

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, April 9th, 2024 – 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 PM in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse in Hillsboro, Illinois, on Tuesday, April 9th, 2024.

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

Roll call: 13 members present, 1 member absent.

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

Members Absent: Patty Whitworth

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Ethan Murzynski.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval:

Motion by Loucks and second by Murzynski to approve the mileage and per diem.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes were Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, and Young. Voting no were none. **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, March 12th, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Animal Control Report** – Emily Gerl, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 2. Circuit Clerk’s Report** – Daniel Robbins, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 3. Coroner’s Report** – Randy Leetham, report submitted.
- 4. County Clerk and Recorder’s Report** – Sandy Leitheiser, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 5. Enterprise Zone Report** – Christine Daniels, report submitted, added her office is preparing for annual abatements.
- 6. Environmental Protection Agency Report** – Christine Daniels, report submitted, and added inspections at the landfill and other sites are on the schedule.
- 7. Health & TB Department Report** – Hugh Satterlee, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 8. Highway Department Report** – Cody Greenwood, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 9. Information Services Report** – Curt Watkins, report submitted.
- 10. Maintenance Superintendent Report** – Phil Ernst, report submitted.
- 11. Probation Office Report** – Banee Ulrici, report submitted.

- 12. Public Defender’s Report** – Erin Mattson, report submitted.
- 13. ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** -- Julie Wollerman, report submitted.
- 14. Sheriff’s Report** – Rick Robbins, report submitted, and encouraged residents to download the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office app on their smartphones. He also informed members about a DeKalb County deputy who was recently killed in the line of duty by a DUI driver, and the DUI defendant was released from jail after only two days.
- 15. SOA Report** – Kendra Niehaus, report submitted, and added the final Property Tax abstract for 2023 payable 2024 should be completed by her office soon.
- 16. State’s Attorney Report** – Andrew Affrunti was present for questions.
- 17. Treasurer’s Report** – Nikki Lohman, report submitted, was present for questions.
- 18. V.A.C. Report** – Cassandra Hampton, report submitted, was present for questions.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Beck and second by Sneed to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **708 Board** – Murzynski had nothing new to report.
- **CEFS Board** -- Beason reported CEFS is looking for another grant agent.
- **ETSB / 911 Board** – Bergen reported after the “financial crunch” of recent years, 911 is in good financial standing.
- **Health Department** -- Whitworth was not present.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Bergen reported a conference is scheduled for May 15th-17th in Springfield.
- **MCEDC** -- Hughes reported the corporation will meet April 18th.
- **Planning Commission** -- Ritchie had nothing new to report.
- **Senior Citizens Board** -- Folkerts reported the board is working on a survey of county seniors.
- **UCCI** – Ruppert reported a legislative conference is scheduled for the current week.
- **U of I** – Beck introduced U of I representative Sara Marten, who invited county board members to an upcoming “Taste of Extension” event.
- **WCDC** – Jones reported the board is “hitting all its numbers” so far.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Citizen Bill Schroeder shared a letter sent to him from Sen. Tammy Duckworth’s office regarding the relocation of a weather radio tower in Montgomery County. He encouraged residents to call her office in support of reinstating our county weather radio tower, and asked county board members to also consider sending her a letter to encourage expedient action. He also referenced current state legislation regarding a CO2 sequestration moratorium and questioned why the board had taken no further action on zoning.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by County Board Chairman Doug Donaldson:

- 1. Information Systems Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson stated Information Services Director Curtis Watkins reported Consolidated Communications is finished with their work on the fiber redundant loop and his office is now installing equipment.

Watkins is also purchasing equipment for the court grant; we bought 36 PCs for county office replacements, and is working on a plan to update the county phone system.

2. **EMA Report Update/Approval:** Donaldson deferred to EMA Director Kevin Schott, who reported Dan Hough and Mark Lewis accompanied him recently to a National Weather Service regional meeting in Hannibal, MO, where the service reported they have now identified two potential towers for weather radio sites in Montgomery County.
3. **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the grant period is now open; and the deadline to submit a pre-application is Friday, May 17th, 2024.
4. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update/Approval:** Donaldson stated the next meeting will be held April 18th, 2024.
5. **DCEO Energy Grant Ad Hoc Committee Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported the pre-application has been submitted, and a meeting date will be set when funding is approved. Donaldson also reported Project Third Day recently purchased a building in Raymond.
6. **Montgomery County Health Department Monthly Report Changes Update/Approval:** Donaldson reported the committee is considering revisions to the current 7-page monthly report and will review the quarterly report submitted to the Health Department Board as a comparison.
7. **Neece Cemetery Clean-Up Update/Approval:** Donaldson said the Coordinating Committee discussed this issue and referred it to the Finance & Budget Committee. He thanked County Board member Ken Folkerts, who researched this need and provided documentation regarding any easements.

DEVELOPMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Chad Ruppert:

1. **Employee Health Insurance and Monthly HRA Report Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and discussed HRA usage for March, which was \$3,500 for a total of \$28,858 so far for FY 2024.
2. **Animal Control Facility Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Warden Emily Gerl shared monthly statistics with the committee. He said updates at the facility are pending DCEO Energy Transition Round 2 Grant approval.
3. **Animal Control Policy Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee continues to discuss possible per capita charges for municipal contracts for Animal Control hours (9-5:30 M-F) and a per-call rate after hours. He said the committee is working toward having a municipal contract and policy updates ready for the May 29th, 2024, Mayors meeting.
4. **HR Consultant Presentation from Travis Bushue Update/Approval:** Ruppert said Bushue representative Travis Bushue attended the committee meeting and told the committee his company is a human resources and risk management consultant firm based in Effingham, Illinois. Ruppert stated he described services and answered questions from committee members and department heads. He said their annual fee is based on the number of county employees, and the agreement does not limit the number of calls. Young questioned where the initial payment would be made since this expense wasn't budgeted, and Ritchie responded it will be paid from the \$100,000 coal contingency line item. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve a three-year agreement**

beginning April 10th, 2024, with Bushue HR for \$9,480 for year one, \$9,600 for year two, and \$9,720 for year three. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 117-118).

5. **UKA Virden Wind Project Update/Approval:** Ruppert said UKA applied for a permit for the Virden Wind Project on Monday, March 25th, 2024, and according to state law and county ordinance, a public hearing must be scheduled within 60 days. UKA Representatives Charles Wilson and Maggie Poteau were present at the meeting, and State's Attorney Affrunti said he is working with an attorney who may potentially serve as our hearing officer attorney.
6. **Hurst-Rosche Proposal to Review Virden Wind Application Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee discussed an engineering proposal from Hurst-Rosche representative Jeremy Connor to review the Virden Wind Project for compliance. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Hughes to approve a proposal from Hurst-Rosche to review the Virden Wind Project for a not-to-exceed fee of \$3,500 to be reimbursed by the petitioner. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 119-120).**
7. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Update/Approval:** Ruppert said DCEO requires agreements be made between the county and sub-recipients for the Energy Transition Grants they receive. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Young to approve of sub-recipient agreements with Lincoln Land Community College, the City of Hillsboro, East Fork Township, and the Hillsboro Area Public Library District. All in favor, motion carried. (For copies, see Resolution Book 21, pages 121-128).**
8. **DCEO Energy Transition Grant Small Business Start-Up Incentive Grants Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee discussed opportunities to share information about Small Business Start-Up Incentive grants with MCEDC Executive Director Bill Montgomery and Hillsboro City Planner Sarah McConnell. They also plan to promote the grants at the upcoming May 29th, 2024 Mayors meeting.
9. **Tourism Grant Application Review/Award Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee reviewed and discussed the 11 Tourism Grant applications totaling \$9,825. He pointed out the budget this fiscal year is \$10,000, so all applicants will be funded. Applicants and amounts requested are Hell's Burrow Haunted Attraction (\$1,000), Historic Red Rooster 1st Anniversary Party (\$1,000), Historical Society of Montgomery County Looking for Lincoln site tour (\$975), Raymond Celebration (\$1,000), Coffeen Fall Fest (\$1,000), DAR Trivia Night Scholarship Fundraiser (\$1,000), Historical Society of Montgomery County "A Pickin' & A Lickin'" and Ulysses S. Grant (\$850), Litchfield Pickers Market (\$1,000), Imagine Hillsboro Cardboard Boat Regatta (\$400), Old Settlers Concerts (\$600), and Farmersville Irish Days (\$1,000). **Motion by Ruppert and second by Beason to approve Tourism Grant funding for all 11 applicants. All in favor, motion carried.**
10. **Personnel Committee Handbook Update/Approval:** Ruppert said the committee will wait until it can discuss potential updates with Bushue HR.
11. **Reparation Payment for Sheep Killed by Dog Update/Approval:** Ruppert stated the committee continues to negotiate with the sheep owner.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Bob Sneed:

1. **Highway Department Roof Bid Opening/Award Update/Approval:** Sneed said the committee opened bids with base bid amounts ranging from \$110,604 to \$185,500 for a new roof on the future EMA building. The committee and County Engineer Cody Greenwood are reviewing these bids until next month.
2. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update/Approval:** Sneed reported Maintenance Director Phil Ernst highlighted many of the 46 items on his monthly report, and he noted Klein Chimney will be on site soon to install a new chimney liner at the Historic Courthouse. He said the maintenance department worked with Dan Heise Plumbing on the Good Friday holiday to install 9 new water shut-off valves at the New Courthouse, and stated new compressors will be installed soon as well.
3. **Former Highway Department Lots (East Side Of University) Update/Approval:** Sneed said the county is possibly interested in transferring three former Highway Department lots on the east side of University Street in Hillsboro to the Hillsboro School District for their future building trades' class sites. Hillsboro Superintendent David Powell attended the committee meeting and said the school district is interested. Sneed said the county incurred costs totaling \$14,308 to prepare the lots, according to County Highway Engineer Greenwood. Sneed said Powell told the committee he will take their proposal to the Hillsboro School Board for their consideration.
4. **Coal Historical Marker Update/Approval:** Sneed said the committee reviewed and discussed photos of a proposed coal historical marker for the Historic Courthouse grounds and a wall mural for the north side of the Courthouse Annex. He said local historian and artist Jeff Dunn will be at the May committee meeting to discuss these projects further. Sneed said these projects should also be coordinated with the City of Hillsboro.
5. **Interior Door Project for County Clerk's Office Update/Approval:** Sneed said the DCEO Energy Transition Grant funding has been approved, and the start of work is pending the contractor's schedule. County Clerk Leitheiser reported the contractor will be measuring the space by the end of this week.
6. **County Board Room Tech Grant Update/Approval:** Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported he recently made the 50% payment required by the contract, and equipment has been ordered.

ROADS & BRIDGES COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Ethan Murzynski:

1. **Walshville Bypass Road Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee spent an hour in discussion with WHKS, the firm working on the preliminary engineering phase of a potential Walshville bypass. He said Engineer Greenwood recommended Alternate 4A, a bypass along the south and east sides of Walshville, and the committee agreed with Greenwood's recommendation. He said WHKS will now begin working on a Project Development Report which will include public comment.
2. **2024 Township MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed and discussed the township MFT oil letting. He said low bids were received from both Louis Marsch of Morrisonville and Litchfield Bituminous of Hillsboro. Engineer Cody Greenwood noted on average, bid prices are five cents more than last

year. **Motion by Ruppert and second by Jones to approve township MFT low bids from Louis Marsch, Inc. of Morrisonville and Litchfield Bituminous Corp. of Hillsboro. All those voting, voted in favor, motion carried. (Murzynski abstained.)**

3. **2024 County MFT Oil Letting Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed and discussed the lone bid submitted by Louis Marsch of Morrisonville. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Jones to approve the county MFT low bid from Louis Marsch, Inc. of Morrisonville. All in favor, motion carried.**
4. **Waggoner Ave. Precast Box Culvert Letting Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the committee reviewed and discussed the lone bid submitted by McCann Concrete Products of Dorsey for a 12' x 3' precast concrete box culvert and end sections. Engineer Cody Greenwood said the funding for the project is in the FY 2024 budget in the County Aid to Bridge Fund. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Beck to recommend approval of the low bid of \$61,525 from McCann Concrete Products of Dorsey for a precast concrete box culvert for Waggoner Avenue. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes were Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, and Young. No one voted no. **All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Specifications for Drainage Tile across/along County Highways Update/Approval:** Murzynski stated County Engineer Cody Greenwood continues to work on specifications to be used in deciding requests on a case-by-case basis.
6. **Section No. 24-00147-00-FP Nokomis Rd. Reconstruction Update/Approval:** Murzynski said Hurst-Rosche continues to work on an engineering study based on work begun in 2007.
7. **Surplus Equipment for sale Update/Approval:** Murzynski said the City of Nokomis recently approached the Highway Department with an interest in purchasing a single-axle truck. **Motion by Murzynski and second by Ritchie to declare a 1992 International 4900 truck as surplus property. All in favor, motion carried.**

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

1. **SOA Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated Supervisor of Assessments Kendra Niehaus reported the tax cycle had been a week behind last year's schedule and is now three days ahead. He said her office has inspected over 200 structures which have now been either added or removed.
2. **Capital Improvement Fund Reports Update/Approval:** Ritchie said this month's reports show \$1,603,808.28 in the Capital Improvement Fund after a coal royalty payment of \$60,838.80 in February, 2024. Treasurer Nikki Lohman stated in the first quarter of the fiscal year \$112,860.56 in interest has been added to the Capital Improvement Fund.
3. **Bellwether Quarterly Budget Report Update/Approval:** Ritchie said Bellwether provided their first quarterly budget report for General Fund revenue and expenses, and one quarter into the fiscal year, the county has spent less than a quarter of budgeted expenses. He said the committee noted some inconsistencies in the way Bellwether reported, and Treasurer Lohman said she would bring this concern to Bellwether's attention.

4. **Sale of Delinquent Mobile Homes Resolution Update/Approval:** Ritchie said there is no need for an update to the contract with Joseph E. Meyer & Associates to allow an annual tax sale of delinquent mobile homes instead of recording liens on them because language to allow the County Trustee to handle the sale of delinquent mobile homes is already included in the contract. Ritchie also stated the County Board approved selling delinquent mobile homes through the trustee in 2021.
5. **Ambulance Agreements Update/Approval:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed and discussed returned signed contracts with Farmersville-Waggoner Ambulance and Raymond-Harvel Ambulance. He said contracts with Hillsboro Ambulance and Nokomis-Witt Ambulance were approved last month. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Young to approve the contract with the Farmersville-Waggoner Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 129-131). Motion by Ritchie and second by Beck to approve the contract with Raymond-Harvel Area Ambulance Service. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 21, pages 132-134).**
6. **Baler Lease Payment Disposition (Coal or General Fund) Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated recycling baler lease payments totaling \$40,500 (according to 2018 minutes) from DC Waste have gone into the Coal Fund to repay that fund for the purchase of the baler throughout the prior contract. He said the Coal Fund has been repaid \$33,600 as a result of receiving the first 48 payments. Ritchie stated the current lease agreement is for two years followed by two years of providing DC Waste other options. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Jones for baler lease payments to continue to repay the Coal Fund for another year and then be re-assessed. All in favor, motion carried.**
7. **DCEO Grant/Waggoner Ball Field Update/Approval:** Ritchie said according to minutes from the July 11th, 2023, County Board meeting, the Montgomery County Board unanimously approved allocating \$38,000 for the Waggoner Baseball and Soccer Field Revitalization Plans contingent upon receiving the DCEO Energy Transition Grant. He said the grant agreement has been received, but unfortunately did not include the Waggoner project. County Coordinators recently reached out to DCEO to determine if the error is correctible.
8. **Neece Cemetery Access and Clean-Up Update/Approval:** Ritchie stated the committee reviewed and discussed a letter from a resident about abandoned Neece Cemetery located near the intersection of Oconee Avenue and E. 28th Road in Audubon Township. He said the letter asked for county assistance with clean-up and access to the cemetery. Ritchie said County Board member Folkerts reported recent response from Audubon township to resolve the access issue.
9. **University of Illinois Extension Agreement:** Ritchie said the committee reviewed the annual agreement with University of Illinois Extension Service for \$157,000 for the state fiscal year beginning July 1st, 2024. **Motion by Ritchie and second by Bergen to approve the annual agreement with University of Illinois Extension Service for \$157,000 for the 12 months beginning July 1st, 2024, through June 30th, 2025. ROLL CALL VOTE:** Voting yes were Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, and Young. No one voted no. **All in favor, motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Beck and second by Sneed to approve the five committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

BLH Electronics Recycling: Chairman Donaldson stated the next Electronics Recycling Drive will be held on Saturday, April 27th from 9am-12noon at the former Litchfield Recycling Building located at Illinois & Ryder in Litchfield, Illinois.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS:

- 1. Appointment of Christine Daniels as a Certified Open Meetings Act Officer:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Beason to appoint Christine Daniels as a Certified Open Meetings Act Officer. All in favor, motion carried.
- 2. Appointment of Tricia Maulding to the Community Mental Health Board:** Motion by Donaldson and second by Young to appoint Tricia Maulding to the Community Mental Health Board. All in favor, motion carried.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Beason and second by Hughes to pay all approved bills and Payroll. All in favor, motion carried. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting yes were Beason, Beck, Bergen, Donaldson, Folkerts, Hughes, Jones, Loucks, Murzynski, Ritchie, Ruppert, Sneed, and Young. No one voted no. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, May 14th, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Ritchie and second by Loucks to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 6:21 pm. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.