

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
July 20, 2023

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, July 20, 2023, at 6:33 PM in the Shields-Carter Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center, 1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois, with County Executive Steve Summers presiding and Matthew Cross as Clerk of the meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call showed the following members present: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Carter, Cowart, Esry, Goss, Hanauer-Friedman, Harper, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, and Patterson – 17; absent: Rogers, Sexton, Stohr, Fortado, and Rodriguez – 5. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business.

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

County Executive Summers read a prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

**READ NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Clerk read the Notice of the Meeting, said Notice having been published in the *News Gazette* on July 6, July 13, and July 19, 2023.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA**

Board Member Thorsland offered a motion to amend the Agenda, adding Addenda resolution honoring outgoing Board Member Harper; seconded by Board Member Michaels. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Board Member Straub offered a motion to approve the Agenda/Addenda; Board Member Carter seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**County Board:**

- A. Regular Meeting
  - Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 6:30 PM
  - Shields-Carter Meeting Room

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Nicholas Dale of Champaign discussed his concerns regarding law enforcement officer misconduct and described various statutorily defined reprimands, including decertification, citing state statutes such as the SAFE-T Act.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Board Member Lokshin noted July as Disability Pride Month, describing her personal experience with a disability, and encouraged consistent use of microphones in Board meetings.

Board Member Carter encouraged attendance of the August 12 CU Days event.

Board Member Peugh noted his plan to distribute school supplies at CU Days, encouraged attendance.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Member Ingram offered an omnibus motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board of May 18, 2023, the minutes of the Special Meeting of the County Board of June 27, 2023, and the minutes of the Special Meeting of the County Board of July 11, 2023; Board Member Straub seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-155 authorizing payment of claims; Board Member Vanichtheeranont seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Taylor offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-156 purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Straub seconded. The motion carried by voice.

Board Member Michaels offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-158 approving budget amendment BUA 2023/06/467 fund 1080 general corporate / dept 040 Sheriff; Board Member Locke seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Carter, Cowart, Esry, Goss, Hanauer-Friedman, Harper, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, and Patterson – 17

Nays: none

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-159 approving budget transfer BUA 2023/7/239 fund 2840 ARPA / dept 075 general county; Board Member Carter seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Carter, Cowart, Esry, Goss, Hanauer-Friedman, Harper, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, and Patterson – 17

Nays: none

Board Member Cowart offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-160 approving budget amendment BUA 2023/7/238 fund 1080 general corporate / Dept 127 veteran's assistance commission; Board Member Ingram seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Carter, Cowart, Esry, Goss, Hanauer-Friedman, Harper, Ingram, Locke, Lokshin, Michaels, Peugh, and Patterson – 17

Nays: none

Board Member Harper offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-161 approving memorandum of understanding between the Champaign County Board, Sheriff of Champaign County, Fraternal Order of Police Illini Lodge 17, and Illinois F.O.P Labor Council Law Enforcement and Law Enforcement Sergeants; Board Member Goss seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Vanichtheeranont offered an omnibus motion to adopt Resolution Nos. 2023-162, 2023-163, 2023-164, 2023-165, 2023-166, and 2023-167 appointing county executive appointments to various boards and commissions; Board Chair Patterson seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Esry offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-168 honoring retiring County Board Member Stan Harper; Board Member Michaels seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Application for Open Appointments

County Executive Summers expressed his plans to forward recommendations for appointment to vacancies to Board Members soon.

### Closed Session Minutes

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to approve the minutes of the Special County Board Meeting of July 11, 2023; Board Member Carter seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

Update from the ARPA Project Manager - Board Member Wilson noted his visit to Flatville, highlighting the state geological survey and Mahomet Aquifer funding allocations from ARPA. Board Member Wilson also notes Sangamon Valley Public Water progress on designs, commends ARPA funding. Board Member Carter asks ARPA Project Manager Kathy Larson about the effectiveness of ARPA funding allocations to date; Larson informs that she perceives allocations to be going well.

Total Rewards Statement Project Request – Director of Administration Michelle Jett requested ARPA funding for program designed to retain employees. Board Member Goss asks Director of Administration Jett why the newly approved HR generalist position cannot handle the total rewards statement project work, with a proposed funding allocation of \$13,000; Director Jett informs that HR generalist may not be ready until end of the year, and the time-sensitive nature of project necessitates action on this project sooner. Board Member Wilson asks Director Jett who gets the \$13,000 allocation; Director Jett informs that Gallagher receives the funds. Board Member Wilson asks why this is needed; Director Jett informs it is for employee recruitment and retention. Board Member Wilson asks Director of Administration Jett if employees are unaware of their benefits; Director Jett informs that yes employees are unaware. Board Member Hanauer-Friedman asks Director of Administration Jett if this will be one-time cost; Director Jett informs yes at least for one year. Board Member Thorsland asks what the cost of re-training a sheriff's deputy is; Jett informs it could be as much as \$60,000-\$70,000, Deputy Director of Finance Tami Ogden informs it is between \$40,000-\$50,000, Director Jett notes the duplicate costs of department retraining deputies; Board Member Thorsland asserts the project would pay for itself by successfully retaining employees.

Animal Control – Spay/Neuter Program Request - Animal Control Director Jerry Kellems and Director Michelle Jett requested ARPA funding for spay and neuter program as well as financial assistance program for pets in animal control whose owners cannot be statutorily-required fees to reclaim their pet. Director Jett explains that animal control is overwhelmed with strays. Board Member Straub asks if animal control has staffing capacity to administer program; Director Kellems explains that it will take time, but through working with Humane Society, University of Illinois, local veterinarians, and as training and facilities issues are addressed, yes. Board Member Straub asks if the financial support proposal has been done anywhere else; Director of Administration Jett explains that there are legally required fees for releasing animals caught by animal control, which is a financial burden for many pet owners. Further explains that medical care costs and other fees within county jurisdiction can be reduced as needed, but state statutes impose non-flexible fines which are burdensome and leading to increased occupancy and shelter. Director Jett further notes that pet owners should not be denied their pet if it is in animal control custody. Director Kellems also notes that when financial barriers keep animals from being returned to their owners, animal control is stuck caring for the pet in county facilities; proposed ARPA funding would help address the issue. Director Jett clarifies this is not a long-term solution, rather an immediate easing of

worsening, urgent issue. Director Kellems notes it will ease current overpopulation of facilities. Board Member Michaels asks if this program will be included in future budgets; Director Kellems answers that yes, costs such as medical care for animals are ongoing. Director Jett adds that this is a long-term issue which will be handled with further budget requests in future. Board Member Taylor asks if long-term funding will be requested; Director Jett answers county is not yet sure, this may require fundraisers to fund as well. Board Member Taylor asks if spay and neuter costs go down over time and if ARPA money can be appropriately applied to this proposal, citing subsidizing the county's own costs with ARPA funds; Director Jett explains that not all the fees and other costs go to county, much goes to state. Director Kellems adds that these costs are also associated with the villages and local governments contracted with animal control. Board Member Taylor notes weariness of the subsidizing, asks if there will be implementation of a cap on this assistance for those who lose their pet more than once. Director Kellems explains that priority is for first-time pet owners, expresses there will be a process for parameters on use of the financial assistance. Director Jett adds that fines increase as an animal gets loose more than once. Board Member Wilson asks what the outstanding balance is for the fees; Director Jett explains there is no set dollar amount. Board Member Wilson asks does \$25,000 cover fines and fees; Director Jett says yes. Board Member Wilson asks what percentage of owners reclaim with all paid; Director Kellems notes that dozens cannot pay the fees and subsequently cannot reclaim their animals, noting he is not familiar with specific data. Board Member Wilson asks where this funding will come from in ARPA; Director Jett answers internal county-use funds. Board Member Wilson notes that he believes approximately \$60,000 would be remaining in that fund should this pass. Board Member Vanichtheeranont notes her personal experiences as a rescue volunteer and explains that there are record levels of cost-related animal surrenders; expresses support for the spay and neuter proposal. Board Chair Patterson asks what the typical cost is for retrieving lost animal from animal control; Director Kellems estimates that it is usually around \$200. Director Jett adds that delays in pickup increase the cost, as more days in shelter are associated with higher fees. Board Member Straub asks what percentage of animals are sterilized before getting to animal control; Director Kellems answers that he would estimate less than 5% of animals. Board Member Straub asks if they will need volunteers from the Board to assist; Director of Administration says yes and for adoption events too. Board Member Michaels asks how many animals the proposal is based upon and requests more information on costs; Director of Administration Jett informs it is based on current number of animals and cost of veterinary care. Board Member Vanichtheeranont asks if there is stipulation that spay and neuter be required when owners reclaim animal from animal control; Director Kellems says yes if animal is caught a second time.

Public Defender – Expert Witness Funding Request – Public Defender Elizabeth Pollock requests funding to pay expert witnesses for clients in Champaign County. Board Member Hanauer-Friedman asks if this has ever been funded in the county before; Pollock explains that she cannot locate any information suggesting it ever was funded. Board Chair Patterson asks if the Board will conduct straw polls to gauge interest in funding requests; County Executive Summers suggests at the end. Board Chair Patterson asks how much is usually spend on expert witness; Pollock explains it

depends on specific needs and facts at hand. Board Member Lokshin asks if this will be worked into future budget requests; Pollock answers likely yes, will see how this one-time funding goes first. Board Member Wilson also asks if this would be requested in future budget requests; Pollock answers likely yes if successfully implemented now. Board Member Wilson asks if expert witnesses have been needed yet in this year; Pollock answers she needs expert witnesses right now. Board Member Wilson notes his belief that there would be \$12,000 remaining in ARPA funds; Board Member Carter notes one cannot put a price on determining innocence or guilt, this funding is needed. Pollock emphasizes that the state's prosecutors get experts that her team cannot challenge at this point. Board Member Locke asks if Pollock benchmarked other public defenders in surrounding counties; Pollock said she has not done so but would for further related budget requests. County Executive Summers asks for Board feedback on acting on proposal tonight or potentially at August meeting; Board Member Lokshin expressed openness to waiting, Board Member Carter urges action now, Board Member Hanauer-Friedman supports action now, Board Member Straub supports action now, other projects later. County Executive Summers asked for show of hands; notes strong majority for funding, informs Pollock that Board will fund.

Additional Information Regarding the Election Truck Purchase Request – Board Chair Patterson notes that two deputy county clerks specializing in elections, Matthew Cross and Kait Kuzio, read statements to the Democratic Caucus urging support for the purchasing of two election trucks. Board Chair Patterson requests that Board Member Taylor read their statements of support into the record.

County Executive Summers notes the departure of Tami Ogden, thanks her for her work. Board Member Harper thanks the Board, particularly Board Member Cowart, for support and service throughout his tenure as he leaves his final Board meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM.



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