resolution to transfer Probation Fee interest to the General Fund, an ARPA update, and the audit report.

Appointments:

1. **Nokomis Area Fire Protection Trustee Update/Approval:** The Nokomis Area Fire Protection District has requested Gary Hulbert be reappointed to a three-year term.

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 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
Hearing Minutes**

County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

6:00 p.m. Monday, April 28, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Project Developer Kayleigh Furth and Director of Development Operations Owen Hooper of Carson Power, Senior Project Manager Andrew Uttan and Senior Staff Engineer Billy Langhenry of Langan Engineering

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
- 2. Identification of Application and Project Overview:** Committee Chair Ruppert said the purpose of the hearing is to discuss a proposed solar project to construct, operate, and maintain the Litchfield Solar, LLC project throughout its useful life. Litchfield Solar is a 5 MW AC, ground-mounted community solar array located on parcels 15-17-200-010 and 15-17-100-004, owned by Steven and Pamela Gosenheider, in unincorporated Montgomery County. The proposed project will occupy approximately 17 acres of a 23-acre Parcel. Located south of N 10th Avenue on Route 66, south of Litchfield, the project area is currently cultivated cropland, surrounded by additional cultivated cropland. The application has been available for review in room 202 of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro as well as on the county's website.
- 3. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing as printed on the hearing agenda, noting the hearing was being recorded.
- 4. Presentation by Applicant:** After reviewing qualifications, Committee Chair Ruppert determined Kayleigh Furth, Owen Hooper, and Andrew Uttan were expert witnesses. Furth further described the project that she said would power 800 homes. She said the developer has a lease with the landowner with an option to purchase. In reviewing the application, she noted a signed interconnection agreement with Ameren, a fully executed AIMA, and a determination from the FAA that the project would have no impact on the Litchfield Airport. The decommissioning plan would result in a surety bond of \$190,489.36 and haul routes would exclusively by Interstate 55 and Route 66.
- 5. Questions for Applicant:** In response to questions from committee members and other concerned parties, Hooper said the project setback was 530 feet from the property line to the closest residence, and 590 feet from the closest residence to the proposed fence. In response to notification questions, Committee Chair Ruppert marked certified mail receipts as Exhibit A, and in response to drainage questions, Ruppert marked a tile map as Exhibit B. The proposed project lies within the boundaries of South Litchfield Drainage District #1. In response to questions on sourcing, Furth and Hooper said the project is pursuing U.S. manufactured materials, and in response to the construction process, Furth said construction is anticipated to begin later this year, and the contractor has not been determined but she has been in contact with local labor.
- 6. Presentation by Independent Consultants for Montgomery County:** None

7. **Public Comment:** Dee Leitschuh of Litchfield, whose residence is just north of the proposed property location, questioned using good farm grounds to generate solar power and said a 10% reduction in the power bills of end users is not enough incentive. She also expressed concerns about the eventual project owner, accidents on the adjoining Route 66 curve, the projects proximity to the airport, panel breakage, and drainage. Zach Leitschuh questioned the proposed tree and shrub height and the eventual impact on the property's land production index. Matt Blankenship asked about construction jobs and the project timeline.
8. **Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application:** None
9. **Closing Comments by Applicant:** Furth asked anyone who needed additional information to reach out.
10. **Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval:** The committee will deliberate and make a recommendation at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday, June 2. Committee Chair Ruppert anticipates conditions for an approval recommendation. Committee member Jones said he would like the developer to contact the drainage district, airport authority, Illinois Department of Transportation, and reach a neighbor agreement. Committee member Beason said he would like to see the agreement with the landowner. Committee member Daniels offered assistance in finding airport authority contacts.
11. **Adjournment Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert determined there was no more evidence and closed the hearing. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 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
Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

6:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Russ Beason, Chris Daniels, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Jesse Boehler, John Lentz **Members Absent:** Vince Reincke, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, North Litchfield Township Assessor Tom Baker, Illinois Realtors Government Affairs Director Ron Deedrick

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Beason.
2. **Public Comments:** Brandi Lentz reported learning about “open space” preferential assessment requirements from an assessment class, an option that could be added to a woodland reclassification notification letter. During the discussion that followed, Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reported Montgomery County has several parcels receiving open space preferential assessments, most notably golf courses.
3. **Best Practices Review Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Beason read a prepared statement about the woodland reclassification statute passed in 2007, its intent, and its impact on best practices in the Supervisor of Assessments office. Beason also shared with the committee best practice suggestions from Tazewell County and Kane County provided by Stan Jenkins. Committee member Daniels reviewed some of her research from other counties, including one that posts Board of Review rules on its website.
4. **Woodland Reclassification Notification Plan Update/Approval:** Committee members spent much of the meeting discussing the notification plan for woodland reclassification for 2026 payable 2027 at the end of the two-year pause. The committee discussed when notification letters should go out, to whom, from whom, and if notification should also include an educational meeting. Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus said the earliest mail notifications could go out is this fall, and asked the committee’s advice on to whom they should be mailed. Committee member Boehler suggested every property owner in the county should receive the notice to protect the Supervisor of Assessments office. Ron Deedrick suggested ways to reduce the size of the mailing, and suggested the notification letter could come from the County Board. Committee member Ruppert said he would rather the notification letter come from the Board of Review. The Ad Hoc Committee was also provided with draft notification letter modifications suggested by Committee member Reincke.
5. **SB3455 Discussion and Recommendations Update/Approval:** Committee member Ritchie said the ad hoc advisory committee has been tasked to recommend improvements that could be made to the property tax system. Committee member Lentz agreed, pointing out that reclassification notifications do not matter if taxpayers cannot afford the subsequent property tax.
6. **Next Meeting Date Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Beason set the next meeting for 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, in the Courthouse Annex.

Motion to adjourn by Beason and second by Ruppert. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 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
Development & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, May 5, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Dr. Patty Whitworth.

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Russell Beason

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery, Sido Shira of Apex Clean Energy, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said he would be asking the Finance & Budget Committee to approve funds for a new pressure washer, mower, cremains processor and fans. He told the committee to anticipate resuming work on the Animal Control Policy. Ruppert also reported talking to all four applicants for the vacant Animal Control Warden position. He recommended hiring Tricia Papin and discussed her qualifications as an EMT for 20 years. Ruppert said he anticipates beginning the contract with Litchfield for Animal Control services on June 1. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to hire Tricia Papin as Animal Control Warden beginning May 6, 2025.** **ROLL CALL:** Voting yes: Daniels, Jones, Ruppert. All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Tourism Grant Update/Approval:** The committee scored the 14 applications for a total of \$5,000 in Tourism Grants. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to award Tourism Grants based on scoring.** All in favor, motion carried.
5. **Montgomery Springs Solar Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed four conditions suggested by Committee Chair Ruppert for siting approval for Montgomery Springs Solar. Committee member Jones reiterated concerns that the panels would be about a foot and a half apart when flat. Project Developer Sido Shira said the ground cover management plan will take into account the anticipated amount of shade due to panel location. **Motion by Daniels and second by Jones to recommend siting permit approval to Montgomery Springs Solar subject to the following four conditions:** 1) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC shall provide detailed construction drawings for review by the relevant authorities no less than two months prior to the commencement of construction of the solar project; 2) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC shall provide the name and contact information of the designated construction liaison once the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) team or construction team has been on-boarded by the developer; 3) Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC shall provide the name and contact information of the contracted Operations and Maintenance (O&M) company once that company has been contracted by the developer; and 4) Access to the facility off S IL Route 127 will be developed in accordance with IDOT standards and will be designed and maintained to minimize impact to adjacent properties. Montgomery Springs Solar, LLC will coordinate with IDOT as needed; typical approvals or coordination for use of state roads include permits for over-size or over-weight vehicles, permits for any work on constructing/modifying entrances/exits, or permits for

any use that may cause damage to the state roads being used. **ROLL CALL:** Voting yes: Daniels, Jones, Ruppert. All in favor, motion carried.

6. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reported the developer has provided much of the additionally requested information, and the committee will deliberate on siting approval next month.
7. **CF IL Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The public hearing for the project on Mine Avenue north of Farmersville has been set for 6 p.m. Thursday, May 22. **Motion by Daniels and second by Ruppert to recommend approval of an agreement with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of the CF IL Solar project for an amount not to exceed \$3,500.** All in favor, motion carried.
8. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** County Board Administration reported the county is now required to make quarterly Phase I reports instead of monthly. Regarding Phase II, the last communication was “I hope to hear something soon on moving this grant for final approvals and getting you an agreement to sign.”
9. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed the most recent changes on the ninth revision of the Employee Handbook developed in cooperation with Bushue HR. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to present the Montgomery County Employee Handbook to the full board for 30-day review.** All in favor, motion carried.
10. **Historic Courthouse Notary Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the spreadsheet of offices in the Historic Courthouse that require notarized documents. Committee Chair Ruppert said each office should have a notary because documents that need notarized at the building should be able to be notarized in the building. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser questioned why the requirement does not apply to other county buildings, and said everyone in her office used to be required to be a notary, but subsequent changes in the notary law has made that not advisable due to potential liability, and her office is not able to notarize documents filed in her office. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to require at least one person in the County Clerk’s office, at least one person in the Treasurer’s office, and at least one person in the Supervisor of Assessments’ office to be a notary.** **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to amend the motion to “request” rather than “require.”** All in favor, motion carried.
11. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed a proposed Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative that would 1) include standard “responsible bidder” language that would require all bidders to comply with state law, provide certificates of insurance, comply with prevailing wage, participate in an apprenticeship program, provide certified payrolls; 2) establish a “Montgomery First” Local Business Adjustment that would allow county businesses to reduce bids by up to 5% but not more than \$20,000; and 3) allow the county to consider, at its discretion, attaching a Project Labor Agreement to any public works or construction contract over \$100,000. Matt Blankenship of Local #1084 said he liked the ordinance, especially the apprenticeship requirement. Committee member Jones asked to delete the \$20,000 cap on the Local Business Adjustment. Committee Chair Ruppert asked the committee to review the ordinance for a month and allow time for the State’s Attorney to also review and comment.
12. **EMA/EPA Office Administrative Assistant Update/Approval:** EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough explained the need for an office administrative assistant. He presented a tentative job description, and said the EPA delegation agreement requires him to inspect the landfill weekly as well as respond to

numerous open dumping complaints, which result in substantial time out of the office. He said some of the cost for an administrative assistant can be recovered through the EMA and EPA grants. **Motion by Daniels and second by Jones to recommend adding an EMA/EPA Administrative Assistant for up to 30 hours per week at the county starting hourly rate unless otherwise recommended by the Finance & Budget Committee. All in favor, motion carried.**

13. Secession Resolution Update/Approval: No resolution has been developed yet.

14. Other Business: MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery updated the committee on Broadband Breakthrough efforts. Committee Chair Ruppert informed the committee about a proposed new TIF district in the City of Hillsboro, County Clerk Leitheiser stated the Nokomis TIF district will soon be in place, and Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins told the committee about a court switch to a new electronic-citation program that will handle ordinance violations.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 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 Minutes**
Historic Courthouse Annex
201 South Main Street, Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson
Members Absent: Russell Beason

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Rob Smith of RL Contractors

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by committee member Beck.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst highlighted the items on his report, including work by RL Contractors, Central Roofing, and Otis Elevator. He thanked Imagine Hillsboro and the Hillsboro Health Junior Board for planting flowers in the pots on the Historic Courthouse grounds, and the Montgomery County Highway Department for spreading a load of rock on the parking lot east of the Montgomery County Court Complex, and Jeff Dunn for donating replacement brick for work at the Historic Courthouse. Committee Chair Hughes reported a keystone fell off the southeast tower of the Historic Courthouse overnight on March 21. After consulting with other county officials, he directed RL Contractors to conduct an inspection and make emergency repairs. Rob Smith of RL Contractors said the keystone weighed over 100 pounds, and his inspection revealed another loose keystone as well as flaking concrete on 70 ledges under windows and on banding. The fallen and loose keystone were replaced with rebuilt brick, flaking ledges and banding were secured and sealed. Smith presented an invoice for \$63,000 for the emergency work. **Motion by Hancock and second by Beck to recommend paying the \$63,000 invoice from RL Contractors for emergency work at the Historic Courthouse from the \$300,000 building maintenance budget from Office 375.** All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst reported on three bids to increase the size of the concrete pad for the courthouse complex generator, ranging from \$5,600 to \$8,400. Committee member Young recommended refraining from awarding the low bid of \$5,600 to RL Contractors of Butler until the DCEO grant agreement paying for the new generator was signed. The committee agreed.
5. **Courthouse Complex Chiller Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Ernst reported the new chiller for the Montgomery County Court Complex arrived on Monday, May 5, and should be installed by Friday, May 9.
6. **DC Waste Recycling Baler Move Update/Approval:** DC Waste had informed County Board Administration they will be moving the leased baler to a new location, which is allowable according to the lease which ends on March 31, 2026. At the end of the lease, DC Waste will have paid \$42,000 in lease payments. Committee Chair Hughes reported he checked with the State's Attorney, and the county could sell the baler to DC Waste for \$1 at the end of the lease term. DC Waste owner Bryan Deming indicated by email he would agree to those terms. **Motion by Beck and second by Young to recommend adding a \$1 buy-out option to the recycling baler lease agreement with DC Waste.** All in favor, motion carried.

7. **New Hire for Cleaning Position Update/Approval:** Both Maintenance Director Ernst and Circuit Clerk Robbins believed five hours per day was the appropriate amount of time needed to clean the Montgomery County Court Complex.

8. **Other Business:** None

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 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, May 7th, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Chad Ruppert

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

Roads & Bridges Committee:

- 1. Public Comments:** None
- 2. UKA Virden Wind Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported the tentative Road Use Agreement (RUA) was 95% complete, but as of Tuesday, May 6, attorneys for UKA notified attorneys for the county that work on the agreement has been “paused.”
- 3. Resolution 2025-3 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Grove Branch Trail, Walshville Township Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Grove Branch Trail. The project cost estimate is \$6,000 with the county responsible for 50%. **Motion by Bergen and second by Whitworth to recommend Resolution 2025-3 appropriating \$3,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Grove Branch Trail in Walshville Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 4. Resolution 2025-4 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Dutchmans Avenue, Walshville Township Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Dutchmans Avenue. The project cost estimate is \$6,000 with the county responsible for 50%. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to recommend Resolution 2025-4 appropriating \$3,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Dutchmans Avenue in Walshville Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 5. Resolution 2025-5 appropriating funds for 100% county culvert replacement on Ohlman Road Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the agreement and discussed the location on Ohlman Road. The project cost estimate is \$38,000 with the county responsible for 100%. **Motion by Bergen and second by Whitworth to recommend Resolution 2025-5 appropriating \$38,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund for a culvert replacement on Ohlman Road in Audubon Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
- 6. Resolution 2025-6 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer’s Salary for 2025 Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported no update. He has reached out to contacts at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) but has not heard anything.
- 7. Other Items:** Engineer Greenwood reported the floor of the new building was poured on Monday, May 5, storm sewer work is complete, the contractor is working on the parking lot area, and the building package should arrive in the next two weeks.

Motion by Bergen, second by Corso to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

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

8:30 a.m. Thursday, May 8, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Evan Young, **Members Absent:** Dr. Patty Whitworth, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, State's Attorney Andrew Afrunti, IS Director Curt Watkins

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by EMA/EPA Director Hough.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Animal Control Funding Request Update/Approval:** Development & Personnel Committee Chair Chad Ruppert made a written request for \$7,500 from ARPA interest to pay for a new lawnmower, cremains processor, ventilation fans, and tranquilizer gun safe. The fans have been provided. **Motion by Young and second by Beck to instruct Animal Control to make the necessary purchases and transfer the funds at the end of the fiscal year.** All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Audit Report Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman said auditors should be ready to make their report at the Tuesday, May 13, 2025 full board meeting.
5. **ARPA Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman provided an ARPA spreadsheet, and noted all of the \$5.5 million in ARPA funding has been expended except for four items, all of which are under contract.
6. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reported the Board of Review will open June 2, and the county earned a state multiplier of 1.0000. Her office budgeted \$15,000 for a required GIS software switch to ArcPro, but the actual cost will be \$7,848.54 over that budget. The committee discussed taking the cost overrun from the budgeted \$100,000 coal contingency, but ultimately decided to terms provided by Bruce Harris & Associates to pay for the cost overrun next fiscal year. **Motion by Young and second by Beck to recommend the ArcGIS Pro Parcel Fabric Conversion contract with Bruce Harris & Associates of Batavia for \$22,848.54.** All in favor, motion carried.
7. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the reports, and Treasurer Lohman noted that although the March coal royalty payment was received late and therefore not on the report, it was in excess of \$180,000. Total coal reserves are \$10.3 million.
8. **Resolution to Transfer Probation Fee Interest to the General Fund Update/Approval:** State's Attorney Andrew Afrunti reported the resolution will require the Chief Judge's signature before it is ready for County Board approval.
9. **County Solar Project Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed solar proposals for county buildings garnered by Maintenance Director Phil Ernst in February 2024. Committee member Young has solicited another proposal, which is not complete yet. The committee will continue to analyze the costs and benefits before making a recommendation.
10. **Electric Bids Update/Approval:** Three brokers submitted five proposals, the least expensive of which ranged from a 27.1% increase to a 42.9% increase. After discussion the committee is recommending the least expensive rate of 0.08792 for one year, up from this year's rate of 0.06918. **Motion by Young and second by Daniels to recommend a 12-month contract with Your Choice Energy.** All in favor, motion carried.
11. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed a spreadsheet prepared by Treasurer Lohman comparing FY26 collective bargaining wage increases of 6%, 4%,

and 85 cents per hour. The committee discussed percentage raises versus set-amount raises, and ultimately asked Lohman to add 5%, \$1 and \$1.15 to the spreadsheet for review and a recommendation next month.

12. **IPRF Work Comp Refund Update/Approval:** After reclassification work by Trish Roemelin in the Treasurer's office, the county earned a workers' comp refund of \$9,124.
13. **IMRF Invoice Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman reported due to the state mandated increase in sheriff's salary and subsequent retirement, IMRF has imposed a \$96,281.66 penalty on the county. Payments will be deferred over the next three years.
14. **Bellwether Letter of Agreement for FY2026 Budget Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the proposed agreement with Bellwether for FY2026 budget preparation for the same terms as the past two years: \$12,000 payable in two installments. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend approval of the Letter of Agreement with Bellwether for FY2026 budget services for \$12,000.** All in favor, motion carried.
15. **Pre-Paid Vendor List Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the Pre-Paid Vendor List, with emphasis on special funds on the list, highlighted by County Clerk Leitheiser. The committee discussed whether funds that are not vendors should be included on the list, and ultimately determined that the list is more accurately a part of a process than a list of vendors. The committee discussed ideas such as developing a Pre-Approved Payment List, reviewing that list for additions and subtractions regularly, and returning to the practice of committee review of pre-approved payments. The committee hopes to make a recommendation next month.
16. **Travel Ordinance Update/Approval:** After the proposed travel ordinance was rejected by the full board last month, the committee discussed returning the suggested language requiring "prior written approval" to the ordinance. State's Attorney Affranti reported he is researching with other state's attorneys whether a travel ordinance applies to special funds. Treasurer Lohman said the county auditors submitted the opinion that a travel ordinance does apply to special funds. The committee discussed whether or not the state statute requires pre-approval. Committee member Young said he would like the county to require pre-approval because he has spent over an hour and a half with Illinois State Police regarding an investigation into travel by the State's Attorney. The committee discussed adding the "prior written approval" language for out-of-state travel. Affranti said that while he still does not believe the county can require pre-approval, he believed requiring it for out-of-state travel was a reasonable compromise. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend adoption of an amended travel ordinance requiring prior written approval for reimbursement for out-of-state overnight travel, meals and lodging.** All in favor, motion carried.
17. **Other Business:** EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough explained the Development & Personnel Committee gave him permission to hire an administrative assistant for 30 hours per week at the county starting salary, unless otherwise approved by the Finance & Budget Committee. Hough requested \$19/hour explaining that the required paperwork requires more experience, and the EMA and EPA grants would cover half of the salary. Committee Chair Ritchie requested the item to be on the full board agenda.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:58 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
Hearing Minutes**

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

6:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason,

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Buzz Becker of Pivot Energy, Kelsey Sidrys of Manhard Consulting

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
- 2. Identification of Application and Project Overview:** Committee Chair Ruppert said the purpose of the hearing is to discuss a proposed solar project to construct, operate, and maintain the CF IL Solar project throughout its useful life. CF IL Solar is a 2.6 MW AC, ground-mounted community solar array (the "Project") located on parcels 01-33-100-017 and 01-32-200-007, owned by the Donna Elmore Trust and Thomas R. Elmore Trust, in unincorporated Montgomery County. The proposed project will occupy approximately 15 acres of a 155-acre Parcel. Located on West Main Street west of Farmersville, the Project Area is currently cultivated cropland, surrounded by additional cultivated cropland to the north, east, and west, and a residential subdivision to the south. The application has been available for review in room 202 of the Historic Courthouse.
- 3. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval:** Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing as printed on the hearing agenda, noting the hearing was being recorded.
- 4. Presentation by Applicant:** After reviewing qualifications, Committee Chair Ruppert determined Buzz Becker of Pivot Energy an expert witness. Becker said Pivot, headquartered in Denver, has an office in Chicago and will be the owner and operator of the proposed community solar garden, which will provide discounts to participating Ameren customers. He described the project location on 15 acres north of Mine Avenue, surrounded by an ag-style fence. He also described the technology and equipment, design, construction and operation, decommissioning plan, site vegetation, the sheep grazing plan, community partnerships, the potential \$14,000 per year in property taxes, and a public engagement meeting in Farmersville hosted by Pivot Energy Project Developer Brittney Krebsbach on Oct. 22, 2024. Committee Chair Ruppert entered certified mail receipts of the public hearing notices into the record as Exhibit A.
- 5. Questions for Applicant:** Committee members raised questions about the depth of the proposed vegetative screening, the location of the project on the property, monitoring, the size of the project, the panel source, the use of a local workforce in construction, season power generation, weather impacts, sound, drainage tile, and the location of the inverter. Public questions were raised about lighting, wildlife, surge protection, and taxes.
- 6. Presentation by Independent Consultants for Montgomery County:** None

7. **Public Comment:** Toby Hobson said he owns a 22-year-old two-story home on the corner directly across Mine Avenue from the proposed project. Voicing concerns about the view, he described the project location as a poor choice due to its proximity to the 75-home subdivision. He said he believed the landowner has better location options, and raised concerns about the long-term maintenance of the drainage ditch, quality of the farm ground, and safety issues from any potential glare on a high-traffic road. He also expressed concerns about vegetative screening options and suggested moving the project 200 feet north and using corn as vegetative screening. Hobson also provided photos that were entered into evidence by Committee Chair Ruppert. Patty Hobson questioned the number and potential noise from grazing sheep, and was informed there would be 12-14 animals on the property for only a couple of weeks a year.
8. **Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application:** Committee Chair Ruppert read and entered a letter into the record from the Elmore family in support of the solar project.
9. **Closing Comments by Applicant:** Becker said he appreciated the collaborative discussions at the hearing.
10. **Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval:** The committee will deliberate and make a recommendation at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday, June 30, 2025. Remaining issues to resolve include a noise study, glare report, tile map, road use agreement, SHPO clearance, soil study, and cooperation with the Hobsons regarding screening.
11. **Adjournment Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert determined there was no more evidence and closed the hearing. **Motion by Daniels and second by Jones to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049**

8:30 a.m. Thursday, May 29, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, 911 Director Ed Boyd, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, County Engineer Cody Greenwood, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Information Services Director Curt Watkins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. **Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Information Services Director Curt Watkins reported he has been completing court grant work, replacing PCs, performing server upgrades and data room restructuring, and preparing for the move to ArcGIS Pro. Cyber security updates are complete, however monthly training participation is down among employees.
2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reported completing EMA training. He is in the process of hiring a deputy director and is planning a tabletop exercise for the Historic Courthouse this fall.
3. **911 Rave Alert System Update/Approval:** 911 Director Ed Boyd presented information on a Motorola Rave alert system to notify cell phones in a determined area about local emergencies, such as weather events, mass evacuations, boil orders, etc. The cost is \$26,500 covering five years, and the ETSB has determined it cannot make the expenditure. Dan Hough reported the 708 Board may be willing to help. Chairman Donaldson asked Boyd to present the plan at the scheduled July 30, 2025 Mayors Meeting.
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** No update.
5. **Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson reported the committee will next meet on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 6 p.m. in the Courthouse Annex.
6. **Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson said he will set a date for the committee to meet to reexamine department head termination procedures.
7. **Sesquicentennial Banner from Tim Elliott Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett pointed out the 1971 Montgomery County Sesquicentennial Banner in the County Board Room, provided by Tim Elliott of Hillsboro. The committee expressed its gratitude.
8. **Other Business:** Chairman Donaldson reported a scheduled public protest on the Historic Courthouse grounds is set for 11 a.m. Sunday, June 8, 2025. He is also researching how new federal legislation addressed CO2. Plunkett gave an update on potential BEAD awards in Montgomery County, and Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus said there may need to be a few changes made to the IGA with North Litchfield Township.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert said he has been working with Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin on potential fee updates.
2. **Scheduled Solar Hearings Update/Approval:** The committee will review the schedule for pending solar hearings.
3. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** The committee will deliberate the application and make a recommendation.
4. **RDC IL N24th Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
5. **Atticus & Finch Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
6. **Small Biz Start-Up Grant Follow-Up Update/Approval:** Plunkett said he notified grant recipients of the grant report requirement.
7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Chairman Donaldson has signed the Phase 2 grant agreement, and the Phase 3 NOFO was announced earlier in the week.
8. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** The full board has been reviewing for the past month and will be asked to act at their June meeting.
9. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
10. **Secession Resolution Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
11. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Ruppert anticipates a request from UKA to extend the siting permit deadline to begin construction.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Alpha Controls Presentation (Brad Smith) Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes said the committee will hear and discuss a presentation on HVAC controls.
3. **Elevator Maintenance Contract Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes said the committee would like to review the current elevator maintenance contract in light of the 10-week elevator shutdown.
4. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** The committee will review and make a recommendation.
5. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Hughes said Diakin is still fine-tuning the new chiller at the Montgomery County Courts Complex.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. **Resolution Appropriating Funds for Engineer Salary Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski said the resolution has finally been presented by the state, and the committee will review and make a recommendation.
2. **Building Construction Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **Other Business:** Committee Chair Murzynski asked for an update on the Walshville Bypass. Vice Chair Whitworth relayed Walshville Mayor Joy McDonald's gratitude over county installation of village paving repairs. Engineer Cody Greenwood also anticipates two township bridge lettings, and reported work on the intersection of Coffeen Road and Seven Sisters Avenue will begin on June 2.

Finance and Budget Committee: Andy Ritchie, Chairman

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
2. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee will review and discuss.
3. **Audit Report Update/Approval:** After a 30-day review, the county board will vote on acceptance of the report.

4. **MCSO K9 Squad Box Update/Approval:** Sheriff Tyson Holshouser reported a deputy is attending K9 training to replace the soon-to-be retiring K9. He anticipates using special funds to purchase a K9 box for the deputy's squad vehicle.
5. **County Solar Project Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to review and make a recommendation.
6. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** The committee will continue to review and make a recommendation.
7. **Pre-Paid Vendor List Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ritchie reported the State's Attorney is reviewing.
8. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman presented credit card request forms, and provided a travel voucher that will require a roll call vote.

Appointments: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 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
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, June 2, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason, Doug Donaldson **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Board member Connie Beck, Kayleigh Furth of Carson Power, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. **Public Comment:** Dave Green of Barnett addressed the committee over Animal Control concerns, specifically an incident in April in which a neighbor's pit bull got loose and bit someone on his property requiring stitches for the victim. He said he was told the animal would not be returned, but Animal Control did nothing other than confine the animal for 10 days. He said the incident was the second time the pit bull has bitten someone on his property; the first was Jan. 29, 2024. Committee Chair Ruppert took Green's telephone number and the address where the offending dog is housed.
3. **Animal Control Update/Approval:** Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported 18 dogs and 15 cats currently at the facility, and all have been vaccinated for rabies. She said the new mower and cremains processor are working well, and is planning a rabies and microchip clinic in July.
4. **Scheduled Solar Hearings Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ruppert reminded the committee of solar siting permit public hearings set for Monday, June 23, at 6 p.m. for RDC IL N24th Solar near Harvel, and on Monday, July 7, at 6 p.m. for Atticus Solar and Finch Solar on Route 127, both in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse. A hearing date for an application received earlier in the day from Montgomery Ellinger Solar on Route 16 east of Litchfield has yet to be determined.
5. **Litchfield Solar Update/Approval:** Project Developer Kayleigh Furth of Carson Power was present and reviewed information she had provided the committee which was requested at the April 28, 2025 public hearing. She reviewed the drain tile survey map, option to purchase, fence detail, conversations with South Litchfield Drainage District #1, an email from the Litchfield Airport Authority expressing no objections, conversations with non-participating neighbor Dee Leitschuh regarding the preference of no landscaping to the north, and correspondence with the Illinois Department of Transportation. Leitschuh said she has spoken to other drainage district officers who would prefer to meet when the spring planting season is completed. Committee Chair Ruppert said he would work on language for siting permit conditions regarding drainage tile, vegetative screening, and IDOT approval. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to recommend siting approval for Litchfield Solar with conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **RDC IL N24th Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the standard agreement with Hurst-Rosche.
7. **Atticus & Finch Solar Agreement with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the standard agreement with Hurst-Rosche. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Daniels to recommend approval of agreements with Hurst-Rosche for independent review of RDC IL N24th Solar, Atticus Solar, and Finch Solar, each for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Small Biz Start-Up Grant Follow-Up Update/Approval:** County Board Administrator Plunkett sent a letter to Small Biz Start-Up Grant recipients who have not yet submitted final grant reports. Many have since responded and some new businesses have yet to open. The committee will continue to monitor their progress.

9. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Plunkett reported the Phase II grant agreement has been signed by the county and is awaiting state signatures. Phase III has been announced, and County Board Administration has been in contact with Dan Rogers of First Due Consulting for grant writing services.
10. **Employee Handbook Update/Approval:** Since presentation to the full board in May, Committee Chair Ruppert said the only change to the proposed new Employee Handbook is the introduction of language that mirrors changes made by the County Board to the Montgomery County Travel Ordinance last month. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to recommend final approval of the Montgomery County Employee Handbook; effective upon passage. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. **Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval:** Committee members discussed the proposed downward adjustment numbers of 5% up to a maximum of \$20,000 local business adjustment. The committee would like to continue researching those numbers and give the State's Attorney an opportunity to offer legal advice.
12. **Virden Wind Extension Application Update/Approval:** New UKA representative Chad Macy has indicated to County Board Administration that the Virden Wind project will move forward, however the Montgomery County Wind Ordinance requires construction to begin within one year of siting approval, which was granted by the County Board on June 11, 2024. Per County Board permit conditions, UKA has requested an extension to December 31, 2026. Committee Chair Ruppert said he would like to speak to Macy himself before considering a longer term extension, and suggested recommending an extension to September 30, 2025 in the meantime. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend a resolution extending the construction deadline for Virden Wind Energy to September 30, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**
13. **Secession Resolution Update/Approval:** Committee member Jeremy Jones asked for the County Board to consider an advisory referendum on the 2026 spring Primary Election ballot that would seek voter opinion about separating from Cook County to form a new state with other Illinois counties. The committee reviewed proposed ballot language from the State's Attorney. Jones said he would like Montgomery County to join 30-some other counties in passing the measure to send a message to the upper part of the state. Chairman Donaldson reminded the committee to consider the over \$1 million in downtown revitalization grants awarded to Hillsboro and Nokomis by the governor in April, and Committee Chair Ruppert pointed out the \$3.6 million in DCEO grants awarded to Montgomery County over the past two years. **Motion by Jones and second by Bergen to table the Secession Resolution until next month. All in favor, motion carried.**
14. **Other Business:** None

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Roll Call: Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson **Members Absent:** None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by Committee Chair Hughes.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Maintenance Report Update/Approval:** Maintenance Director Phil Ernst said his department responded to 51 work orders in May. He reviewed items on his report, including work on the Animal Control pressure washer, the new chiller installed at the Courts Complex on May 9, and new guttering on the Historic Courthouse porch. He has asked Cinric for a quote to patch and paint the front porch of the Historic Courthouse, and provided the committee with documentation of over 100 calls and texts to Otis Elevator while the Historic Courthouse elevator was inoperable for two and a half months.
4. **Alpha Controls Presentation Update/Approval:** Energy Solutions Advisor Brad Smith of Alpha Controls of Springfield, along with Project Manager David Kleckler and Senior Design Engineer Jeff Miller, made a presentation to the committee about the company's energy savings solutions using software and artificial intelligence. Smith said Alpha would need 24 months of utility bills to score county buildings on energy efficiency, and then search for funding sources to help offset upfront costs. The committee will continue to discuss the proposal.
5. **Elevator Maintenance Contract Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Hughes expressed frustration with the elevator contract in light of the recent 10-week shut-down, but still needs to discuss the issue with the State's Attorney. The item will be on next month's agenda.
6. **Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval:** The matter will be considered next month when the DCEO grant agreement for Phase II is signed and executed.
7. **Other Business:** Maintenance Director Ernst asked about window cleaning and was instructed to solicit quotes.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 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, June 4th, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

Members present: Ethan Murzynski, Bill Bergen, Patty Whitworth, Keith Hancock, Rob Corso,

Members Absent: Chad Ruppert, Doug Donaldson

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Bev Seamon

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **Bid Opening for Section 23-01134-00-BR Audubon Twp White Settlement Trail Bridge Replacement**
Update/Approval: County Engineer Cody Greenwood opened sealed bids from C-Hill Civil Contractors of Campbell Hill, Stutz Excavating of Alton, and Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon, and Bev Seamon tabulated results. Representatives from all three bidders were present. Bids ranged from \$350,000 to \$412,021.45. The project will be 80% township funded and 20% county funded. **Motion by Bergen and second by Whitworth to recommend awarding the apparent low bid of \$350,000 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fielden for Section 23-01134-00-BR Audubon Township White Settlement Trail Bridge Replacement.** All in favor, motion carried.
3. **Bid Opening for Section 23-18119-00-BR Witt Twp E. 22nd Rd. Bridge Replacement**
Update/Approval: County Engineer Cody Greenwood opened sealed bids from C-Hill Civil Contractors of Campbell Hill, Stutz Excavating of Alton, and Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon, and Bev Seamon tabulated results. Representatives from all three bidders were present. Bids ranged from \$350,000 to \$428,670.56. The project will be 80% township funded and 20% county funded. **Motion by Bergen and second by Whitworth to recommend awarding the apparent low bid of \$350,000 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fielden for Section 23-18119-00-BR Witt Township East 22nd Road Bridge Replacement.** All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Walshville Trail Improvement Project**
Update/Approval: County Engineer Greenwood reported engineers at WHKS are working on the project development report, which includes identifying existing drainage patterns and side street tie-ins. Construction remains on schedule to begin in 2026 or 2027.
5. **Coffeen Rd/Seven Sisters Ave. Intersection Project**
Update/Approval: County Engineer Greenwood reported the intersection was closed and work began on Monday, June 2, 2025. The contract calls for 30 working days, but Greenwood anticipated the closure to remain in effect for 2-3 weeks, depending upon weather.
6. **Resolution 2025-6 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for 2025**
Update/Approval: Committee members reviewed minimum recommended County Engineer salaries provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation, which increased 10% over last year. By participating in the program, 50% of the County Engineer's salary is reimbursed; the remaining 50% is paid through MFT funds. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Hancock to enter executive session at 8:56 a.m. to discuss personnel matters.** All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Hancock and second by Bergen to return to open session at 9:12 a.m.** All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Hancock and second by Bergen to recommend increasing the County Engineer's salary by 10% to \$132,255.75 effective December 1, 2024.** All in favor, motion carried.
7. **Other Items:** Engineer Greenwood reported roofing material should be delivered next week for the building under construction, and Plunkett reported UKA rep Chad Macy has indicated the Virden Wind project will move forward.

Motion by Corso, second by Whitworth to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:33 a.m. Thursday, June 5, 2025

Roll Call: **Members Present:** Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young **Members Absent:** Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Hillsboro Community Planner Sarah McConnell, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** was led by committee member Evan Young.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus reviewed the items on her monthly report, noting the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) approved with North Litchfield Township required some small corrections. State's Attorney Affrunti will make the required corrections and present the agreement to Chairman Donaldson for his signature. Niehaus also pointed out since the East Fork-Grisham-Walshville MTA has signed an assessment agreement with an assessor, the contract with the county should be voided according to State's Attorney Affrunti. The action will be on the full board agenda.
4. **Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the reports provided by Treasurer Lohman showing coal royalty payments of \$142,936.05 in March and \$185,258.38 in April, both received in April. The payments bring the total Coal Fund balance to \$10,608,855.87.
5. **DevNet Contract Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed a new contract with DevNet for five years beginning August 1, 2025 for \$45,868.57 per year, payable quarterly. County Clerk Leitheiser spoke positively regarding DevNet's services. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend approval of a five-year contract with DevNet beginning August 1, 2025, for \$45,868.57 per year. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Convey Parcel 15-05-228-007 in Litchfield to Donna M. Hemken Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed and discussed the resolution to transfer the Litchfield parcel at 817 W. Sargent Street sold by the trustee. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to convey parcel 15-05-228-007 in the City of Litchfield to Donna M. Hemken. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Audit Report Update/Approval:** The committee discussed the audit report under review since presentation at the April County Board meeting. **Motion by Daniels and second by Beck to approve the FY2024 Audit Report. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **MCSO K9 Squad Box Update/Approval:** Sheriff Tyson Holshouser reported the current K-9 is a year from retirement, and his department is making plans for a new K-9 to be trained and assigned to a deputy. Upgrades to that deputy's squad vehicle will have to be made to handle the K-9, and State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti agreed to pay the estimated \$10,550 cost from his Forfeiture Fund. The deputy will be reimbursed the \$2,100 for a doghouse concrete kennel pad poured at his residence.

9. **County Solar Project Update/Approval:** Cost estimates are still being developed, so the committee will discuss the matter at their July meeting.

10. **Non-Union & Part-Time Salary FY2026 Salary Increases Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman distributed a spreadsheet with FY2025 county employee salaries, collective bargaining agreement (CBA) raises for FY2026, and potential raises of varying percentages and dollar amounts. **Motion by Young and second by Whitworth to first decide whether to recommend raises based on a percentage or flat amount. All in favor, motion carried.** Whitworth said she favored a percentage-based raise as being most fair to the bulk of employees and taking into account varying job responsibilities. Corso added that since the County Board will be determining salary line items and not individual salaries, a percentage would be easier to determine. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to base raises on a percentage rather than a flat amount. All in favor, motion carried (Young voted against).** At the request of Committee Chair Ritchie, the committee determined the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2025 was 2.5%. Young said recommended raises should be at least 3% and made a motion to recommend 4% raises; that motion died for lack of a second. **Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth was amended to recommend 5.5% non-union and part-time salary increases for FY2026.** **ROLL CALL:** Voting yes: Beck, Corso, Daniels, Whitworth, Young, Ritchie. All in favor, motion carried.

11. **Pre-Paid Vendor List Update/Approval:** Continuing a discussion that began at the May committee meeting, State's Attorney Affrunti said he has researched statutory authority for each special fund and has no issue with removing them from the Pre-Approved Vendor List, per audit recommendations. Affrunti, Plunkett, Lohman and Leitheiser will meet prior to next month's committee meeting to review special funds on the Pre-Paid Vendor list for potential removal. The committee will also discuss a process to voucher special fund expenses such as citing statute on the "County Board Approved Signature" line, and a process by which the County Board will review special fund vouchers.

12. **Travel Voucher Roll Call Update/Approval:** Treasurer Lohman explained that since sales tax pushed the hotel expense slightly over the GSA approved amount, no roll call vote was needed.

13. **County Grocery Occupation Sales Tax Ordinance Update/Approval:** The committee debated the opportunity afforded by state statute to impose a 1% Grocery Occupation Sales Tax, and adamantly voiced no intent to do so.

14. **Other Business:** Plunkett relayed a message from County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson that the Montgomery County Farm Bureau had asked the board to participate in a project to seal and re-stripe the Farm Bureau parking lot, frequently used by the county. Chairman Donaldson suggested paying half of the \$4,200 cost, and Committee Chair Ritchie requested the item to be place on the full board agenda. Treasurer Lohman noted estimating EAV in planning future budgets encourages taxing bodies to maximize their levies. With the committee's consent, she and Supervisor of Assessments Niehaus will no longer estimate EAV.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:52 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
Hearing Minutes**
**County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049**

6:01 p.m. Monday, June 23, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Russell Beason, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Reactivate Development Manager Gabriel Araiza, Reactivate Project Developer Andrew Jurewicz, landowners Robert and Pam Bloome.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Identification of Application and Project Overview: Committee Chair Ruppert said the purpose of the hearing was to discuss a proposed solar project to construct, operate, and maintain the RDC IL N24TH Avenue solar project, a 4.95 MW AC ground-mount distributed generation CSEF located directly northwest of the intersection of N 24th Avenue and Harvel Road in Montgomery County, IL, on parcel 04-33-476-005 owned by Robert E. Bloome in unincorporated Montgomery County. The proposed project will occupy approximately 27.2 acres of a 38.85-acre parcel, currently cultivated cropland, surrounded by additional cultivated cropland to the north, south, east, and west. The application was available for review in Room 202 of the Historic Courthouse located at #1 Courthouse Square Hillsboro.
3. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval: Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing as printed on the hearing agenda, noting the hearing was being recorded.
4. Presentation by Applicant: Reactivate Development Manager said the developer is a Chicago company, and described the project size and location, noting that it meets setback requirements, does not include lighting, and should have no negative impact on neighboring property values. He also described ground cover and the plan for periodic sheep grazing. Reactivate Project Developer Andrew Jurewicz said vegetative buffers will depend upon county requirements. Landowner Robert Bloome described the location and the research he had done on Reactivate. The proposed project site is located in the Union Drainage District #2 King & Harvel, and a tile survey will be completed before construction. Committee Chair Ruppert entered evidence of the certified mailings to neighboring property owners as Exhibit A.
5. Questions for Applicant: The committee asked questions about the nearest residence, property values, the location of the equipment pad, tile and drainage, the lease term, the interconnect agreement, transmission lines, required road use agreements, panel sourcing, distance between panels, ground cover, fencing, the construction workforce, bonding and decommissioning, and the potential vegetative buffer.
6. Presentation by Independent Consultants for Montgomery County: None
7. Public Comment: Landowner Robert Bloome told the committee he appreciates the job they are doing, and the efforts they are taking to protect landowners.
8. Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application: None
9. Closing Comments by Applicant: None

10. Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval: The committee will deliberate at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday, June 30, 2025, and likely make a recommendation at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 4, 2025. Remaining issues to resolve include a road use agreement, tile survey and contact with the drainage district, and the vegetative buffer.
11. Adjournment Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert determined there was no more evidence and closed the hearing. Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 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, June 26, 2025

Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Connie Beck for Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Ad Hoc Committee Chair Russ Beason

Members Absent: Andy Ritchie, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, IS Director Curt Watkins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Engineer Cody Greenwood.

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department is working on concluding court grant upgrades, annual PC upgrades, and server upgrades. He said county employees need to continue to be diligent and on guard for phishing emails. His department is beginning work on upgrading the phone system and switches, projects funded by the DCEO Energy Transition Grant.
2. EMA Report Update/Approval: EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reported he has hired an assistant who will begin work the second week of July. He has ordered a new grant-funded drone that will be an asset to multiple departments, and is working on other grant opportunities.
3. West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reported the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 17.
4. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: Chairman Russ Beason reported the next meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 15.
5. Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval: Committee Chair Connie Beck reported the next meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, July 17.
6. Bluewave Solar Correspondence Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett reported a mail solicitation from BlueWave expressing an interest in developing a community solar project on county farm ground. The letter, however, also referenced Montgomery County, PA. Note: An hour after the committee meeting adjourned, County Board Admin received a call from Austin Grammer of BlueWave who said he had indeed identified county farm ground for a potential project, but since the ground is near MJM power lines and not Ameren's, the site is of no interest to BlueWave.
7. Supervisor of Assessments Resignation Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson said he received a letter of resignation from Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus on June 10. Her last day of employment will be July 11, and her last day in the office will be Friday, June 27. Donaldson thanked her for her time and service.
8. Other Business: County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser shared a letter dated June 17, 2025, from IDNR to Deer Run Mine asking for numerous modifications to their application for Revision No. 1 to Permit No. 424 to increase an impoundment facility height. The letter gave the mine one year to complete the application modifications. Chairman Donaldson added he had learned Deer Run had withdrawn their request to accept Springfield City Water, Light & Power (CWLP) coal combustion waste.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. Animal Control Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert said he anticipates discussions on rates for adoptions and the procedure manual.
2. CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will discuss information from the public hearing and make a recommendation.

3. RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will discuss information from the public hearing.
4. Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval: The public hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, July 7.
5. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval: The public hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, July 28.
6. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will discuss the Phase II grant agreement and Phase III application.
7. Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss a recommendation.
8. Secession Resolution Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert will discuss resolution development with the State's Attorney. Chairman Donaldson requested the item be on the July 30 Mayors Meeting agenda.
9. Other Business: Committee Chair Ruppert said he will also ask his committee to consider a wind ordinance revision to accommodate siting approval extensions. He would also like vacancies in the Supervisor of Assessments office to be posted.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Historical Marker Update/Approval: Jeff Dunn will be present to provide new information.
3. Elevator Maintenance Contract Update/Approval: On the advice of the State's Attorney, the county will send a letter to Otis Elevator expressing service issues during the recent outage.
4. Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
5. Window Cleaning Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
6. Other Business: None.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Building Construction Update/Approval: The committee will discuss building progress.
2. Other Business: Engineer Cody Greenwood anticipates agenda items including a Harvel Township bridge letting, summer maintenance projects, an update on the Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters intersection work, and a presentation from a Harvel drainage district.

Finance and Budget Committee: Connie Beck, Vice Chair

1. SOA Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
3. Extension Agreement Update/Approval: The agreement was approved in April and need not be on the agenda.
4. Bruce Harris Contract Update/Approval: SOA Niehaus will request Bruce Harris reps to attend the meeting.
5. Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss recommendations from County Board Administration, the County Clerk, and State's Attorney.
6. Other Business: Additional agenda items that need to be discussed include the budget process, audit contract, and county offices' drinking water.

Appointments:

1. None

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 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
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, June 30, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones (at 5:07 p.m.), Russell Beason

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Pivot Senior Developer Brittney Krebsbach

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was let by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported responding to 25 calls in June, as well as currently housing 12 dogs and 19 cats at the facility. She reported reviewing adoption fees. Most of the county costs related to adoptions is for required spay/neuter services, and she is working on a plan to reduce those costs. She also reported providing contractual services to Litchfield is going well, and the committee discussed the plan of action for enclosing the porch at the facility, an improvement that will be funded by Phase II of the DCEO Energy Transition Grant.
4. CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval: Pivot Senior Developer Brittney Krebsbach reviewed a written presentation addressing seven issues raised at the May 22, 2025 public hearing including vegetative management research, community partnerships, drain tiles, cooperation with neighbors, local labor, glare potential, and sound mitigation. Due to feedback from the hearing, Krebsbach said the developer has moved inverters to the center of the project, is working on shifting the entire site away from Mine Avenue, and has added a vegetative buffer to the east side. Committee Chair Ruppert will work on siting approval conditions, share them with the developer, and present them for a recommendation vote at next month's committee meeting.
5. RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert noted relatively few issues were raised at the June 23, 2025 public hearing. The committee consensus was to honor the property owner's request to waive the vegetative screening requirement in favor of a mowing agreement. Chairman Ruppert will work on standard siting approval conditions and then present them for a recommendation vote at next month's committee meeting.
6. Bluestar & Horseshoe agreements with Hurst-Rosche Update/Approval: The committee reviewed standard agreements with Hurst-Rosche for independent review agreements. **Motion by Beason and second by Daniels to recommend approval of independent engineer review agreements with Hurst-Rosche for Bluestar and Horseshoe solar projects for fees not to exceed \$3,500. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval: The public hearing date is set for Monday, July 7, beginning at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
8. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Public Hearing Date Update/Approval: The public hearing date is set for Monday, July 28, beginning at 6 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

9. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Plunkett said projects in Phase I are about 85% complete, the grant agreement for Phase II has been executed and projects are underway, and the initial application for Phase III was submitted to DCEO on Friday, June 27.
10. Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative Update/Approval: The committee continued to discuss the proposed Montgomery First Local Labor Initiative and Responsible Bidder ordinance that would allow local businesses who request to do so to reduce their bids up to a maximum of 5% if necessary to meet the low bid. The committee had been debating the \$20,000 cap. Matt Blankenship of Local 1084 said in his research, local labor initiatives have been utilized with success around the state, but suggested raising the cap to \$50,000. **Motion by Daniels and second by Beason to recommend approval of the Responsible Bidder Ordinance with “Montgomery First” Local Business Adjustment to Bid Award. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. Montgomery County Wind Ordinance Update/Approval: Because the Montgomery County Wind Ordinance had no provision for extending the one-year deadline for construction to begin after siting approval, the committee discussed adding language that would allow for an extension of up to two years, along with a \$250 per MW application fee for requesting the extension. **Motion by Daniels and second by Jones to amend the Montgomery County Wind Ordinance as presented, effective July 8, 2025, upon passage. All in favor, motion carried.**
12. Secession Resolution Update/Approval: Committee member Jeremy Jones is requesting an advisory referendum be placed on the March 17, 2026 ballot.
13. Employee Handbook Distribution Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert would like to schedule a virtual meeting between Bushue HR and all Montgomery County department heads to explain changes in the newly adopted Employee Handbook. Treasurer Lohman offered to email the new handbook to all employees along with a request to sign and return the signature page.
14. Supervisor of Assessments Position Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert said with two resignations in the Supervisor of Assessments office along with two previous vacancies, only one person remains working in the office. Advertisements to fill the vacancies appeared in print on Monday, June 30, and the committee asked County Board Administration to post the vacancies on Indeed. Ruppert said he will contact retired staff for short-term help, and he will research contracting with another county. Treasurer Lohman said she will obtain a list of individuals who have already passed the qualifying exam from the Illinois Department of Revenue.
15. Other Business: The committee reviewed a press release from the City of Litchfield dated June 19, 2025 regarding the announcement of a new primer ammunition manufacturing facility to be located in Litchfield’s I-55 Commerce Center. Phase I of the project will begin in 2025, be operational in 2028, and create 85 jobs. Phase II will be operational in 2032 and create 75 more jobs. The committee also learned of a new tax sale process lawsuit involving 62 Illinois counties.

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

Motion to Adjourn by Jones and second by Bergen. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049**

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 1, 2025

Members Present: Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: Mark Hughes

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Illinois State Historical Society Director Jeff Dunn

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Vice Chair Beason.
2. Public Comments: Jeff Dunn said he would like to donate more stackable bookcases to the Historic Courthouse, and more reserve building bricks.
3. Historical Marker Update/Approval: Jeff Dunn shared with the committee a proof of the Illinois State Historical Society marker, as well as activities to celebrate planned for Friday and Saturday, Aug. 1-2. Dunn said the marker, which should arrive in the next few weeks, will be affixed to a pole that needs to be four feet in the ground and anchored in concrete. The committee agreed the southeast corner of the Historic Courthouse lawn would be a good spot for the marker, and met with Dunn on the grounds after the meeting to determine a location.
4. J-Tec Pipe Coating Presentation Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Ernst said a presentation has been scheduled for next month's committee meeting.
5. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The maintenance department completed 51 work orders in June, and Maintenance Director Ernst reviewed his report. The committee will advertise for Courts Complex boiler bids to be opened at the August committee meeting and reimbursed through the DCEO grant.
6. DCEO Phase II Projects Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the six items requested by Maintenance Director Ernst and funded by Phase II of the DCEO grant. Additionally, Ernst will take the lead in the VAC and ROE entrance repair and the Courthouse Annex rest room access.
7. Elevator Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a letter written by County Board Administration to Otis Elevator detailing the issues encountered during the 10-week Historic Courthouse elevator outage.
8. Generator Pad Bids Update/Approval: The committee reviewed three bids ranging from \$5,600 to \$8,400 for concrete pad improvements for the soon-to-arrive generator replacement at the Courts Complex, plus two bollards to protect it. Maintenance Director Ernst added the low bidder has agreed to include a third bollard at no extra cost. **Motion by Young and second by Beck to recommend awarding the low bid of \$5,600 for 6x10 one-foot concrete pad plus three bollards to RL Construction of Butler. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. Window Cleaning Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a proposal to clean windows for \$2,205 at the Historic Courthouse and for \$2,750 at the Courts Complex, but took no action.
10. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Robbins asked the committee to consider bollards protecting the Courts Complex front glass, as well as a detailed cleaning after several construction projects.

Motion to pay the bills by Young and second by Hancock. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 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, July 2nd, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

Members present: Ethan Murzynski, Bill Bergen, Chad Ruppert, Keith Hancock, Rob Corso

Members Absent: Patty Whitworth, Doug Donaldson

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Denny Held and Richard Lyons of Harvel Drainage District #2, Bill Yamnitz

1. Public Comments: None
2. Bid Opening for Section 23-07108-00-BR Harvel Township N. 26th Avenue Bridge Replacement Update/Approval: County Engineer Cody Greenwood opened sealed bids from C-Hill Civil Contractors of Campbell Hill and Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon, and Bev Seamon tabulated results. Bill Yamnitz was present. Bids ranged from \$314,955.03 to \$344,888 (both under the approved engineer's estimate of \$376,545.50. The project will be 80% township funded and 20% county funded. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Corso to recommend awarding the apparent low bid of \$314,955.03 to Yamnitz & Associates of Fieldon for Section 23-07108-00-BR Harvel Township North 26th Avenue Bridge Replacement. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. Harvel Drainage District #2 Drain Tile Improvements Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood said county policy regarding crossing county roads requires a bore, and cuts will only be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the situation and conditions. Harvel Drainage District #2 had asked for such consideration due to the substantial grade change required at Black Diamond Trail. Greenwood gave the district specific conditions, such as pipe specs, requiring a saw cut, and fill requirements, and shared plans with the committee indicating the conditions will be met. Drainage District Commissioner Richard Lyons, who was present with Dennis Held, said the district is working to replace a system that is 125 years old, the first drainage district main replacement in the state. In order to receive Rural Development financing terms, the project must be completed by Dec. 31, 2025. Engineer Greenwood said he intends to approve the request.
4. Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters Avenue Intersection Project Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported the first layer of asphalt was laid on July 1 and the second on July 2. Dirt work and striping should be completed the following week before the intersection is open to traffic.
5. Other Items: Engineer Greenwood reported progress on the new building: the electrician has trenched conduit, and the contractor is currently working on overhead door headers. The committee also discussed the feasibility and scope of a Nokomis-Fillmore Road project. Committee members will attend a Nokomis City Council meeting in August to continue the discussion.

Motion by Ruppert, second by Hancock to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Bergen, second by Corso to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

Montgomery County Board
Finance & Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, July 3, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Development & Personnel Committee Chair Chad Ruppert, Michaela Gray from the Supervisor of Assessments Office, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Illinois Account Manager Alex Simpson of Bruce Harris & Associates.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ritchie.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Bruce Harris Proposal Update/Approval: Bruce Harris & Associates Illinois Account Manager Alex Simpson presented a proposal for the board to upgrade its public GIS website, noting Bruce Harris currently has 18 active websites and 5 more in development. The proposal included a cost of \$24,878.16 for building the new site which would take about two months, and the monthly fee would be \$752 which is substantially less than the current Beacon contract. Simpson said work could begin when a contract is signed, and cost could be paid next fiscal year. **Motion by Young and second by Whitworth to recommend accepting the proposal from Bruce Harris & Associates to build and maintain the Montgomery County public GIS website at a set-up cost of \$24,878.16 and a monthly maintenance cost of \$752. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. SOA Report Update/Approval: Development & Personnel Committee Chair Ruppert reported the resignation of the Supervisor of Assessments and Chief Deputy leaves one person in the office, who is doing a great job. Vacancies have been posted, and Ruppert said the Illinois Department of Revenue allows a temporary SOA for 60 days, and the committee discussed reaching out to retired SOA Ray Durston. Another option, according to Ruppert, is to contract with a neighboring county for those services. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to appoint committee member Evan Young to contact Ray Durston about temporary work. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: According to reports furnished by Treasurer Lohman, the May coal royalty payment was \$98,165.83. Also in May, \$346,000 in coal interest was transferred to the General Fund per the County Board Resolution.
6. FY2026 Budget Process Update/Approval: Treasurer Lohman reported she has been working with Bellwether on the FY2026 budget process. She anticipates budget hearings in August.
7. County Audit Contract Update/Approval: Scheffel Boyle remains under contract for the FY2025 audit.
8. COLA Salary Increase for State's Attorney Update/Approval: Treasurer Lohman provided a Notice of Annual Salary Reimbursement Cost of Living Adjustment for State's Attorneys and Public Defenders setting a 6.1% COLA increase for state FY2026, which began on July 1, 2025. The notice set the State's Attorney salary at \$169,865.81 and the Public Defender salary at \$152,879.23. According to state statute, the Sheriff salary is to be 80% of the State's Attorney's, or \$135,892.65. **Motion by**

Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend setting the State's Attorney salary at \$169,865.81, the Public Defender salary at \$152,879.23, and the Sheriff salary at \$135,892.65 beginning July 1, 2025. All in favor, motion carried.

9. County Office Drinking Water Update/Approval: Per request from the Coordinating Committee, the Finance & Budget Committee was asked to reconsider the prohibition of office holders vouchering bottled water. Both Treasurer Lohman and County Clerk Leitheiser said the water quality in the Historic Courthouse is poor, and both pay for water for their employees from their pockets. **Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth to recommend allowing department heads to voucher bottled water from Office Supplies budget line items. All in favor, motion carried.**
10. Pre-Approved Vendor List Update/Approval: As recommended by the Finance & Budget Committee last month, County Board Administration, the Treasurer, County Clerk, and State's Attorney met to develop a plan to revamp the Pre-Paid Vendor List and report vouchers paid from the list. Ultimately, the list will be re-named the Pre-Approved Payment List and State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti will include statutory citations and special funds that grant authority for payments from them. Additionally, committees will be furnished with monthly reports of payments made from the Pre-Approved Payment List. The board will be asked to consider approval of the new list when it has been completed.
11. Other Business: Committee Chair Ritchie noted two solar public hearings scheduled for July, and County Clerk Leitheiser and Treasurer Lohman referenced a state-wide lawsuit questioning the tax sale process. The committee also discussed a possible pay increase for the lone employee in the Supervisor of Assessments office, the need to reinstate an Imprest Fund at Animal Control, and developing a policy regarding reimbursing the county for training for employees who exit early. Treasurer Lohman also provided information that \$717,000 of the \$10 million (7.2%) in property taxes collected to day have been paid electronically.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:23 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
Hearing Minutes**

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

6:00 p.m. Monday, July 7, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels, Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason (arrived at 6:47 p.m.)

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Ironwood Renewables Project Developer Keith Morel, Atwell Project Manager Michael Keith

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Chad Ruppert.
2. Identification of Application and Project Overview: Committee Chair Ruppert said the purpose of the hearing was to discuss a proposed solar project to construct, operate, and maintain the Atticus Solar, LLC, and Finch Solar, LLC, (the "projects"), two 5 MWac commercial solar energy projects located on portions of two contiguous parcels, totaling approximately 80.6 acres on Route 127 in Hillsboro Township in unincorporated Montgomery County, Illinois (the "parcel"). The projects are planned for a footprint of up to 33.7 acres and up to 26.6 acres, respectively. The land for the projects—identified by Parcel Identification Numbers 16-36-400-001 and 16-36-300-002—is currently in active agricultural use and will continue to support productive groundcover through the planned integration of pollinator-friendly vegetation. The parcels are owned by Daniel Chappelar, with whom the applicant has executed a binding purchase option agreement. The site is bordered by farmland to the north, south, east, and west, and by Illinois State Route 127 to the west. Access to the site will be from Illinois State Route 127, an IDOT-maintained road. The application has been available for review in room 202 of the Historic Courthouse located at #1 Courthouse Square in Hillsboro.
3. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval: Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing as printed on the hearing agenda, noting the hearing was being recorded.
4. Presentation by Applicant: Project Developer Morel began by describing his expertise as well as the history of Ironwood Renewables, which currently produces 2.5 GW of power through projects in 13 states. Atticus Solar and Finch Solar are two separate 5MW community solar project with two separate interconnect agreements, but will sit side-by-side and share the same access road. Morel and Project Manager Michael Keith of Atwell anticipate energizing Atticus in May 2026 and Finch sometime in 2027. The nearest non-participating structure is 383 feet from Finch. Morel also discussed the vegetative management plan which includes a pollinator-friendly mix that will be mowed and baled. He described the ag-style 8-foot fencing, said there was no drain tile on the property, reviewed both decommissioning plans, and described the community and economic benefit which he anticipated as an additional \$60,000 annually in property taxes. Because there are no close non-participating residences, Morel said the project does not call for a vegetative buffer. County Board Admin produced a copy of required certified mail receipts to nearby property owners which Committee Chair Ruppert labeled as Exhibit A.
5. Questions for Applicant: Committee members raised questions regarding vegetative management, fencing, run-off, decommissioning, distance between panels, source of panels, bales, location of inverters, vegetative buffer, contractors, long-term effects on the ground, and operation and maintenance. Public questions included the voltage of the Ameren lines, the location of other Ironwood sites, and the number of construction jobs.

6. Public Comment: None
7. Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application: None
8. Closing Comments by Applicant: None
9. Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval: The committee will deliberate at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 4, 2025. Remaining issues to resolve include operation and maintenance, use of bales, submission of 24x36 plans, and the need for a vegetative buffer.
10. Adjournment Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert determined there was no more evidence and closed the hearing. Motion by Beason and second by Jones to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 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
Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 15, 2025

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

Members Absent: Chad Ruppert, John Lentz, Vince Reincke, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, North Litchfield Township Assessor Tom Baker, Illinois Realtors Government Affairs Director Ron Deedrick

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Beason.
2. Public Comments: None
3. Woodland Reclassification Notification Plan Update/Approval: After much discussion, the committee consensus was to develop and recommend a list of local “Best Practices,” and then to use that list as a basis for input into the SB 3455 Property Tax System Study. The committee will continue to discuss local Best Practices and finalize at the next meeting. So far, the committee suggests local Best Practices such as 1) Developing a Woodland Acreage page on the county website with a new Montgomery County Parcel Use Form, publications on enrolling in state and federal programs, and definitions and deadlines; 2) Recommending a change in timber classification can only be completed after an on-site visit; 3) Recommending the SOA office fill the Field Assistant vacancy; 4) Recommending the SOA office consider adding a second Field Assistant; 5) Recommending the SOA office annually request a review of Sales Ratio Report data by either an outside source or the Board of Review; 6) Recommending the SOA publish notifications of classification changes even if not required by law.
4. Timber Intent Worksheet Update/Approval: Boehler furnished an updated “Montgomery County Parcel Use Form” that he believes will be useful for entering timber into a program leading to a preferential assessment. Baker said he uses Illinois Department of Revenue publications describing the process, and will furnish those publications to the county and the committee.
5. Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors Info Update/Approval: Plunkett gave an update on the vacancies in the Supervisor of Assessments (SOA) office and the efforts to fill them; the application deadline is Friday, July 18, 2025. He anticipates deputy assessors will be hired first, and the county is discussing a proposal from Stan Jenkins and Gary Twist of Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors to train new staff. Committee Chair Beason noted the opportunity for the ad hoc committee to have input into rebuilding the SOA office.
6. Considerations of Comparative Tax Rate Among States Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beason provided three spreadsheets, which will be reviewed, analyzed, and discussed at the next meeting.
7. Next Meeting Date Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beason set the next meeting date for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 19, in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser. NOTE: due to a recorder malfunction, there is no verbatim audio recording of the meeting.

Montgomery County Board
Rules of Order Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

1:04 p.m. Thursday, July 17, 2025

Members Present: Connie Beck, Chris Daniels, Mark Hughes, Patty Whitworth

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, County Board member Ethan Murzynski

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Dr. Patty Whitworth
2. Public Comments: None
3. Review Department Head Termination Rules of Order Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beck said the Rules of Order need to define a process for termination of a department head. Hughes said the department head's oversight committee chair needs to be involved. The committee discussed the potential issues with oversight committee chairs having sole responsibility for termination, and the potential issues with waiting until the next monthly full board meeting for termination. Murzynski suggested a process that includes suspension before final board action on termination. Hughes said the suspension needs to be with pay. Whitworth suggested language that give the County Board Chair or Vice Chair, the Chair of the oversight committee, the Personnel & Development Committee chair, and the State's Attorney the authority to suspend a department head after consultation with Bushue HR. **Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to add the following paragraph 3 under Hiring and Personnel in Section E of the Montgomery County Board Rules of Order:** "No appointed department head shall be terminated without first being suspended by majority agreement of the County Board Chairman or Vice Chair, the Chairman of the oversight committee, the Chairman of the Personnel & Development Committee, and the State's Attorney. Suspension shall be with pay until the next County Board meeting. Termination and terms of termination shall be by majority vote of the County Board." All in favor, motion carried. The committee also discussed changes in the hiring policy. **Motion by Hughes and second by Daniels to strike the following sentence from paragraph 1 under Hiring and Personnel in Section E:** "The elected official, supervisor or department head is responsible for hiring their staff but may request help from the Personnel & Development Committee and/or their oversight committee in interviewing and recommending applicants for hiring." All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Hughes to make the following sentence change in paragraph 1 under Hiring and Personnel in Section E:** "Appointed department heads shall consult with the Personnel & Development Committee Chair and their oversight committee Chair before filling any employee vacancy." All in favor, motion carried.
4. Montgomery County Travel Ordinance Update/Approval: After discussion, the committee consensus was there was no need to reference changes in the Travel Ordinance in the Rules of Order.
5. Other Business: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 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
Development & Personnel Committee
Hearing Minutes**

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

6:00 p.m. Monday, July 28, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels (arrived at 6:14 p.m.), Jeremy Jones, Russ Beason

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Summit Ridge Vice President of Development Bridget Callahan, neighboring landowners Brad Bowles and Paul Ernst

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Chad Ruppert.
2. Identification of Application and Project Overview: Committee Chair Ruppert noted the purpose of the hearing was to discuss a proposed solar project, Montgomery Solar IL 1, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Summit Ridge Energy, LLC, proposing to develop a 4.99 MW AC community solar project on an approximately 33.946-acre area of land on parcel pins 10-36-300-013 and 15-02-200-029 owned by Dustin and Dee Ellinger, which are currently agricultural use parcels. The application has been available for review in Room 202 of the Historic Courthouse located at #1 Courthouse Square in Hillsboro.
3. Hearing Rules and Procedures Update/Approval: Ruppert reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing as printed on the hearing agenda, noting the hearing was being recorded.
4. Presentation by Applicant: Summit Ridge Vice President of Development Bridget Callahan described her qualifications and the history of a company that has over 100 projects operating in Illinois and another 33 in development. She said Summit Ridge intends to be the owner and operator of the proposed community solar project, which she described in detail, including the overhead interconnection plan across Route 16, commercial entrance from Route 16, the signed AIMA, environmental studies and approvals, decommissioning plan, equipment, fencing, vegetative cover and planned buffer, and planned CAB wiring system. Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed the certified mail receipts notifying non-participating neighbors.
5. Questions for Applicant: Committee members raised questions of the size of Summit Ridge projects, the location of non-participating neighbors, flooding, project voltage, access points, lease details, abandoned railroad right-of-way, potential wells, a drainage tile survey, decommissioning plans, panels sourcing, panel monitoring and rotation, distance between panels, glare impacts, fence details and location, vegetative cover and mowing, the need for a vegetative buffer, the use of local labor, timetables, and a potential Community Benefits Agreement. Members of the public raised questions on flooding, hail and wind damage, Summit Ridge acquisition of other local projects and the lack of response to contact requests, and local vegetative management crews.
6. Public Comment: None
7. Receipt of Written Comments Regarding the Application: None
8. Closing Comments by Applicant: None

9. Date for Deliberation and Vote to Recommend/Deny Application Update/Approval: The committee will deliberate at their regularly scheduled meeting at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025. Remaining issues to resolve include operation and maintenance, tile maps, possible well locations, distances between panels, panel components, fence details, a possible vegetative buffer waiver, a possible Community Benefits Agreement, and the IDOT access permit.
10. Adjournment Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert determined there was no more evidence and closed the hearing. Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, July 31, 2025

Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes, Ethan Murzynski, Chad Ruppert

Members Absent: Andy Ritchie, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Others Present: Rules of Order Ad Hoc Committee Chair Connie Beck, Wooded Acreage Ad Hoc Committee Chair Russ Beason, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, IS Director Curt Watkins, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Engineer Cody Greenwood, State's Attorney Andrew Affranti, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough and Assistant Kayla Fath

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department is working on court grant improvements and the mapping move to ArcGIS Pro. He has begun the planning portion of the telephone system upgrade which he anticipates will take place in September. His department has completed the annual PC swap and a test phishing campaign, and will be replacing older switches.
2. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough reviewed his report, including participating in a National Weather Service conference in St. Charles, MO. He is working on the siren grant status and pursuing a mass alert system.
3. Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors Contract Update/Approval: Development & Personnel Committee Chair Ruppert reported a candidate has accepted the position of Chief Deputy Assessor and has enrolled in classes to become certified as Supervisor of Assessments. He and Chairman Donaldson reported meeting with Gary Twist and Stan Jenkins of Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors (PETA) for assessment field work and employee training. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to recommend a six-month contract with Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors for a total of \$87,498. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: Committee Chair Russ Beason reported a successful meeting held on Tuesday, July 15, which included several members of the public and the North Litchfield Township assessor. The next meeting has been scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 19, in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Historic Courthouse.
5. Rules Committee Meeting Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beck reviewed recommendations from a Thursday, July 17, meeting, including a procedure to be used in the event of the termination of a department head.
6. Mayors Meeting Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reviewed a successful meeting held on Wednesday, July 30. Agenda items included municipal and county responses to derelict properties, a presentation on electronic mass notification, and presentations from elected officials and department heads.
7. Bluewave Solar & Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval: Companies have reached out to discuss leasing County Farm ground for potential solar projects. The State's Attorney will review any offers to determine if the county is allowed to consider the leases.

8. Closed Session Minutes Review Update/Approval: The committee discussed committee closed session minutes from March 3, March 31, and June 4, and recommends all remain permanently closed.
9. Other Business: Chairman Donaldson noted county unemployment numbers have improved, and said he will ask for a moment of silence in memory of County Recorder's Office employee Laura Cerven at the next County Board meeting.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. Animal Control Update/Approval: The committee will review rates and discuss recommendations.
2. Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval: The committee will review and make recommendations.
3. CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss siting approval.
4. RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss siting approval.
5. Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss siting approval.
6. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will review and likely discuss siting approval at the September committee meeting.
7. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review the status of three grant phases.
8. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss a potential community benefits agreement.
9. Secession Resolution Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
10. Schedule Change for September Update/Approval: Due to the Labor Day holiday, the September meeting will be on Tuesday, Sept. 2.
11. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported a new requirement to participate in court management training.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. Boiler Bid Opening Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes reported bids are due the following afternoon.
2. Jaytech Water Solutions Presentation Update/Approval: Andrew Grapperhaus will be at the committee meeting for a presentation.
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
4. Historical Marker Update/Approval: A dedication ceremony is planned for Saturday, Aug. 2.
5. Other Business: Other agenda items include an Ameren energy assessment offer and an Arches Rail Trail request.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Building Construction Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reported he had just toured the new building.
2. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski said a 50/50 pipe culvert in Fillmore Consolidated Township will also be on the agenda, as well as an update on the Walshville bypass and a process to vacate alleys in Zanesville Township.

Finance and Budget Committee: Connie Beck, Vice Chairwoman

1. SOA Office Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss the office report.
2. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
3. Bruce Harris Contract for GIS Website Update/Approval: The committee will discuss the proposed contract and make a recommendation.

4. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: The committee is awaiting a completed document from the State's Attorney.
5. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee will discuss the potential need for a policy.
6. Assessment Contract with Grisham/Walshville/East Fork MTA Update/Approval: The committee will discuss a recommendation to void the contract.
7. SOA Office Stipend Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
8. Other Business: Treasurer Lohman reported the FY2026 budget process needs to be added to the agenda.

Appointments:

1. Chairman Donaldson will ask for approval of the appointment of Amy Jeffers, Hillsboro, to Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 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**
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, August 4, 2025

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

Members Absent: Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, Brittney Krebsbach of Pivot Energy, Gabriel Araiza of Reactivate

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Papin referenced her report, which included 25 calls over the past month and 11 dogs, 11 puppies, 1 cat and 18 kittens at the facility. She requested first aid kits for the two Animal Control vehicles, which committee member Daniels said could be provided through the Safety Grant. Daniels also suggested using expired first aid kits for animals.
4. Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval: Committee member Jones sent the manual to the County Board Administrator for consideration and a recommendation next month.
5. CF IL Solar (Farmersville) Siting Permit Update/Approval: Project Manager & Senior Manager Brittney Krebsbach was present to update the committee information requested at the public hearing. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to recommend siting approval for CF IL Solar in Farmersville with 5 conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. RDC IL N24th Solar (Harvel) Siting Permit Update/Approval: Development Manager Gabriel Araiza was present to update the committee information requested at the public hearing, including a plan to row crop around the array for a vegetative buffer. **Motion by Jones and second by Beason to recommend siting approval for RDC IL N24th Solar in Harvel with six conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Atticus & Finch Solar (Route 127) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee reviewed improved maps provided by Ironwood Renewables requested at the public hearing. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to recommend siting approval for Atticus Solar and Finch Solar on Route 127 south of Hillsboro with six conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert said since the public hearing was the previous week on Monday, July 28, the committee should be ready to discuss and make a recommendation at their September meeting.
9. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Plunkett reported 83.1% of Phase 1 reimbursements have been received totaling nearly \$1.9 million, and 1.1% of Phase 2 reimbursements have been received totaling \$14,800. The county is awaiting notification of the Phase 3 award. The committee will review the status of Small Biz Grant recipients next month.

10. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee considered an initial draft that specifies three community benefits: 1) the applicant will purchase as much as possible in Montgomery County; 2) the applicant will recruit project labor from Montgomery County; and 3) the applicant will make annual payments to Montgomery County, the fire department that covers the project location, and the South Central Illinois Regional Workforce Training & Innovation Center in Litchfield. Committee member Jones suggested adding Montgomery County EMA for payments. Committee Chair Ruppert would like to study more Community Benefits Agreements and asked County Board Administration to send the current draft to the State's Attorney.
11. Secession Resolution Update/Approval: Committee member Jones said he would like an advisory resolution to be on the ballot asking Montgomery County voters if they would like to secede from Illinois and form a new state with other downstate counties. Jones said that although he believes secession cannot occur constitutionally, state borders can be moved to allow downstate Illinois counties to become a part of Indiana. Committee Chair Ruppert said he has only heard negative comments on the possibility of secession, and Montgomery County currently receives more state grants than neighboring counties. In answer to a question, County Clerk Leitheiser said voters could petition the advisory referendum on the ballot with 860 signatures.
12. Schedule Change for September Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert reminded the committee due to the Labor Day holiday, the next meeting will be on Tuesday, Sept. 2, beginning at 5 p.m.
13. Other Business: Committee Chair Ruppert reported Tysha Mullen had been offered and accepted the position of Chief Deputy in the Supervisor of Assessments office, and he will ask the County Board to appoint her as Supervisor of Assessments pending the successful completion of all state requirements. He also said the County Board will be asked to approve a contract with Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors at the August meeting to train new employees and make sure the 2025 tax cycle remains on schedule.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:29 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 Minutes**
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, August 5, 2025

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Ray Luebbert and Glenn Savage of NAGS, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Andrew Grapperhaus of Jaytech.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.
2. Public Comments: None
3. Boiler Bid Opening Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes opened three sealed bids, all three received on Aug. 1, 2025, and representatives from all three bidders were present. Leollke Plumbing of Jerseyville bid \$74,671.50; EL Pruitt of Springfield bid \$103,929; Henson Robinson of Springfield bid \$70,592. Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the bids, noting the bid requested a specific make and model number. County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett reminded the committee \$47,152 would be reimbursed through Phase 2 of the DCEO Energy Transition grant. **Motion by Young and second by Hancock to recommend awarding the low bid of \$70,592 to Henson Robinson of Springfield. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. Jaytech Water Solutions Presentation Update/Approval: Andrew Grapperhaus from the St. Louis Jaytech office suggested water treatment for closed-loop HVAC systems. He provided test results for water in Courts Complex and Montgomery County Jail systems, and found an elevated copper level. His proposal for treatment was \$4,549.22 not including filter installation, and \$882.90 for annual inspections.
5. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Ernst reported on the 36 items on his report, including completing 59 work orders during the past month. With the maintenance truck out of service, his office is currently borrowing the EPA truck. He reported a new generator will arrive in late October, three dying trees on the jail grounds need to come down, and suggested the committee consider installing a split unit AC in Courtroom 3 at the Courthouse Complex.
6. Ameren Illinois Energy Assessment Offer Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes reported Alpha Electric in Litchfield is working on replacing inefficient lighting fixtures through an Ameren grant.
7. NAGS Arches Rail Trail Request Update/Approval: Ray Luebbert of NAGS reported a damaged area about 700-800 feet long on the Arches Rail Trail that cannot be mowed due to the deep ruts. He reminded the committee NAGS has maintained the recreational trail through a 2011 contract with the county. Engineer Cody Greenwood is working on a remediation plan and estimated cost. The committee will continue the discussion next month pending cost information.
8. Historical Marker Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes said the Historical Marker was installed on Historic Courthouse grounds the previous week and dedicated on Saturday, Aug. 2, 2025. He and his son Marshall dug the post hole, Rob Smith of RL Contractors installed the post, Mid-Illinois Concrete provided concrete, and Jeff Dunn painted the pole, all at no cost.

9. Other Business: Committee Chair Hughes asked for window cleaning to be placed on the September committee agenda. Circuit Clerk Robbins reported he is seeking an ADA grant for first and second floor restroom improvements in the Court Complex.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 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 Agenda

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

Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Bill Bergen

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett

1. Public Comments: None
2. Resolution 2025-7 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on Hill Circle, Fillmore Township Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on Hill Circle in Fillmore Consolidated Township. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$26,000 with Montgomery County's share estimated at \$13,000 from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of Resolution 2025-07 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay one-half of an estimated \$26,000 project to replace a culvert on Hill Circle. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported he had been approached by NAGS volunteer Ray Luebbert about damages on the Arches Rail Trail between Hillsboro and Butler. Luebbert appeared at the Aug. 5, 2025 Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting to request repairs to rutting caused by motorized vehicles. Greenwood will visit the site and develop a remediation plan that could be implemented this fall. Committee member Hancock suggested the county adopt an ordinance prohibiting motorized vehicles so violators could be prosecuted.
4. Walshville Road Improvement Project Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported the Illinois State Archaeological Survey has informed him the proposed Walshville Bypass site needs shovel testing. His office will notify landowners by letter. Greenwood anticipates construction will begin in fall 2026 at the earliest, but more likely in the spring or summer 2027.
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. Greenwood said to proceed, the vacation plan will need a petition signed by two-thirds of the impacted landowners and will need to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the County Board.
6. Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported wiring has been roughed in, most of the concrete has been poured. Some carpentry work remains as well as trim work, installing downspouts and overhead doors. Committee member Ruppert pointed out a change order that removed \$22,000 in cost from the project.
7. Other Items: None

Motion by Ruppert, second by Whitworth to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.

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

8:30 a.m. Thursday, August 7, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, SOA Deputy Michaela Gray.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ritchie.
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: The committee reviewed Deputy Michaela Gray's report. A new Chief Deputy is expected to begin work on Aug. 11, and the County Board will be asked to sign a contract with Property Evaluation and Tax Advisors for field work and training on Aug. 12.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: The committee reviewed reports provided by Treasurer Lohman, and Committee Chair Ritchie noted a coal royalty payment of \$170,361.72 in June.
5. Bruce Harris Contract for GIS Website Update/Approval: After county board approval of a proposal from Bruce Harris last month, the committee reviewed a contract that calls for an initial fee of \$22,003.31 and a monthly maintenance fee of \$752. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to recommend approval of the contract with Bruce Harris and Associates for the county GIS public website. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: The committee reviewed changes to the Pre-Approved Payment List made by the State's Attorney. **Motion by Beck and second by Corso to recommend approval of the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: County Clerk Leitheiser said she introduced the idea after Christian County action to seek reimbursement from Sheriff's Office personnel who leave employment shortly after training. The committee reviewed the Christian County pre-employment contract that requires a 24-36 month commitment or training costs must be reimbursed. Sheriff Holshouser reported those training costs at \$7,000 to \$8,000 and said enforcing reimbursement would likely require civil court action. He said the State's Attorney is reviewing the idea, and Leitheiser said she will continue to research.
8. Assessment Contract with Grisham/Walshville/East Fork MTA Update/Approval: The MTA is now officially under contract with an assessor. **Motion by Young and second by Whitworth to recommend voiding the assessment contract with the Grisham/Walshville/East Fork Multi-Township Assessment District. All in favor, motion carried.**
9. FY2026 Budget Process and Budget Hearings Update/Approval: Treasurer Lohman said budget forms have been distributed, and Bellwether has scheduled budget hearings to begin at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 28. The date and time conflict with Coordinating Committee, so arrangements will have to be made. Committee Chair Ritchie said he is working on a memo to send to department heads noting he expects the General Fund budget to show a six-figure surplus for FY2026.

Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to enter closed session at 9:30 a.m. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Daniels and second by Young to return to open session at 9:50 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.

10. SOA Office Stipend Update/Approval: A discussion on an amount occurred in closed session.
Motion by Beck and second by Daniels to recommend awarding Michaela Gray a \$3,000 bonus effective the next payroll. All in favor, motion carried.
11. Other Business: Sheriff Tyson Holshouser reported the current 911 Administrator would be retiring on Dec. 1, 2025. Rather than replace the position as a combined telecommunicator and administrator, Sheriff Holshouser said he has recommended to the ETSB to add 911 Administrator to the EMA/EPA Director's responsibilities.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 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

Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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

6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Members Present: Russ Beason, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Jesse Boehler, John Lentz

Members Absent: Chris Daniels, Vince Reincke

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, SOA Office Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, Stan Jenkins and Alex Gentner 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: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett introduced new SOA Office Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, who was welcomed with a round of applause. He also introduced Stan Jenkins and Alex Gentner of Property Evaluation & Tax Advisors (PETA), who are working in the field under contract along with Gary Twist of PETA who is working remotely for the SOA office. Committee member Ruppert, who also chairs the Development & Personnel Committee, said Mullen distinguished herself among other applicants due to her attitude and ability. Regarding the status of the tax cycle due to SOA office understaffing, Jenkins said he believes the county is currently a bit behind schedule, but not substantially.
4. Montgomery County Best Practices Plan Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the list of seven recommended best practices discussed a last month's meeting, plus a detailed year-long best practices schedule developed by PETA. The committee also reviewed and discussed a list of best practices submitted by Doris McFarlin regarding transparency and accountability, citizen engagement, efficient resource management, and good governance principles, as well as a list of best practices submitted by Brandi Lentz regarding compliance and legal standards, field inspection safety and legal compliance, assessment accuracy, public service and communication, appeals and dispute resolution, office management and staff development, technology and data security, ethics and professionalism, and continuous improvement. Committee member Ruppert noted many of the recommended best practices are required by the county Employee Manual and Ethics Ordinance. **Motion by Boehler and second by Lentz to recommend the adoption of seven best practices, the PETA best practices schedule, and the Parcel Use Form. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. Considerations of Comparative Tax Rate Among States Update/Approval: Committee Chair Beason shared a list of effective property tax rates by state with Illinois second behind New Jersey. Sorted by median tax paid, Illinois is sixth highest at \$5,591.
6. Illinois Best Practices Plan Update/Approval: The committee reviewed Public Act 103-1002, which commissions the Illinois Department of Revenue in consultation with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to "conduct a study to evaluate the property tax system in the state" and "may also examine whether the existing property tax levy, assessment, appeal, and collection process is reasonable and fair and may issue recommendations to improve that process." In order to examine statistical data to provide local comments and recommendations, committee member Boehler asked County Board Admin to provide historical population data and property taxes collected, and committee member Lentz also requested historical median income data.

7. Next Meeting Date Update/Approval: The committee set the next meeting for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 23, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert

Members Absent: Mark Hughes, Dr. Patty Whitworth

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, Engineer Cody Greenwood, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, IS Director Curt Watkins

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: IS Director Curt Watkins reported working on court grant items with some supply issues, server upgrades, updating DevNet sketching software, working on fire/panic alarm updates, planning the phone system upgrade, and working on remote access for township assessors, and is nearing completion of the ArcPro upgrade. He reported phishing campaigns remain up, and will soon begin planning the GIS website change.
2. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: Director Dan Hough reported a visit from the acting Illinois EPA Director on Tuesday, Aug. 26, and was asked to be a test site for new forms and processes. He also reviewed his EMA activity report.
3. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: Administrator Mike Plunkett reported on the Aug. 19 committee meeting, during which the ad hoc committee recommended Best Practices for the Supervisor of Assessments office. The committee will next meet on Tuesday, Sept. 23, to potentially recommend Best Practices to the state.
4. Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval: The committee reviewed an option from a Solar Company to purchase the county farm. Chairman Donaldson referred the proposal to the Buildings & Grounds Committee for review.
5. Cell Phone Policy Update/Approval: The committee discussed reviewing which employees need a county cell phone. Budget hearings would be a good time to do so.
6. Workforce Development Month Proclamation Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the proclamation. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Ritchie to recommend adoption of the Workforce Development Month Proclamation. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Other Business: None.

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. UKA Virden Wind Update/Approval: Chad Macy will be present at the committee meeting.
4. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee will review and likely make a recommendation.
5. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
6. Small Biz Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
7. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee will continue the discussion until ready to make a recommendation.

8. 2026 County Holiday Schedule Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a recommendation.
9. Other Business: County Clerk Leitheiser reported the new Nokomis TIF has been filed, and she anticipates the new Hillsboro TIF will soon be filed.

Buildings and Grounds:

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Courtroom Three Split Unit Update/Approval: After maintenance work, the split unit may not be necessary.
3. Jaytech Water Solutions Proposal Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a recommendation.
4. NAGS Arches Rail Trail Request Update/Approval: Investigation into potential remediation continues.
5. Window Cleaning Proposal Update/Approval: The committee will review and may reconsider.
6. Court Complex ADA Grant Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the grant is not out yet.
7. Other Business: None.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Building Construction Update/Approval: The committee will review progress.
2. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski anticipates a 50/50 culvert project as well as a discussion on road improvements in Nokomis.

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. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ritchie reported budget hearings scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 28, beginning at 8 a.m.
4. FY2026 Estimated Tax Levy Update/Approval: Plunkett reported the likelihood of one Truth In Taxation hearing, and the possibility of at least one other.
5. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee will continue to investigate before making a recommendation.
6. Other Business: A resolution regarding Circuit Clerk fees will also be in the committee agenda.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 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
Finance & Budget Committee Special Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:00 a.m. Thursday, August 28, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young, Doug Donaldson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Justin Greeley and Dustin Harmon of Bellwether, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, various county officeholders and department heads

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Sheriff Tyson Holshouser
2. Public Comment: None
3. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: Treasurer Lohman presented initial budget requests resulting in a \$162,671 General Fund deficit. After two errors were corrected, one regarding grant income and the other regarding a misplaced expense, the committee began the hearings with a \$475,000 deficit. After making adjustments throughout the hearing, the committee ended the day with a \$138,426 General Fund surplus. Items that remain under consideration are salary increases for two positions in the Maintenance Department, one position in the Treasurer's office, two attorney positions in the State's Attorney's office and one attorney position in the Public Defender's office, and the possibility of removing GIS from the General Fund.
4. FY2026 Tax Levy Update/Approval: Levy requests remain under consideration, however the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance and VAC will likely require a Truth In Taxation hearing.
5. Other Business: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 3:31 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 Minutes**
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, September 2, 2025

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

Members Absent: Evan Young, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Hughes
2. Public Comments: None
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 39 items on his report, including the potential for a key fob installed on the front door of the Historic Courthouse, and a new generator scheduled to arrive on Sept. 26. Ernst reported his department completed 51 work orders during the past month.
4. Courtroom Three Split Unit Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Ernst said after work his department performed on the air handler, the system has maintained a 71-degree temperature in Courtroom Three, so the split unit may not be necessary.
5. Jaytech Water Solutions Proposal Update/Approval: The committee discuss proposals presented last month from Jaytech Water Solutions of Maryland Heights, MO, for one-time closed loop treatment of the Montgomery County Courts Complex HVAC system, and annual lab testing of the same. Ernst said funds were available in the FY2025 budget, and the work was needed to maintain warranties. **Motion by Beason and second by Beck to recommend accepting proposals from Jaytech Water Solutions of Maryland Heights, MO, for \$4,549.22 for closed loop treatment of the Montgomery County Courts Complex HVAC system, and for \$882.90 for annual lab testing. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. NAGS Arches Rail Trail Request Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes reported County Engineer Cody Greenwood is still analyzing the damage and will suggest repairs.
7. Window Cleaning Proposal Update/Approval: The committee reexamined proposals from Dominic Ellinger of Litchfield to clean windows at the Montgomery County Courts Complex and the Historic Courthouse, inside and out. Ernst reported the proposals had been put off earlier in the summer until later in the budget year. **Motion by Beck and second by Beason to recommend accepting proposals from Dominic Ellinger in Litchfield to clean windows at the Historic Courthouse for \$2,205 and the Courts Complex for \$2,750. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Court Complex ADA Grant Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the grant has yet to be released.
9. Silicon Ranch Solar Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the purchase option agreement. Committee Chair Hughes will discuss the proposal with Silicon Ranch.
10. Other Business: Plunkett reminded the committee they still have \$10,000 DCEO grant money to spend in the County Board Room, plus DCEO grant funds for renovations to the ROE and VAC entrances and the ROE restroom.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 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 Agenda
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 2, 2025

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, Jack Butler and Lindsey Workman of UKA, Moira Cronin (virtually) of Summit Ridge Energy, Maggie Poteau (virtually) of Pattern

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reviewed her report, highlighting 21 calls over the past month and only eight dogs at the Animal Control Facility.
4. Animal Control Policy & Procedure Manual Update/Approval: The committee will consider making a recommendation next month after Animal Control Warden Papin has an opportunity to review.
5. UKA Virden Wind Update/Approval: Jack Butler and Lindsey Workman of UKA described the progress of the 100 MW Virden Wind project permitted in 2024 and granted a three-month extension that expires at the end of September. Butler said UKA had originally envisioned three wind projects: the 100 MW Virden Wind project already permitted, a 150 MW Grand Prairie Wind project, and a 100 MW Pawnee Wind project. He said due to subsurface risks with the permitted Virden Wind turbine locations, continued supply chain and subsequent financial risks, UKA has determined Virden Wind and Grand Prairie Wind are no longer feasible and will let the siting permit expire at the end of September. Instead, UKA intends to combine the Virden Wind and Grand Prairie proposed footprints and develop a new 100 MW Pawnee Wind project, which the company envisions will apply for siting approval in 2027 or 2028 and be constructed 2029-2031.
6. Montgomery IL Solar 1 (Route 16) Siting Permit Update/Approval: The committee reviewed additional information requested during the July 28 public hearing for the proposed 4.99 MW community solar project just east of Litchfield on the north side of Route 16. Committee Chair Ruppert reviewed five potential conditions with Moira Cronin of Summit Ridge Energy, present virtually, including a condition adding a fully executed Community Benefits Agreement. **Motion by Beason and second by Daniels to recommend siting approval for Montgomery IL Solar 1 on parcels 10-36-300-013 and 15-02-200-029 with five conditions. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett reported projects continue in Phase I and Phase II, and the county is still awaiting an award amount for Phase III.
8. Small Biz Grant Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a spreadsheet of grant recipients showing most businesses are successfully operating. Most of the rest continue to progress toward an opening date, and only two have shown no signs of progress.

9. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert said he would like the opportunity to compare the county draft to one submitted by Summit Ridge Energy. The committee will discuss both drafts next month.
10. 2026 County Holiday Schedule Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the schedule of holidays for 2026, which included one additional holiday for General Election Day. Because the County Board had added Christmas Eve as a holiday in 2025 with the absence of an Election Day holiday, the committee discussed whether General Election Day should be added. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser said if General Election Day is not a holiday, her office would be open and required to fulfill all clerk and recorder duties at the same time. The committee discussed eliminating a different holiday from the 2026 schedule, such as Juneteenth. Committee Member Jeremy Jones said he favored adding General Election Day as a 2026 holiday without eliminating any. **Motion by Beason and second by Bergen to recommend the 2026 county holiday schedule that adds General Election Day and eliminates Juneteenth. Motion carried (Jones voted against.)**
11. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the contract is not yet ready for County Board approval.
12. Other Business: Committee Chair Ruppert noted a letter of intent from Local 1084 to begin negotiations with the bargaining unit representing office and clerical works.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:18 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 Roads & Bridges Committee Meeting Agenda

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

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: Patty Whitworth

Other Present: County Engineer Cody Greenwood, Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin

1. Public Comments: None
2. Resolution 2025-8 appropriating funds for 100% County culvert replacement on Ohlman Rd. **Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the resolution and map for 100% County culvert replacement on Oconee Road in Audubon township. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$25,000 with Montgomery County responsible for the entire cost from the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hancock to recommend approval of Resolution 2025-8 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay in full an estimated \$25,000 to replace a culvert on Ohlman Road. All in favor, motion carried.**
3. Arches Rail Trail Update/Approval: The committee discussed a plan to address deep rutting and washout on the Arches Rail Trail that will be implemented later this fall. The remediation will likely include cutting brush to allow equipment access, cutting ditches, and crowning the trail.
4. Nokomis Rd. (CH 7) Extension Project Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a proposal that would allow the existing County Road that runs through the City of Nokomis on E Union Street to be transferred to the City of Nokomis. Additionally, the existing County Road, County Road 2300 E, would be transferred from the jurisdiction of Nokomis Township to Montgomery County. The goals of this transfer is to ensure the safety of the residents and schools who utilize the existing road from heavy equipment. There had been a prior arrangement reached in 1979, however, due to the proper paperwork not being filed with the state, the prior arrangement is no longer valid. The committee will continue to research the plan, and will continue to communicate with the city and township.
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. Due to the proper paperwork not yet being received, the committee will make a recommendation next month.
6. Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported that industrial sized overhead garage doors will soon be installed on the new building. Additionally, rock is being laid and tapped down in the parking lot, and the greenspace is receiving fresh top soil and is being seeded.
7. Other Items: The committee reviewed the status of bridge construction projects and the Virden Wind project.

Motion by Ruppert, second by Corso to Pay Bills. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Bergen, second by Corso to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, September 4, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Phil Ernst and Roger Cassidy of Maintenance, Judge Christopher Hantla, Extension County Director Sara Marten, James VanOstran, Public Defender Erin Mattson, SOA Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti, Buildings & Grounds Committee Chair Mark Hughes, VAC Superintendent Cassandra Hampton, Mandy Myers and Dianne Hampton of the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Judge Hantla
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen reviewed her report, noting 119 Certificates of Error completed for tax year 2024. She noted IT has provided remote access for Property Evaluation & Tax Advisor consultants who have completed most of the field work. The office is still expecting work from two township assessors, and she continues to complete classes with the goal of passing the SOA exam by the end of the year. The committee also discussed problems the office is having filling vacancies at \$16/hour, and will discuss the recommended county starting salary next month.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ritchie noted a coal royalty payment of \$100,771.04 in July, resulting in a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,344,801.64.
5. Trustee Sale Parcel 13-06-179-001 Update/Approval: James VanOstran of Witt read from a written statement questioning the trustee sale of parcel 13-06-179-001 in the City of Witt to a bidder from California for \$8,000. VanOstran expressed doubts that the buyer, should the sale proceed, will clean up the property.
6. Transfer 13 Parcels from Trustee Sale Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the parcels, and after discussion, decided to recommend transferring all of the parcels except 13-06-179-001 to allow more time to research VanOstran's concerns. **Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth to recommend transferring 12 of 13 properties sold at the trustee sale. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Circuit Clerk Fee Resolution Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins explained language in the resolution had changed, but not fees. State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti indicated he had reviewed and approved the recommended language changes. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend the updated Circuit Clerk Fee Resolution. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: Treasurer Nikki Lohman presented a working tentative FY2026 budget that predicts a General Fund surplus of \$106,345.18. Judge Christopher Hantla and Public Defender Erin Mattson, who were unable to attend Budget Hearings, reviewed their budget proposals. Both also spoke in favor of proposed salary increases for assistant state's attorneys and the assistant public defender. Development & Personnel Committee Chair Mark Hughes spoke in favor of requested \$2/hour increases in addition to 5.5% raises for the Maintenance Department. Hughes said

in order to be budget neutral, the committee could reduce the Maintenance-County Buildings budget line item by \$8,500. Committee member Young expressed opposition to any salary increases above 5.5%. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to increase Maintenance Department salary line items an additional \$2/hour and reduce line item 520.003 by \$8,500 in the FY2026 budget. Motion carried (Young voted against).**

9. FY2026 Estimated Tax Levy Update/Approval: Extension County Director Sara Marten reviewed extension staff and programming, and presented a budget and flat levy request of \$157,000. Mandy Myers of the Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance service presented a handout detailing her board's request for a tax levy of \$149,000 representing a 67.9% increase over last year. VAC Superintendent Cassandra Hampton described her board's request for a levy of \$127,997 representing a 13.17% increase over last year. County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett said the Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance levy request was greater than the rate cap would allow them to collect. Treasurer Nikki Lohman reviewed the county levy, and the committee recommended reducing the IMRF levy by \$132,358. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to recommend a Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service FY2026 levy of \$149,000 requiring a Truth in Taxation hearing. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Daniels and second by Corso to recommend a VAC FY2026 levy of \$127,997 requiring a Truth in Taxation hearing. All in favor, motion carried (Young abstained). Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to recommend a Nokomis-Witt Area Ambulance Service FY2026 levy of \$438,943. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Young and second by Beck to recommend an estimated Montgomery County FY2026 levy of \$5,081,785. All in favor, motion carried.**
10. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: With advice from State's Attorney Affrunti, the committee will continue the discussion next month.
11. Other Business: Committee Chair Ritchie requested county starting salaries and the consideration of moving GIS from the General Fund to be placed on next month's agenda.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 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
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. IDFPR 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.

Montgomery County Board
Finance & Budget Special Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, October 23, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young
Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, Hugh Satterlee and Jodi Perkins of the Montgomery County Health Department, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, State's Attorney Brian Shaw, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, County Board Member Mark Hughes

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Member Connie Beck.
2. Public Comment: None
3. FY2026 Budget Revisions Update/Approval: Treasurer Nikki Lohman explained Bellwether's spreadsheet did not pick up the \$1,017,650.80 highlighted "General Administrative" expenses from Page 10 of the budget and include them in the "General Government" Expense Totals By Department on Page 6. This resulted in General Fund expenses on Page 1 being under-reported by \$1,017,650.80 throughout the entire budget process. After discussion, the committee recommended increasing Solar Permit Fees revenue from \$75,000 to \$110,000; decreasing Professional Services expenses from \$21,600 to \$9,600; transferring \$322,692 in ARPA interest to the General Fund; and in the Coal Fund moving \$550,000 in contingencies to Transfer Out-General Fund. Chairman Ritchie asked for the Bellwether contract to be placed on the November committee agenda.
4. Other Business: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:37 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
Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, October 30, 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, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, IS Director Curt Watkins.

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson.

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman thanked the board for their work during his absence, particularly Vice Chair Whitworth.

1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department has been working on security and audio updates funded by the court grant, updating servers, working on remote DevNet access for Township Assessors, and working at the Cress Hill Tower building replacement. The department has also converted fire and panic alarms to IP or cellular and eliminated the unneeded phone lines. Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins noted a problem with the jury 800 number that took the phone company two weeks to fix. His office is replacing that number.
2. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reported EMA/EPA Director Dan Hough was unable to attend the meeting.
3. Appointment of Montgomery County State's Attorney Update/Approval: Committee member Hughes reported a letter of recommendation from the Montgomery County Republican Central Committee is anticipated.
4. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: The Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled to next meet on Tuesday, Nov. 18, to finalize recommendations to the state.
5. IDFPR Cemetery Relief Fund Grants Update/Approval: Assistant County Board Administrator Lucas Nowlan applied for a \$20,000 grant to make improvements to the County Farm Cemetery and Neece Cemetery in Audubon Township.
6. 2026 Meeting Dates & Times Update/Approval: The committee reviewed meeting dates for 2026 and made two corrections. **Motion by Hughes and second by Murzynski to recommend approval of the 2026 Montgomery County Board meeting dates. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Kane County Juvenile Detention Intergovernmental Agreement Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson intends to sign the agreement after full board approval in November.
8. Other Business: Chairman Donaldson reminded committee members that federal SNAP benefits end Nov. 1, which may cause issues at grocery retailers.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman

1. Animal Control Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. EMA Volunteer List Update/Approval: The committee will review the list and make a recommendation.
3. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Robbins reported the contract remains with the union.
4. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: Negotiations have yet to begin.

5. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The county received notice it had been awarded just under \$1.1 million in the third phase of the grant. Chairman Donaldson set a grant committee meeting for 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
6. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee will continue to review and make a recommendation.
7. Other Business: Plunkett reported on communication from UCCI that if passed, House Amendment 3 would address battery storage as well as require changes to the county's solar and wind ordinances.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval: The committee will review a proposal and make a recommendation.
3. Cinric Painting South Porch Estimate Update/Approval: The committee will review the proposal and make a recommendation.
4. Robinson Construction Estimate on DCEO Grant Annex Work Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
5. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: The committee will discuss needs that can be addressed with the \$10,000 grant.
6. County Farm Lease Update/Approval: The current lease expires in April and Committee Chair Hughes anticipates rebidding.
7. City of Hillsboro Request to Move Electric Service Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes said the City has asked to move electric service on the southeast side of Courthouse Square from city property to county property.
8. Other Business: Committee member Whitworth reported the local DAR chapter will ask permission to mount a plaque in honor of Gen. Richard Montgomery at the Courthouse Complex.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Building Construction Update/Approval: Committee Chair Murzynski said he is planning a walk-through to establish a punch list before the next meeting.
2. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski reported the state salary recommendations for FY2026 will be on the agenda, as well as a meeting with the City of Nokomis.

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. Cyber Policy Renewal Update/Approval: Bushue anticipates presenting recommendations.
4. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: The committee will consider adding the Village of Taylor Springs for Montgomery County Highway Department sewer service.
5. Bellwether Quarterly Variance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
6. Bellwether Contract Update/Approval: This item will not need to be considered until later.
7. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: Bushue will make a recommendation.
8. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: Bushue will make a recommendation.
9. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a final recommendation.
10. FY2026 Budget Appropriations/Levies/Resolutions Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a recommendation.
11. Other Business: The committee will review an invoice from Bellwether and make a recommendation.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 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
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, November 3, 2025

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Animal Control Administrator Tricia Papin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None
3. MCEDC Update/Approval: Kaitlyn Fath reported on the last board meeting and the need to fill three open seats. She told committee members the board has developed 10 priorities and an accompanying program of work, and she has developed a new 20-page promotional booklet that will be printed, posted on the MCEDC website, and become a Power Point presentation.
4. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Tricia Papen reported many cats and long-term fosters have been adopted, and calls were down for the month. She continues to research fees and solicit proposals for enclosing the front of the facility. She also is considering changing facility hours to Tuesday through Saturday beginning Nov. 1, 2026 to better serve the public on the weekend.
5. EMA Volunteer List Update/Approval: A list has yet to be submitted.
6. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported the contract remains with the union.
7. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: County Board Administration received a wage proposal on Monday, Nov. 3. Committee Chair Ruppert will reach out to the union to continue negotiations.
8. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: DCEO informed the county it had been awarded \$1,092,450.34 in the third phase of the Energy Transition Grant. An ad hoc committee meeting has been set for 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10, with grant writer Dan Rogers to determine projects to include in the grant.
9. UCCI Summary of HA3 to SB25 (Energy Omnibus) Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a summary from UCCI regarding House Amendment 3 to SB 25, an Energy Omnibus piece of legislation that would require changes to the county solar and wind ordinances. The proposed legislation would also create a uniform assessment for commercial energy storage.
10. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee reviewed changes to the proposed Montgomery First Community Solar Benefits Agreement suggested by Summit Ridge Energy. The committee requested feedback from Local 1084 and the Montgomery County State's Attorney.

11. Other Business: The committee reviewed communication from Assured Partners that Blue Cross Blue Shield and HSHS are currently in negotiations for a new contract and have not yet reached an agreement. Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins updated the committee on the potential impact of the Clean Slate Act if it becomes law. Committee Chair Ruppert announced that Tysha Mullen had passed the required examination to become Supervisor of Assessments, and asked for the appointment to be on the November County Board agenda.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049**

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Hillsboro City Commissioner Kendra Wright, Hillsboro Mayor Don Downs, Dr. Patty Whitworth, and Trent Laughlin of Laughlin Electric

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Hillsboro Mayer Don Downs
2. Public Comments: None
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 43 items on his report, including cleaning the County Clerk's record storage in the basement of the Historic Courthouse after flooding. It was found that the gutter pipes have collapsed due to tree branches, causing repeated flooding. The line is expected to replaced and rerouted to prevent future collapse. Otis arrived on Oct. 20 and replaced the traveling cable, allowing for the elevator of the Historic Courthouse to once again be operational. Gardner Glass installed a panic bar, as well as a new full length door-hinge on the south double door entrance to the Historic Courthouse. Ernst reported his department completed 47 work orders during the past month.
4. EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval: Hillsboro City Commissioner Kendra Wright was present to give her proposal to install grant funded EV charging stations around Hillsboro. Their hope is to install one charging station near the library on Main Street and another one Courthouse Square. Wright asked if the county would be willing to allow use of county internet to process payments. Concern was raised by Beason on how often the charging station would get used. Wright reported that Montgomery County has 40 registered electric vehicles, 20 of them in Hillsboro, with an unknown amount of hybrids. Additionally, Wright said the installation of an EV charging station would have great tourism benefits, as the charging station would be mentioned on travel sites. The discussion will continue with Information Services Director Curt Watkins to discuss the internet possibility.
5. Cinric Painting South Porch Estimate Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Phil Ernst presented a proposal from Cinric Paining for \$17,900 to repair and paint the south porch of the Historic Courthouse. This will include the repair and repainting of the front porch columns, molding, trim, handrails, and second story corbels and soffit/fascia. **Motion by Beck and second by Beason to recommend approval of a proposal from Cinric Painting and Remodeling for \$17,900 to repair and paint the south porch of the Historic Courthouse in FY2026. All in favor, motion carried**
6. Robinson Construction Estimate on DCEO Grant Annex Work Update/Approval: The Committee reviewed a proposal by Robinson Construction for \$5,500 to install a new wall in the ROE office to ensure easier access to the restroom from the Courthouse Annex. The committee decided that a better use of DCEO funds would be to install key fob readers on already existing doors, thus continuing the committee's goals of installing key fob readers on all county owned buildings.
7. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett reported that he had met with Double E Upholstery on Nov. 3 to for a quote to have cushions made for the bench style seating in the back of the County Board Room. Additionally, Plunkett reported that he had inquired about a quote to retouch and refinish the tops of the old judge's bench and clerk's desk.

8. County Farm Lease Update/Approval: The lease of the County Farm is set to expire April 30, 2026. County Board Administration will update the lease to advertise for bids early next year.
9. City of Hillsboro Request to Move Electric Service Update/Approval: The City of Hillsboro would like to remove the power pole on Courthouse Square and move the electric services behind the VAC building.
10. DAR Plaque Honoring Gen. Richard Montgomery Update/Approval: Dr. Patty Whitworth, representing the Daughter of the American Revolution, asked the committee to approve the installation of an 18 by 24 inch bronze plaque to honor Revolutionary War veteran General Richard Montgomery, in whose honor Montgomery County was named. The committee discussed where the plaque could be mounted. **Motion by Beason and second by Young to allow the DAR to install a plaque honoring Gen. Richard Montgomery. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported he intends to submit a proposal for DCEO grant funding to repair or replace benches outside the Court Complex.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 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

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

1. **Public Comments:** None
2. **Pattern Energy – Shoals Renewable Wind/Solar Farm Update/Approval:** Pattern Energy, a North American energy developer, reached out to Engineer Cody Greenwood to begin discussion on installing a wind farm near the Raymond/Nokomis area. Greenwood reported that Pattern Energy has similar installations in Livingston and Kankakee counties, and thus will be in contact with their county engineer for an overview of Pattern Energy's construction process. Pattern projects to start in 2026, apply for permitting in 2027, and begin construction in 2027. Greenwood said that he will continue communicating with Pattern Energy, and hopes to have more information to present to the next committee meeting.
3. **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. Chairman Donaldson will reach out to the Mayor of Nokomis to inquire about the progress on the extension project.
4. **Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval:** Engineer Greenwood reported that he had received an updated plat showing the vacated streets of Zanesville. The updated plat map was sent to Kevin Brink of GIS to review. Greenwood stated that he hopes to have the completed and approved plats prepared for the committee next meeting.
5. **Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval:** In response to public comments at the last county board meeting, engineer Greenwood reviewed the certified drawings signed by the structural engineer, verifying that the building meets all requirements.

6. **Resolution 2025-10 appropriating funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary for FY2026 Update/Approval:** Motion by Whitworth and second by Hancock to go into closed session to for personnel reasons at 8:57 a.m. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Corso and second by Hancock to return to open session at 9:12 a.m. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Bergen and second by Corso to approve a 4% increase in the County Engineer's Salary for FY2026. All in favor, motion carried.
7. **Other Items:** none

Motion by Whitworth, second by Murzynski 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 9:15 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Thursday, November 6, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie, Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young
Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Niki Lohman, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, State's Attorney Brian Shaw, SOA Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath, Eric Braasch of Dimond Brothers Insurance

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Rob Corso.
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: Chief Deputy Tysha Mullen reported that she had passed the state exam with an 88% on the first attempt and is now qualified to be Supervisor of Assessments; the Development & Personnel Committee intends to recommend her appointment to the full board.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: Treasurer Nikki Lohman noted a coal royalty payment of \$180,946.23 in September, resulting in a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,564,728.
5. Cyber Policy Renewal Update/Approval: Eric Braasch of Dimond Brothers Insurance presented property/casualty/liability, work comp, and cyber insurance renewal packages at an increase of \$35,000 (7.18%) for FY2026. Treasurer Lohman added that the renewal premiums were within the anticipated budget. **Motion by Young and second by Beck to recommend approval of the FY2026 insurance package for a total of \$523,001. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser presented an amended Pre-Approved Payment List with the addition of the Village of Taylor Springs at the request of the Montgomery County Highway Department for sewer services at the new building. Committee Chair Ritchie asked the county clerk to review vendors on the list for possible updates next month. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Beck to recommend adding the Village of Taylor Springs to the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Bellwether Quarterly Variance Report Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the third quarter report from Bellwether. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to forward the Bellwether Quarterly Variance Report to the full board. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Bellwether Invoice/Contract Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the contract with Bellwether for FY2026 budget services, the second half invoice for \$6,000 and an emailed apology from Bellwether regarding flaws in the process. After discussion, Treasurer Lohman will prepare a voucher for the \$6,000 invoice.
9. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: The committee is awaiting a recommendation from Bushue HR.
10. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee is awaiting a recommendation from Bushue HR.

11. FY2026 Budget Update/Approval: The committee reviewed an updated budget reflecting a General Fund surplus of \$50,756.28 after changes were made to more accurately reflect expenses in the Supervisor of Assessments' office. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser reported an error in a Fees revenue line in her office that had been changed from the requested \$208,000 to \$220,000. After an Other Business discussion about adding a Victim/Witness Advocate position to the State's Attorney's office, Treasurer Lohman will email the latest budget to department heads and ask them to check and sign-off on their line items. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to recommend the FY2026 budget with validations from department heads. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to amend the FY2026 budget recommendation to reflect a \$45,000 expense and \$20,000 revenue for a Victim/Witness Advocate position in the State's Attorney's office. All in favor, motion carried.**
12. FY2026 Budget Appropriations/Levies/Resolutions Update/Approval: The committee reviewed FY2026 budget appropriations, levies, and resolutions. **Motion by Daniels and second by Whitworth to recommend adoption of F Y2026 Budget Appropriations, Levies and Resolutions as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**
13. Other Business: The committee reviewed a property transfer from the Trustee Sale, learned from Sheriff Tyson Holshouser that approximately \$25,000 in court grant invoices will not be covered by the grant, and a proposal from State's Attorney Brian Shaw to add a Victim/Witness Advocate position. The property transfer will be an action item on the full board agenda, Holshouser said he would try to pay the invoices from special funds, and Shaw said he anticipates a grant of around \$30,000 in FY2027 to partially fund the new position. Committee Chair Ritchie noted advocating for crime victims should be a priority.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 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
Property Tax Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Square, Hillsboro, IL 62049

6:00 p.m. Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Members Present: Russ Beason, Chris Daniels, Andy Ritchie, Chad Ruppert, Jesse Boehler, John Lentz
Members Absent: Vince Reincke, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen, South Litchfield Township Assessor Tom Baker, Stan Jenkins & Gary Twist of Property Evaluations & 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: Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen announced beginning Jan. 1, 2026, wooded acreage would be reclassified upon ownership transfer. She added her office will maintain the 60/40 timber/farm split, and in response to questions, affirmed establishment of a trust doesn't necessarily constitute ownership change.
4. Final Illinois Best Practices Recommendations Update/Approval: The committee reviewed previously-discussed recommendations to the State of Illinois for the study to evaluate the property tax system required by Public Act 103-1002 and added two more:
 - *Regarding the local and state appeal process, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends legal notice publication of the process is included with the required annual assessment change publication and quadrennial publication.*
 - *Because variability in assessments hampers economic development, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends a statewide assessment process that is less reliant on market values.*
 - *Because in rural areas increases in assessed value are usually driven more by market values rather than economic development, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends required Truth in Taxation public hearings when the percentage levy increase exceeds the percentage of assessed value increase from new construction.*
 - *The State of Illinois should reexamine the requirements for unit of local government to extend and increase debt ceilings.*
 - *The State of Illinois should statutorily lessen the reliance of education funding on local property tax levies.*

Motion by Ruppert and second by Boehler to make five recommendations to the State of Illinois for the study to evaluate the property tax system as required by Public Act 103-1002. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Wednesday, November 26, 2025

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

Members Absent: Mark Hughes,

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Engineer Cody Greenwood, IS Director Curt Watkins, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, 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: IS Director Curt Watkins reported responding to a power outage earlier in the day, prohibiting him from compiling a report. He said he is proud of the work his department has accomplished in the past 15 years, during which time the department has grown beyond expectations. Chairman Donaldson pledge support for the IS Department.
2. Privacy Notice Policy Update/Approval: Watkins will review the draft policy provided by Bushue HR.
3. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: EMA/EPA Director Hough described a hazardous material emergency plan grant agreement, which was signed by Chairman Donaldson before the meeting.
4. Ad Hoc Committee to Address SB3455 Wooded Acreage Assessments Update/Approval: The committee reviewed five recommendations for the study to evaluate the property tax system required by Public Act 103-1002, which will be on the board agenda for approval.
5. Farm Bureau Office Space Update/Approval: The committee reviewed an email from Montgomery County Farm Bureau Manager Katie Wilson asking if the county had any interest in leasing space that will be vacated by Lincoln Land Community College. No need was evident.
6. Mayor's Meeting Date Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson tentatively scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, at 5 p.m.
7. Other Business: Chairman Donaldson asked for a FOIA employee discussion to be added to the next agenda, and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Development & Personnel Committee: Chad Ruppert, Chairman:

1. MCEDC Update/Approval: Kaitlyn Fath will give an update.
2. Animal Control Update/Approval: Tricia Papin will give an update.
3. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: The committee will review the agreement signed by the union.
4. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert anticipates recommending an agreement.
5. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
6. Energy Omnibus Legislation Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
7. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
8. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss Bushue HR's recommendation.
9. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss Bushue HR's recommendation.

10. Other Business: None.

Buildings and Grounds: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman:

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. EV Charging Station Request Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes had asked the item to be removed from the agenda.
3. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss proposals.
4. County Farm Lease Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a recommendation.
5. Other Business: Chairman Donaldson asked property for sale on North Main Street to be added to the agenda.

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman:

1. County MFT Resolution Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski reported other agenda items will include the new building, Nokomis Road extension, bridge updates, and Leesburg vacation.

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. Montgomery County Fair Board Request Update/Approval: A request for funds to complete electrical work is anticipated.
4. 2026 IRS Mileage Rate Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss after IRS updates its rate.
5. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: The committee will review recommendations made by County Clerk Leitheiser.
6. Coal Fund Voucher Process Update/Approval: The committee will review and recommend a process for vouchering budgeted coal funds. The committee also discussed the disposition of remaining FY2025 vouchers presented for payment.
7. Other Business: None.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:51 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
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

5:00 p.m. Monday, December 1, 2025

Members Present: Chad Ruppert, Bill Bergen, Chris Daniels

Members Absent: Jeremy Jones, Russell Beason, Doug Donaldson

Others Present: County Board Administrator Mike Plunkett, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Matt Blankenship and Mike Young of Local 1084.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. Public Comment: None
3. MCEDC Update/Approval: Kaitlyn Fath was not present.
4. Animal Control Update/Approval: Animal Control Warden Tricia Papin reported 11 dogs, 2 pups, 4 cats, and 6 kittens at the facility. She and her staff responded to 25 calls in November. The committee reviewed and discussed two estimates for DCEO grant work at the facility, and asked Animal Control to solicit three separate proposals: one for the enclosure, one for the eye-wash station, and one for fencing.
5. Circuit Clerk Local 148 Contract Update/Approval: The committee reviewed the signed four-year contract with Circuit Clerk employees, calling for wage increases of 5.5% in FY2026, 5% in FY2027, 5% in FY2028, and 5% in FY2029, along with an entry level salary of \$17/hour. **Motion by Daniels and second by Bergen to recommend approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Circuit Clerk of Montgomery County and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 148, effective Dec. 1, 2025 through Nov. 30, 2029.** All in favor, motion carried.
6. SOA Local 1084 Contract Update/Approval: **Motion by Daniels and second by Bergen to enter closed session at 6:11 p.m. for personnel.** All in favor, motion carried. **Motion by Daniels and second by Bergen to re-enter open session at 6:30 p.m.** All in favor, motion carried. The committee discussed salary and starting wage issues for a three-year contract with Matt Blankenship and Mike Young of Local 1084. The union will discuss the county offer with members.
7. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee reviewed and discussed items that will be included on the Award #3 DCEO Energy Transition Grant totaling the award amount of \$1,092,450.34. Dan Rogers of First Due Consulting will have the grant application completed by the Dec. 19 deadline.
8. Energy Omnibus Legislation Update/Approval: State legislation passed by both the Illinois House and Senate that would require changes in the county wind and solar ordinances awaits the Governor's signature. The legislation also lays the framework for battery storage regulation and assessment.
9. Montgomery First Community Engagement Update/Approval: The committee has an agreement in principle with Summit Ridge, but would like to wait until the developer or contractor has made contact with local labor before signing an agreement.

10. County Starting Salary Update/Approval: The committee reviewed starting salary language suggested by Bushue HR that would institute pay grades for county positions. The committee will continue to work on the proposal.
11. Training Reimbursement Policy Update/Approval: The committee reviewed a Training Repayment Agreement policy drafted by Bushue HR that would require employees to reimburse for county out-of-pocket training expenses if the employee resigns before completing three years of employment. **Motion by Daniels and second by Bergen to recommend the Montgomery County Training Repayment Agreement. All in favor, motion carried.**
12. Other Business: The committee discussed a proposal from Hurst-Rosche for review of construction documents for Montgomery County Solar on Route 16 east of Litchfield for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500. Committee Chair Ruppert will ask for approval at the full board meeting.

Motion to pay the bills by Daniels and second by Bergen. All in favor, motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:39 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 Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049**

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Members Present: Mark Hughes, Connie Beck, Russell Beason, Keith Hancock, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Banee Ulrici from the Probation Office

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Mark Hughes.
2. Public Comments: None
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed the 49 items on his report, including Bondurant Plumbing replacing a broken drainage pipe on the west side of the Historic Courthouse. This should relieve the continuous flooding in the County Clerk's record storage in the basement of the Historic Courthouse. Ellinger Window Cleaners finished cleaning the windows of the Courthouse Complex. Central Roofing repaired the gutters on the roof of Historic Court House's porch. The Courthouse Complex's three elevators were inspected on Dec. 1. Ernst reported his department completed 27 work orders during the past month.
4. DCEO County Board Room Grant Update/Approval: Mike Plunkett of the County Board Admin presented the committee with Double E Upholstery's quote of \$4,023.85 to fabricate cushions for the bench style seating in the back of the County Board Room. The committee reviewed the proposed elements of the cushions, including fabric samples. **Motion by Beason and second by Hancock to recommend Double E Upholstery's quote of \$4,023.85 to fabricate cushions for the bench style seating in the back of the County Board Room. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. County Farm Lease Update/Approval: Plunkett updated the lease to reflect the Committee's wishes to have rent payments due twice each year; previously the payment was once a year. The committee agreed to begin advertising this week, and will open bids at the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2025.
6. 127 N. Main Street Property Update/Approval: 127 North Main Street, currently RehabEdge, was recently put on the market. Banee Ulrici of the Probation Office presented her proposal for the county to buy the 127 North Main street property for use by the Probation Office. Ulrici expressed that the probation office's services are expanding and now shares space with EMA in the basement of the Courthouse Complex. Probation needs a space where they can continue expanding services related to mental health and drug court. The office is also in need of a secure space where they can ensure confidentiality. Although concern was raised about the price of upkeep and furnishing a new building, Ulrici explained that the grant funds they currently receive may relieve some of the cost. Hughes and Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins will develop a proposal for the committee to review next month.
7. Other Business: None

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 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, December 3, 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: Lucas Nowlan of County Board Admin, County Engineer Cody Greenwood, Assistant Engineer Dustin Sefton

1. Public Comments: None

2. Irresponsible Contractor on Township Bridge Projects Update/Approval: Engineer Cody Greenwood presented a list of past and continuing issues observed with Yamnitz & Associates that have affected project performance, compliance, and overall trust. This includes manipulating materials to give the appearance they were installed properly, when in reality only minimal quantities were used. Additionally, the contractor lacks appropriate equipment, refuses to hire local labor, and traffic control is maintained only when given official notification. The committee discussed possible ways to avoid this problem moving forward, including not accepting any future bids from Yamnitz & Associates.

3. Resolution 2026-01, 2026 County MFT Resolution Update/Approval: The resolution appropriates \$1.2 million in County Motor Fuel Tax, the same amount as last year. **Motion by Bergen and second by Corso to recommend approval of the 2026 County Motor Fuel Tax Resolution 2026-01 for \$1.2 million. All in favor, motion carried.**

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 and improving the road to Route 16 to divert truck traffic from city streets. In hopes of receiving grant funding from the state, the committee agreed to move forward with a proposal from an engineering firm to increase the capacity of the road to present at next month's committee and full board meetings. Both Engineer Greenwood and committee member Hancock expressed when deciding who to award funding, that the State of Illinois prioritizes projects that are ready to start.

5. Vacating Streets and Alleys in Zanesville Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood presented the approved petition showing the vacated streets of Zanesville. Greenwood sent the petition to the State's Attorney for final review. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend the Petition to Vacate Streets and Alleys in Zanesville on the contingency the States Attorney has no objections to the petition. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. Heavy Equipment Shed Update/Approval: Engineer Greenwood reported that the recent heavy snow had revealed a few holes that were subsequently patched. Greenwood hopes to finalize a list of final jobs needing to be completed soon.

7. **Section 23-05122-00-PV – Fillmore Consolidated Township E. 24th Road Improvement Project – Preliminary Engineering Agreement Update/Approval:** Fillmore Consolidated Township received funding to improve Township East 24th Road, which routinely floods as it runs along a creek bottom. Engineer Greenwood reported that since no engineering drawings have been obtained, he will report next month on any further updates.
8. **Other Items:** The committee discussed the possibility of using coal funds to purchase a new tandem truck snow plow to replace an aging truck. The committee agreed to present a resolution to next month's committee and full board meetings. The committee also discussed writing a mailbox policy for when a person's mailbox gets damaged as a result of snow plowing.

Motion by Ruppert, second by Hancock to pay bills. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Ruppert, second by Corso to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett as deputized by the Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser

Montgomery County Board
Finance & Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:33 a.m. Thursday, December 4, 2025

Members Present: Andy Ritchie (arrived at 8:50 a.m.), Connie Beck, Rob Corso, Chris Daniels, Dr. Patty Whitworth, Evan Young

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Dr. Whitworth.
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen reported her office was caught up on the 2025 payable 2026 tax cycle, assessment change notices were published and mailed on Dec. 4, a Township Assessor meeting had been scheduled for Dec. 15, and a Board of Review meeting had been scheduled for Jan. 9. She also informed the committee she had promoted Michaela Gray to the Chief Deputy position.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: Committee Vice Chair Beck noted an October payment of \$188,383.16 and a total Coal Fund balance of \$10,778,950.36.
5. Montgomery County Fair Board Request Update/Approval: After a request for \$75,000 for electrical upgrades was deemed not eligible for the next round of DCEO grant funding, the Montgomery County Fair Board had asked to be on the committee agenda. No one from the fair board was present.
6. 2026 IRS Mileage Rate Update/Approval: The new IRS mileage rate had not been published by meeting time.
7. Pre-Approved Payment List Update/Approval: County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser presented the results of her requested review of the Pre-Approved Payment List, with 12 items suggested for removal for non-use, and the addition of several notes of explanation. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Daniels to recommend approval of changes to the Pre-Approved Payment List. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Coal Fund Voucher Process Update/Approval: The committee discussed the issue created when Department Heads vouchered money out of Coal Fund 375 in the final week of FY2025. County Clerk Leitheiser said all Coal Fund vouchers used to go through the Finance & Budget Committee, and the committee expressed a desire to return to that procedure. The committee also discussed establishing a procedure for Department Heads and Office Holders to request budgeted expenses from Coal Fund 375, and Leitheiser suggested addressing that in the County Board Rules of Order. **Motion by Young and second by Daniels to recommend all Coal Fund 375 requests to be approved by the Finance & Budget Committee and vouchers presented for payment before the committee's November meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to recommend a Coal Fund 375 expense procedure be established in the Montgomery County Board Rules of Order. All in favor, motion carried.**

9. Other Business: Treasurer Nikki Lohman presented a PTAX-451 form that will need approved by the County Board for partial reimbursement of the Supervisor of Assessments salary, and described the ICRMT request to establish a safety committee in 2026. Successful completion of their HELP program will result in a 10% reduction in work comp insurance premiums. Committee member Patty Whitworth asked the committee to anticipate a January request from the Roads & Bridges Committee to use coal funds to purchase a new snow plow truck. MCEDC Director Kaitlynn Fath reported on a potential \$10,000 software program that will help the corporation with business and population retention, assess community health care needs, and numerous other benefits. She also expressed an interest in revitalizing the MCEDC Board of Directors, and at the suggestion of Committee Chair Ritchie, potentially the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.