

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, January 10th, 2023 at 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, January 10th, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken - 14 members present, 0 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Bill Bergen, Doug Donaldson, Ken Folkerts, Mark Hughes, Jeremy Jones, David Loucks, Gene Miles, Ethan Murzynski, Andy Ritchie, Bob Sneed, Patty Whitworth and Evan Young

Members Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member David Loucks.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Motion by Whitworth and second by Young to approve the Mileage and Per Diem. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Miles, Murzynski, Ritchie, Sneed, Whitworth and Young. **All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to approve the Minutes of the Previous Regular County Board Meeting held on Tuesday, December 13th, 2022. **All in favor, motion carried.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Animal Control Report** -- Emily Gerl – No December report was submitted.
- 2. Circuit Clerk's Report** – Daniel Robbins was present for questions – report was submitted. Robbins reported the auditors have finished auditing his office, and he has submitted for another technology grant.
- 3. Coroner's Report** – Randy Leetham was present for questions – report was submitted.
- 4. County Clerk and Recorder's Report** – Sandy Leitheiser was present for questions - report was submitted.
- 5. Health & TB Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee was present for questions – report was submitted.
- 6. Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood was present for questions – report was submitted.
- 7. Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici was not present – No report was submitted.
- 8. Public Defender's Report** – Erin Mattson was not present — No report was submitted.
- 9. ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman was not present—report was submitted.
- 10. Sheriff's Report** – Rick Robbins was present for questions – report was submitted.
- 11. SOA Report** – Cindy Laurent was not present– Report was submitted.
- 12. State's Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions – Report was submitted. Affrunti stated the County was successful in their lawsuit stopping the no cash bail bill. He said he doesn't expect the Supreme Court to hear arguments on this bill until March, 2023.
- 13. Treasurer's Report** – Nikki Lohman was present for questions – Report was submitted.
- 14. V.A.C. Report** – Dave Strowmatt was present for questions – Report was submitted. Strowmatt stated it was his last meeting as Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance

Commission. He thanked the board leadership for their support throughout his tenure. He said Cassandra Hampton will officially take over as superintendent February 1, 2023, and he is confident the board will continue to support her. Members gave Strowmatt a round of applause in appreciation for his dedicated years of service.

APPROVAL OF 11 ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Beck and second by Miles to approve the 11 items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **708 Board** – Murzynski reported the next meeting will be held in February.
- **CEFS Board** – Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
- **911 Board** – Bergen stated there is nothing new to report.
- **Health Department** – Whitworth reported they will meet later this month.
- **IL Association of County Officials** – Bergen stated there is nothing new to report.
- **MCEDC** – Hughes reported there will be a meeting on February 9, 2023, and he will have a report next month.
- **Planning Commission** – Ritchie reported their next meeting will be scheduled after coordinating with Valerie Belusko.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Folkerts reported they are supposed to meet in February, 2023.
- **UCCI** – Miles reported they will meet later this month.
- **U of I** – Beck reported they will meet on March 16, 2023.
- **WCDC** – Jones stated there is nothing new to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by Chairman Doug Donaldson:

1. **Information Systems Report Update:** Donaldson reported Information Systems is performing end of the year maintenance. He also reported Manager Curt Watkins hired a new employee (Zeke Philpot) to replace Mat Marietta, and he began on January 3rd, 2023.
2. **EMA Report Update:** Donaldson reported EMA dealt with several incidents related to the cold weather toward the end of 2022. He also reported EMA Assistant Coordinator Joe Gasparich stated the new Hazard Mitigation Grant plan should be done by the end of 2023. EMA Coordinator Kevin Schott was in attendance and reported their next meeting is scheduled for February 8th at 6:30 p.m.
3. **Committee Structure Update:** Donaldson stated there is nothing new to report and said the Rules committee will discuss future committee structure during their meeting to be held on January 18th.
4. **Carbon Capture and Storage Update:** Donaldson reported he has been in contact with Jim Prescott of the Heartland Greenway carbon sequestration project about hosting first responder training closer to Montgomery County since the closest training currently offered is located in Jacksonville, Illinois.

5. **EPA Report Update:** EPA Administrator Christine Daniels reported the electronics recycling drives for 2023 have been scheduled for the spring and fall.
6. **Rules Committee Meeting Update:** Donaldson reported the Rules Committee will meet on January 18th, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
7. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update:** Donaldson said there is nothing new to report.
8. **Resolution 2023-01 Opposing HB 5855 Protect Illinois Communities Act Approval:** State's Attorney Affrunti stated the board may want to amend the proposed Resolution to not order the County Clerk to send certified copies to all members of the Illinois General Assembly because it will cost the county more money than is necessary. He said the resolution can be amended so certified copies could be sent only to the leaders of the Senate and House, as well as the office of the Governor. **Motion by Beck and second by Whitworth to amend Resolution 2023-01 to state certified letters be sent to the Governor and Senate and House leaders in the Illinois General Assembly and not sent to all members of the Illinois General Assembly. All in favor, motion carried. Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to approve Resolution 2023-01 as amended opposing HB 5855 Protect Illinois Communities Act. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy of Resolution, see Resolution Book 19, pages 253-254).**

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **MCEDC Update:** Hughes stated there is nothing new to report.
2. **Heartland Greenway Carbon Sequestration Project and Development Agreement Update:** Hughes reported a few residents from the northeastern part of the county attended the committee meeting and spoke about the carbon sequestration project. He said he knows some of those individuals are in attendance at this meeting.
3. **Macoupin/CIPT Public Transportation Update:** Hughes reported Macoupin County Health Department Director Kent Tarro attended the meeting to present information about Macoupin County Public Transportation. He stated Montgomery County has an Intergovernmental Agreement with CEFS, which includes Central Illinois Public Transit (CIPT). Hughes said it is too late to change affiliation for public transportation this year, but the committee will research this topic in preparation for next year.
4. **Temporary Supervisor of Assessments Update:** Hughes reported Cindy Laurent's appointment as temporary Supervisor of Assessments was a one-time, 60-day appointment, which expires at the end of January. He stated Laurent will still be able to run the office after the appointment expires, but she won't be able to sign official documents related to the abstract or Board of Review. Hughes said the County Board Chairman will sign those official documents until a certified Supervisor of Assessments is in place.
5. **DCEO Energy Community Reinvestment Act Grant Approval:** Hughes reported the County Board will be applying for the DCEO Illinois Energy Community Reinvestment Act Grant. He said Montgomery County is eligible to apply for this grant due to the Coffeen Power Plant closure in 2019 and because it is located in an unincorporated part of the County. Hughes said other units of government are eligible to apply for the grant, but they need to either partner with the County Board in our application or receive a letter of support from the County Board. Hughes reported the committee is recommending

including the taxing districts from the 2021 Vistra Tax bill who want to participate as part of the County application while giving other taxing districts in the county who wish to apply a letter of support. **Motion by Hughes and second by Beck to include the following participating taxing districts in the County application, with Montgomery County serving as the lead entity, for the Energy Community Reinvestment Act Grant: Montgomery County Community Mental Health, Montgomery County Senior Social Services, Lincoln Land Community College, Hillsboro Area Public Library, Multi Township Assessor Grisham-Walshville-East Fork, East Fork Road District, and East Fork Township. All in favor, motion carried.**

6. **Approve Hiring Consultant/Grant Writer for DCEO Energy Community Reinvestment Act Grant Approval:** Hughes reported the committee recommends the County Board hire Dan Rogers to write the grant at \$38.00 per hour. **Motion by Hughes and second by Whitworth to hire Dan Rogers to write the DCEO Energy Community Reinvestment Act grant at \$38.00 per hour.** Young asked how the County will pay Rogers. State's Attorney Affrunti said the cost of hiring the grant writer can be included in the grant application for reimbursement. Young asked how he would be paid if the County is not awarded the grant. Affrunti said the county would then have to pay for his salary from a separate fund. **All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **Jail Inspection Report Update:** Hughes reported the Sheriff received the Jail Inspection Report, and it is available for board members to read if they would like.

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

1. **Assistant Public Defender Position Update:** Ritchie reported Judge Jim Roberts needs additional public defender staff to take on an increased workload, and he has hired Wes Poggenpohl for this purpose. Ritchie said Poggenpohl will make more than the budgeted \$70,000, but the overall county budgeted amount will not change since the judge's budget will also be used for this salary.
2. **SOA Report Update:** Ritchie reported Interim Supervisor of Assessments Cindy Laurent informed the committee the tentative abstract was sent to IDOR. He also said Laurent continues to train and guide staff on a daily basis.
3. **Approve Extending Salary for Interim Supervisor of Assessments for February 2023 Approval:** Ritchie reported Laurent's appointment ends at the end of January, but she will still be running the SOA office even after that date expires. He said because Laurent will be running the office, the Finance and Budget Committee recommends she be paid the same salary she has been making as interim Supervisor of Assessments through February. Ritchie stated this is being addressed now because Kendra Niehaus, who hopes to become the certified Supervisor of Assessments, takes the state exam January 17th, 2023. Laurent told the committee if Niehaus passes the exam, she still will not likely be certified until February and will still have to be trained. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Hughes to approve extending and increasing Cindy Laurent's temporary salary through February 2023. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Capital Improvement Fund Reports Update:** Ritchie stated there is nothing new to report.

5. **IMRF Update:** Ritchie reported Treasurer Lohman informed the committee there is an employee under senior services who is working seven hours a day, which means they have a 35-hour work week and are IMRF eligible. Lohman stated she has taken care of this matter.
6. **FY 2022 Audit Update:** Ritchie reported the auditors have been on site working. He said the County is fortunate to have found auditors because it is very difficult to find companies to do government audits.
7. **Approve IRS Mileage Rate Increase Approval:** Motion by Ritchie and second by Whitworth to approve the IRS Mileage Rate Increase from 62.5 cents per mile to 65.5 cents per mile, effective January 11, 2023. All in favor, motion carried.
8. **Approve Preapproved Vendor List with Additions of Huels Oil Company and Schreiber Veterinary Services, and Removal of Farmers Oil Company Approval:** Motion by Ritchie and second by Miles to approve the Preapproved Vendor List as presented with the additions of Huels Oil Company and Schreiber Veterinary Services of Sorento, Illinois and the removal of Farmers Oil Company. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, pages 255-256).
9. **Digitizing Collectors Books for Treasurer's Office Approval:** Ritchie reported this is one of the board-approved county ARPA projects. Motion by Ritchie and second by Beason to approve digitizing the collector's books and sign the contract with US Imaging, Inc. All in favor, motion carried.
10. **Ordinance 2023-02 to Authorize ARPA Funds to Digitize Collectors Books for the Treasurer's Office Approval:** Motion by Ritchie and second by Sneed to approve Ordinance 2023-02 authorizing the use of ARPA funds to digitize the Collectors books in the Treasurer's office in the amount of \$510,924. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, page 257).
11. **Ordinance 2023-03 to Authorize ARPA Funds to Purchase Generators for Montgomery County Emergency Management Agency Approval:** Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve Ordinance 2023-03 authorizing the use of ARPA funds to purchase generators for the Montgomery County Emergency Management Agency in the amount of \$74,800. Schott stated the generators are owned by Altorfer, and they have a little over 800 hours on them. He said if the board approves the ordinance, he expects to have them within two weeks. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, page 258).
12. **Notification of Non-County ARPA Project Recipients Update:** Ritchie reported a letter will be sent notifying non-county ARPA money recipients of their awards and how to go about receiving those funds. He said the City of Nokomis had a question related to their award. Schott said the Nokomis City Council has a rule stating items exceeding a certain amount must be bid out, but they were unsure if this applied in this situation since it was being paid for with County money. Affrunti said he cannot give the city legal advice, but he could speak with their legal counsel and stated ultimately this decision must be left up to the City of Nokomis.
13. **Bellwether ARPA Reporting and Budgeting Process Update:** Ritchie reported representatives from Bellwether will be in attendance at the February Finance and Budget Committee meeting to talk about ARPA, as well as the possibility of Bellwether taking over the budgeting process from the County. Treasurer Lohman said it would also be good to have entities who have been awarded ARPA money attend the meeting.

14. DCEO Energy Community Reinvestment Act Grant and Vistra Energy Update:
Ritchie stated their committee had nothing additional to report.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Gene Miles:

1. **Walshville Bypass Road Intergovernmental Agreement Update:** Miles reported Walshville village representatives attended the Infrastructure Committee meeting to discuss the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement for the bypass road. He said they proposed two changes to the original draft of the agreement; the first was for the name of the village clerk to be changed and the second was for the addition of a clause clarifying the county's responsibility for repairing the main road through the village after work on the bypass road is completed. Miles said County Highway Engineer Cody Greenwood added language to the agreement reflecting those changes and now we are waiting for the village board's approval before going any further.
2. **Highway Resolution 2023-01 for 2023 County MFT Funding Approval:** Miles reported the MFT amount is \$1.2 million, which is the same amount as last year. **Motion by Miles and second by Loucks to approve Highway Resolution 2023-01 for 2023 County MFT Funding as presented. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, page 259).**
3. **2023-2024 Bulk Fuel Purchasing Letting Results Approval:** Miles reported one qualified bid was submitted from Farmers Oil, with one other bid arriving after the deadline and disqualified. Young asked if the motion should reflect the name change since Huels Oil purchased Farmers Oil. Greenwood said the original agreement was with Farmers Oil, but Huels Oil said they would honor all agreements made prior to the buyout. Affrunti said he did not have an issue with use of either name. **Motion by Miles and second by Young to approve the low bidder of Farmers Oil/Huels Oil for Bulk Fuel Purchasing. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **2023 MFT Rock Letting Results Update:** Miles reported this item has been tabled.
5. **Property Acquisition for Coffeen Road/Seven Sisters Intersection Project Approval:**
 - A) **Motion by Miles and second by Young to approve the purchase of a portion (0.38 acres) of Parcel ID # 17-03-200-003 from Lon Stroup in the amount of \$800. All in favor, motion carried.**
 - B) **Motion by Miles and second by Whitworth to approve the purchase of a portion (0.267 acres) of Parcel ID # 17-02-100-001 from Lon Stroup in the amount of \$800. All in favor, motion carried.**
 - C) **Motion by Miles and second by Folkerts to approve the purchase of a portion (2.024 acres) of Parcel ID # 12-35-300-002 from the Harold Jurgena Living Trust in the amount of \$7,100. All in favor, motion carried.**
 - D) **Motion by Miles and second by Young to approve the purchase of a portion (0.457 acres) of Parcel ID # 12-34-400-003 from Shelli Beth Maguire in the amount of \$800. All in favor, motion carried.**
6. **Minor Subdivision Plat Approval for D&D Acres in South Litchfield Township Approval:** Greenwood reported this property began as a five-acre tract and is now being split into three lots. **Motion by Miles and second by Jones to approve the Minor Subdivision Plat for D&D Acres in South Litchfield Township. All in favor, motion carried.**

7. **Old Highway Department Building Update:** Miles reported the white truck shed on the old highway department property has not yet been removed.
8. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update:** Sneed stated there was nothing additional to report.
9. **Review and Approve Letter of Intent for ADA Project at New Courthouse Approval:** Motion by Sneed and second by Beason to approve the Letter of Intent with Ameresco for ADA upgrades to the new courthouse. All in favor, motion carried.
10. **A/C at Jail Dispatch Center Bids Approval:** Sneed reported the air conditioning unit for the dispatch room at the jail needs replaced. Sheriff Rick Robbins stated this unit is used for both the employees and for the equipment located in the room. **Motion by Sneed and second by Murzynski to accept the bid from C and C Heating and Cooling for a conventional air conditioning unit at a cost of \$4,810. All in favor, motion carried.**
11. **New Locks at Historic Courthouse Update:** Sneed reported the Historic Courthouse locks will need to be replaced and the committee approved a bid from Gardner L and M Glass for \$1,005 to replace the locks plus \$3 per key. Sneed stated the work is already done.
12. **Sidewalks at Historic Courthouse and Jail Update:** Sneed reported he will be attending a Hillsboro City Council meeting to discuss the city's share of the sidewalks around the Historic Courthouse. Sheriff Robbins said the jail could be removed from this project since the sidewalks there have been upgraded.
13. **Interior Door Project for County Clerk's Office Update:** Sneed said there is nothing new to report.
14. **Bidding out the County Farm Update:** Sneed reported the committee agreed to start advertising to bid the lease agreement for the County Farm. Donaldson said we are putting this item on hold until the State's Attorney's research is completed. Affrunti said he will attend the next Infrastructure Committee meeting to discuss this matter.
15. **EMA Storage Shed Update:** Nothing new to report.
16. **Elections Update:** County Clerk Leitheiser reported there is one election in 2023, which is the April 4th Consolidated Election. She also reported over 900 registered voters in the county are signed up for the permanent vote-by-mail list. She stated the county is mandated by state law to send out vote-by-mail postcards to each county registered voter again, and State's Attorney Affrunti has agreed she must comply. Whitworth asked how much this mailing will cost the county. Leitheiser stated it will cost approximately \$13,000.
17. **Animal Control Facility Update:** Miles reported they are working to replace a door at the animal control facility. He also stated Animal Control Warden Emily Gerl submitted a report, but he has not seen it yet. Coordinator Daniels said the report submitted was for nine days of January, 2023, and she informed Gerl the board needs the previous month's report for their future meetings.
18. **Animal Control Municipal Contracts Update:** Miles reported the municipal contracts state a charge of \$250 will be issued for welfare checks, but some municipalities want the charge removed from the contract before they will sign it since they feel it is something should be covered by the county under state statute. Affrunti said he has already had a conversation with Gerl about it, and the matter is handled.

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Hughes and second by Folkerts to approve the four committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Donaldson reminded board members to stay after the meeting is adjourned tonight to take a group photo for the county website.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS: **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve the appointment of Darrin Beckman to the 911/Emergency Telephone System Board. All in favor, motion carried.**

Motion by Loucks and second by Young to approve the appointment of Bill Bergen to the 911/Emergency Telephone System Board. All in favor, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Audubon Township resident Greg Archibald stated he is submitting a resolution to the County Board from the Audubon township board along with 219 signatures opposing carbon sequestration in that area. Audubon Township Resident Sabrina Jones said part of their duty is to make the public information surrounding this issue more accessible to residents. She said despite what has been reported, there are no successful carbon sequestration projects in the world taking place right now. She said a well is currently being placed across from her front yard right now. Tenaska and Heartland Greenway Project Manager Monte Ten Kley said the well Jones referenced is just an observation well. He said they are two to three years away from actually beginning the construction process on this project. Ten Kley said there are other carbon sequestration projects currently underway across the country and similar projects have been taking place for 40 years. Jones asked where the other projects are taking place. Ten Kley cited projects in Texas, South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. Resident Jones said those are not successful. Ten Kley asked how Jones defined success. Board member Jeremy Jones said he is interested in hearing about how the Heartland Greenway representatives came to Montgomery County because he believes it's different than how they started in Christian County. County resident Bill Schroeder asked if anyone from the Heartland Greenway project has talked to Drummond Coal about their potential mining in the Audubon township area because they supposedly have the coal rights. Ten Kley stated mining can take place in the same area as carbon sequestration projects. Schroeder also stated the board should look into zoning for matters such as these. County resident Karyl Dressen stated there has not even been a recent map of the pipeline released. Ten Kley said Heartland Greenway should release a map by the end of the month and pledged it will be made available to the public.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: **Motion by Jones and second by Beck to pay all approved bills and payroll. All in favor, motion carried.**

ADJOURN: **The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, February 14th, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Murzynski and second by Young to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.**

Meeting Adjourned at 7:21 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.