

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, April 30, 2026

Members Present: Doug Donaldson, Mark Hughes (left at 9:25 a.m.), Ethan Murzynski, Connie Beck, Chad Ruppert, Dr. Patty Whitworth (arrived at 9:15 a.m.)

Members Absent: Chad Ruppert

Others Present: Mike Plunkett and Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, EMA/EPA/911 Director Dan Hough, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen, Engineer Cody Greenwood, Information Services Director Curt Watkins, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser

Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Chairman Donaldson

Public Comments: None

Coordinating Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. Montgomery County 4-H Youth Leadership Team Update/Approval: No one was present.
2. Information Systems Report Update/Approval: IS Director Curt Watkins reported his department has been working on updating door access in the Court Complex and will finish PC installs this week. He will soon have a date for switching to the new phone system, has been involved in planning for use of the building at 127 N. Main, and the move into the new building at the Cress Hill tower will begin the week of May 11. He also intends to have a department manpower request ready for budget hearings.
3. EMA/EPA Report Update/Approval: EMA/EPA/911 Director Dan Hough distributed an action report from the March 30 tabletop exercise. He has been busy responding to weather events this spring, and will soon be meeting with the National Weather Service to finalize weather radio transmitter placement.
4. HELP Safety Committee Update/Approval: The committee will next meet on Tuesday, May 12. **Motion by Donaldson and second by Beck to recommend approval of the Montgomery County Slip/Trip/Fall Prevention Policy and the Montgomery County Safe Lifting Policy pending HELP Safety Committee review. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. Declare County Board District 5 Vacancy Update/Approval: **Motion by Donaldson and second by Murzynski to declare a vacancy in County Board District 5. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. Appointment to County Board District 5 Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reported the Montgomery County Republican Central Committee will be recommending Cody Gudgel to fill the vacancy.
7. Appointment to County Board District 7 Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson reported no recommendation from the Montgomery County Republican Central Committee to fill the vacancy.
8. Committee Assignments Update/Approval: Chairman Donaldson will ask the board to approve committee reassignments based on the vacancies in Districts 5 and 7 and the appointments to fill those vacancies.
9. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins recapped legislative changes that will impact his office. Later in the meeting, Vice Chair Whitworth reported on the Elysian sequestration meeting she attended in Nokomis.

Development & Personnel Committee: Doug Donaldson, Board Chairman

1. MCEDC Update/Approval: Kaitlyn Fath will report to the committee.
2. Animal Control Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.

3. Surplus Ram 1500 Bid Opening Update/Approval: The committee will open bids and make a recommendation.
4. MCSO Additional CO Request Update/Approval: The committee will review a request from Sheriff Holshouser and make a recommendation.
5. Route 66 Pilot Corridor Update/Approval: John Warga will present a plan regarding a recreational trail on Historic Route 66 between Litchfield and Mt. Olive.
6. Geronimo Power Update/Approval: Jack Haley will update the committee on a 200MW solar project at a later meeting.
7. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
8. Other Business: The committee will review a Code of Conduct Resolution and make a recommendation. Circuit Clerk Robbins reported he is advertising to fill a vacancy.

Buildings and Grounds: Mark Hughes, Chairman

1. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: The committee will review and discuss.
2. EMA Building Bid Opening Update/Approval: The committee will open bids.
3. 127 N. Main Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes reported boring for internet access began on Thursday, April 30.
4. Other Business: The committee will review a request by Hillsboro Health to park a food truck on the Court Complex parking lot for a Friday, May 8, event during evening hours

Roads and Bridges Committee: Ethan Murzynski, Chairman

1. Other Business: Committee Chair Murzynski anticipates agenda items including two 50/50 pipe culvert projects, township and county oil lettings, and the Road Use Agreement for Plains Solar. The Highway Department is also advertising to fill a vacancy.

Finance and Budget Committee: Connie Beck, Chairwoman

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. MCEDC Update/Approval: Kaitlyn Fath will make a presentation.
4. Fund 375 Purchases Update/Approval: The committee will review and recommend. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser reminded the committee according to County Board Rules of Order, Fund 375 requests should begin with submissions to the County Board Administration office.
5. Energy Contract Update/Approval: The committee will review and make a recommendation.
6. FY2027 Wage Changes & Salary Adjustments Update/Approval: The committee will discuss and make a recommendation.
7. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported he will be requesting additional personnel for FY2027 due to Clean Slate Act requirements.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 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, May 4, 2026

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

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

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Ruppert.
2. MCEDC Update/Approval: Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath reviewed her monthly report, which included attending 24 meetings and work on all 11 priorities. She also noted the community calendar is live on the MCEDC website and added she has been working on encouraging more AT&T cell towers. Fath also reviewed the MCEDC annual report, noting encouraging data for local entrepreneurship.
3. Animal Control Update/Approval: Warden Tricia Papin reported 16 dogs and 15 cats at Animal Control. The Kitten Yoga event went well, and the front porch of the building has been framed and the project is pending the arrival of doors.
4. Surplus Ram 1500 Bid Opening Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert opened three sealed bids for the surplus Animal Control 2008 Ram 1500: Rick Lane for \$1,515.05; Peter McDonalds for \$1,201.50; and Roger Cassidy for \$927. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to sell the surplus 2008 Ram 1500 to Rick Lane for \$1,515.05. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. Health Insurance Renewal Update/Approval: Tony Johnston of Assured Partners Gallagher reported with skyrocketing insurance costs, renewals have been between at increases between 18% and 28%. With Montgomery County's loss ratio currently running at 127% he cautioned the board to anticipate a renewal quote at an increase of 30-40%. Renewal numbers should be available in early September, and the board should anticipate making a final decision at the October meeting.
6. MCSO Additional CO Request Update/Approval: Sheriff Tyson Holshouser requested another full-time jailer and moving a part-time jailer to full-time, citing state inspection failures for staffing only one jailer on the midnight shift. Holshouser also requested adding an administrative assistant, citing extensive FOIA requests and the need for secretarial back-up. The committee discussed options for 708 and 911 helping with costs, and deferred to the Finance & Budget Committee as to whether any of the requested staff can be added in FY2026 or FY2027. **Motion by Beason and second by Jones to recommend adding one-and-a-half Correctional Officers and one Administrative Assistant position at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office pending Finance & Budget Committee approval. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Route 66 Pilot Corridor Update/Approval: John Warga of Mt. Olive presented packets to committee members requesting the County Board authorize a feasibility study to determine if 9.35 miles of Historic Route 66 between Litchfield and Mt. Olive could be repurposed as a recreational trail. Warga envisioned construction costs ranging from \$600,000 a mile to \$3 million a mile, but suggested that

could be accomplished by layering state and federal grants. His report also emphasized possible economic and public health impacts. Committee Chair Ruppert said the abandoned right-of-way is the property of the State of Illinois, and suggested Warga first seek state input.

8. Geronimo Power Update/Approval: Jack Haley rescheduled for the July meeting.
9. DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval: The committee reviewed follow-up letters sent to seven Small Biz Grant recipients who have yet to open. The county is awaiting the finalization of state paperwork that would allow future Small Biz Grant awards.
10. Code of Conduct for Land Agents Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert described a draft Resolution Establishing a County-Wide Code of Conduct for Land Agents and Energy Project Representatives. Ruppert said the resolution references the in-force criminal code regarding trespassing, and sets out a code of conduct similar to the one posted on Pattern's website, a no-contact list requirement, mandatory registration, mandatory recording of agreements, and enforcement. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser raised questions on her role in the resolution regarding mandatory registration, maps, and mandatory recording. Committee member Beason said he agreed with the resolution in concept, but wanted to make sure the document was reviewed by the State's Attorney and County Clerk. **Motion by Jones and second by Daniels to recommend the Resolution Establishing a County-Wide Code of Conduct for Land Agents and Energy Project Representatives pending State's Attorney and office holder review. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. The Shoals Wind Project Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert noted no new lease agreements have been recorded, and pointed out the President's plan to halt all wind projects due to national security concerns regarding potential radio interference. The committee also discussed the 1.5 mile municipal Extra Territorial Jurisdiction that can be exercised by communities with zoning ordinances.
12. Elm Lawn Solar Public Hearing Reminder Update/Approval: Committee Chair Ruppert reminded the committee of the public hearing set for 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, in the County Board Room at the Historic Courthouse.
13. Other Business: Circuit Clerk Robbins informed the committee he will need at least one new deputy clerk in FY2027 for Clean Slate Act requirements. Committee Chair Ruppert read an email reporting UKA is no longer pursuing any wind projects in Montgomery County.

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

Motion to Adjourn by Daniels and second by Beason. 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
County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Historic Courthouse
#1 Courthouse Sq. Hillsboro, IL 62049

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 5, 2026

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, EMA/EPA/911 Director Dan Hough, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Board member Ethan Murzynski

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Hughes.
2. Public Comments: None
3. Maintenance Report Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Phil Ernst reviewed many of the 101 items on his report, including problems with both riding mowers and an issue with the Historic Courthouse boiler that filled the basement with smoke on Saturday, May 2. The boiler has been shut down and is scheduled to be replaced in this year's DCEO Energy Transition Grant. Ernst also reported completing 65 work orders in April, and noted Cinric will be painting in the County Board Room and on the south porch of the Historic Courthouse beginning May 20.
4. EMA Building Bid Opening Update/Approval: Committee Chair Hughes and Administrator Plunkett opened five bids for the first phase of work on the EMA building at the Highway Department. Bids were received from Pro-Bilt for \$193,200; from Weiss Construction for \$224,747.80; from Thomas Hapner Construction for \$150,187.19; from Laughlin Electric for electric only for \$57,500; and from Bondurant Plumbing for plumbing only for \$49,523.18. EMA/EPA/911 Director Hough and County Board member Ethan Murzynski reviewed the three complete bids, and later in the meeting reported the low bidder appeared to meet the bid requirements. Hough noted the grant reimbursement amount will be \$144,749 and believes he can pay the difference from his budget. **Motion by Beason and second by Hancock to recommend awarding the low bid of \$150,187.19 to Thomas Hapner Construction of Hillsboro for the first phase of work on the EMA building. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. 127 N. Main Update/Approval: Maintenance Director Ernst reported contracting an engineer who said the building meets ADA compliance as is due to grandfathering status. He also described completed work at the building and quotes totaling \$27,743.73 for primarily for electric, lighting, sewer, and HVAC work. Later in the meeting, the committee discussed a budget of \$100,000 for repairs and upgrades to the building. **Motion by Hancock and second by Beck to enter closed session for possible litigation at 9:14 a.m. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Beck and second by Hughes to return to open session at 9:26 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. Hillsboro Health Request for Parking Lot May 8 Update/Approval: **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to allow Hillsboro Health to use the Courthouse Complex parking lot for a food truck from 6-9 p.m. Friday, May 8. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. Other Business: None

Motion to pay the bills by Beck 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 9:32 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

Roads & Bridges Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Time: 8:30 AM – County Highway Department

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

Members Absent: None

Other Present: Board Member Evan Young, Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, various township road commissioners

1. **Public Comments:** None

1. **County 2026 MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Ethan Murzynski opened and reviewed the bids for 2026 County MFT oil letting. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Ruppert to recommend the low bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

2. **Township 2026 MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski opened and reviewed the bids for 2026 Township MFT oil letting. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend the low bids as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

3. **Plains Solar Road Use Agreement Update/Approval:** Committee Chair Murzynski reported that both the State's Attorney Brian Shaw and Engineer Cody Greenwood had reviewed the Road Use Agreement, however, both parties had not reached an agreement on the amount to be taken out on the Surety Bond. Additionally, the committee expressed concern that the entrance point proposed in the road use agreement may pose a safety concern. Board member Evan Young explained that the entrance point is surrounded by large trees and dense underbrush, making visibility limited. The committee agreed to take no action on the road use agreement until next month to continue discussing potential ways to increase visibility at the entrance point from the county road.

4. **New Western Star Plow Truck Update/Approval:** The first of two 2027 Western Star 47X Tandem Dump Trucks with snow plow and tailgate spreader has arrived in Troy. Engineer Greenwood has already inspected and approved the new truck, which will be sent off to have the snow plow and tailgate spreader attached. Additionally, Murzynski reported that the second 2027 Western Star Truck should arrive this summer with both ready for road use by the fall of 2026.

5. **Guardrail Damage from Uninsured Motorist Update/Approval:** An uninsured motorist recently damaged a guardrail in Walshville Township. Murzynski reported that while he was in talks with the State's Attorney to see if we will get any compensation, it is unlikely.

6. **Resolution 2026-06 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on N. 23rd Ave., Raymond/Rountree Township Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on North 23rd Ave. in Raymond and Rountree Townships. Murzynski noted that since the culvert lies nearly on the border between Raymond and Rountree Townships, the townships have agreed to split their half of the culvert replacement. The cost of the project is estimated at \$16,000 with Montgomery County responsible for half the cost, Raymond Road District responsible for 34.15%, and Rountree Road District responsible for 15.85%. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of Resolution 2026-06 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay one-half of an estimated \$16,000 project to replace the Culvert on North 23rd Ave in Raymond and Rountree Townships. All in favor, motion carried.**

7. **Resolution 2026-07 appropriating funds for 50/50 culvert replacement on E. 17th Rd., Irving Township Update/Approval:** The committee reviewed the resolution and map for a 50/50 culvert replacement on East 17th road in Irving Township. The cost of the project is estimated at \$35,000 with Montgomery County responsible for half the cost and Irving Road District responsible for the other half. **Motion by Hancock and second by Ruppert to recommend approval of Resolution 2026-07 to appropriate funds from the County Aid to Bridge Fund to pay one-half of an estimated \$35,000 project to replace the Culvert on East 17th Road in Irving Township. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. **Secretary/Payroll Clerk Resignation Update/Approval:** Due to the recent departure of the front lobby secretary at the Highway Department, the search has begun for a replacement. Murzynki reported that the job notice has been posted in several publications, noting that several applications have already been submitted.
9. **Other Items:** None

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 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

8:34 a.m. Thursday, May 7, 2026

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

Members Absent: Doug Donaldson

Others Present: Mike Plunkett & Lucas Nowlan of County Board Administration, Development & Personnel Committee Chair Chad Ruppert, Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins, County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser, Maintenance Director Phil Ernst, Treasurer Nikki Lohman, Sheriff Tyson Holshouser, Supervisor of Assessments Tysha Mullen, MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath

1. Pledge of Allegiance: was led by Committee Chair Beck.
2. Public Comment: None
3. SOA Office Update/Approval: SOA Mullen reported her office has rolled to the County Clerk, who is close to completion.
4. Capital Improvement & Coal Fund Reports Update/Approval: The committee noted a March royalty payment of \$177,964.86 bringing the Coal Fund balance to \$10.989 million.
5. MCEDC Update/Approval: MCEDC Executive Director Kaitlyn Fath presented a line-by-line explanation of the corporation's proposed FY2027 budget, including two potential revenue options that would require from \$1 per capita to \$2.25 per capita contributions from public members. Fath said she believes the current funding model, which includes a \$15,000 annual county contribution, is not sustainable. Both the Finance & Budget Committee and the Development & Personnel Committee will continue to research heading into the county FY2027 budget cycle.
6. Frerichs ICash Update/Approval: Responding to a letter from Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs' Unclaimed Property division, Treasurer Nikki Lohman has filed claim forms requesting nearly \$6,000 owed to Montgomery County.
7. Fund 375 Purchases Update/Approval: The committee reviewed monthly requests from Coal Fund 375, and considered a recommendation by the Buildings & Grounds Committee to set a budget not to exceed \$100,000 from Coal Fund 375 for repairs and improvements at 127 N. Main Street. **Motion by Young and second by Whitworth to recommend approval of Coal Fund 375 expenditures of \$6,300 to Reid Baugher Century 21 Realty; \$450 to Lipe Architecture; \$273.47 to Ace Hardware; \$2,060 to Dan Heise Plumbing; \$11.97 to Ace Hardware; \$93.75 to Mac's Fire & Safety; \$91.92 to Johnston Fire & Safety; \$21,312.05 to GTSI; \$1,672.92 to Motorola; \$594.97 to Paragon Micro; and \$7,400 to replace the transmission in the Sheriff's vehicle. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Young and second by Corso to approve a Coal Fund 375 budget not to exceed \$100,000 for repairs and improvements to 127 N. Main Street. All in favor, motion carried.**
8. Energy Contract Update/Approval: After the County Board elected not to approve the new 36-month energy contract at the April meeting so Highway Department and Health Department accounts could be removed, the committee reviewed a new 36-month contract without those accounts, signed by County Board Administration on April 17. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to recommend approval of a 36-month contract with Direct Energy for electricity and natural gas. All in favor, motion carried.**

9. FY2027 Wage Changes & Salary Adjustments Update/Approval: The committee continued a discussion begun last month to recommend FY2027 wage increases for county employees not covered by collective bargaining. Development & Personnel Committee Chair Chad Ruppert noted that although three union contracts currently in place require 5% wage increases in FY2027, those contracts were catching up with previous higher non-union raises. He also pointed out health insurance premiums are expected to increase 30-40% in FY2027, which may require an impact on employee contributions. Committee member Evan Young suggested 4.5% wage increases, which are greater than the current Central Illinois cost of living at 4%. County Clerk Sandy Leitheiser asked the committee to recommend 5% raises, equal to most current union contracts, while Committee Chair Beck and County Board Vice Chair Whitworth both expressed preferences for 5% raises. **Motion by Whitworth and second by Corso to recommend 5% increases for non-union county employees. All in favor, motion carried.**
10. Other Business: Sheriff Holshouser informed the committee about transmission problems in his vehicle, and Circuit Clerk Robbins informed the committee about potential additional staff needed to comply with the Clean Slate Act.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Mike Plunkett, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.