

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 Grosenheider, 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 Affrunti, 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 Affrunti 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 Affrunti 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. Affrunti 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.