

RESUME OF MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
January 14, 2021

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Special Meeting, Thursday, December 17, 2020, at 5:30 PM at the Brookens Administrative Center, 1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois and remote participation via Zoom due to social distancing necessitated by the coronavirus, with County Executive Darlene Kloeppel presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting. No board members were physically present; all were remote participants via Zoom.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following members present: Esry, Fortado, Goss, Harper, Humphrey, King, McGuire, Michaels, Passalacqua, Raab, Rodriguez, Stohr, Straub, Summers, Taylor, Wolken, Ammons, and Patterson – 19; absent: none; late Cowart arrived at 5:53 PM and missed the Agenda vote, and Paul arriving sometime before 6:20 and missed the Agenda vote – 2. Thereupon, County Executive Kloeppel declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business.

READ NOTICE OF MEETING

The Clerk read the Notice of the Meeting, said Notice having been published in the *News Gazette* on January 14 and January 20, 2021.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA

Board Member Goss offered a motion to approve the Agenda; Board Member Taylor seconded. Motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Esry, Fortado, Goss, Harper, Humphrey, King, McGuire, Michaels, Passalacqua, Raab, Rodriguez, Stohr, Straub, Summers, Taylor, Wolken, Ammons, and Patterson – 19

Nays: None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Allen Axelrod gave an update on the Covid-19 pandemic and urged the suspension of evictions and utility shutoffs.

Wayne Williams, Cunningham Township Assessor spoke about the salary of the County Recorder.

Benjamin Beaupre gave an update on the Covid-19 in the nation and the county, focusing especially on the infection rates on the incarcerated population, and expressed displeasure with those in the community flaunting Covid-19 safety measures. He also expressed displeasure with the attempted coup at the United States Capitol.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to adopt the resolution requesting the submission of a binding question of public policy to the electors of Champaign County regarding eliminating the Office of the Recorder of Champaign County; Board Member King seconded. Board Member Rodriguez expressed concern about proposed merger's effect on the Recorder's Special Projects and asked about the transition. Recorder Ingram was invited to join the conversation and stated that he will prioritize planning for a smooth transition and will explore hiring a paid University of Illinois intern to work on the Special Projects. Clerk Ammons was invited to join the conversation and noted that this early in the process, while a merger is still hypothetical, he does not yet have a concrete plan formalized, but will prioritize a smooth transition and continued operation of the Recorder's Office tasks. Board Member Rodriguez questioned the Clerk about research in "Racial Covenants" or real estate redlining through the Recorder's Office, and Clerk Ammons responded that he has long had an interest in real estate redlining, both past and present, in the County.

Board Member Wolken moved to amend the referendum to change the proposed transition date from April 1, 2022 to December 31, 2021; Board Chair Patterson seconded. Board Members Humphrey and Taylor expressed apprehension to that accelerated timetable but ultimately would agree. Recorder Ingram stated that he would prefer having the extra four months to ensure a smooth and orderly transition and has concerns that some board members may be disingenuous in their support of the merger. Board Member Thorsland expressed similar fears about disingenuous support and asked the County to offer its full support to the Clerk's Office during the proposed transition. Board Member Fortado noted the amended date would work well with the County financial calendar; she went on to explain the proposed transition's effect on the County finances and budgeting. Board Chair noted that the amendment to the resolution appeared to have broad, bipartisan support and asked that the amendment be adopted as a friendly amendment sans vote; original offering Board Member Thorsland and seconding Board Member King agreed to apply the friendly amendment to change the proposed transition date from April 1, 2022 to December 31, 2021. The resolution as amended carried by roll-call vote.

Yeas: Esry, Fortado, Goss, Harper, Humphrey, King, Michaels,
Passalacqua, Paul, Raab, Stohr, Straub, Summers, Taylor,
Thorsland, Wolken, Ammons, and Patterson – 18

Nays: McGuire, Rodriguez, and Cowart– 3

ADJOURNMENT

No other business was raised. County Executive Kloeppel adjourned the meeting at 6:21 PM.

Champaign County Board
January 14, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron Ammons". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Aaron Ammons, Champaign County Clerk
and ex-Officio Clerk of the Champaign County Board
Champaign County, Illinois