

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

POLICY, PERSONNEL, & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Brookens Administrative Center, Lyle Shields Meeting Room
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Betz (Chair), Gross, Hogue, Knott, McGinty, Moser, Putman, Schroeder

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hunt

OTHERS PRESENT: Kat Bork (Recording Secretary), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Debbie Chow (County Insurance Specialist), John Dimit (RPC Executive Director), Tony Fabri (Auditor), Ron Gremore (Deputy County Administrator HR), Denny Inman (County Administrator of Facilities & Procurement), Susan McGrath (Senior Assistant State's Attorney), Michael Richards (County Board Member), C. Pius Weibel (County Board Chair), Dennis Schmidt (City of Champaign Public Works Director)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Betz called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Recording Secretary called the roll. Betz, Hogue, Knott, McGinty, Moser, Putman, and Schroeder were present at the time of the roll call. Betz declared a quorum and proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

MOTION by Moser to approve the agenda and addendum; seconded by Putman. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Putman to approve the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee regular session minutes of October 3, 2007; seconded by McGinty.

Weibel suggested the word "germane" on line 156 be changed to "non-germane." The committee agreed to the change.

Motion carried as amended.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

MONTHLY REPORTS

County Clerk Fees Monthly Reports

MOTION by Moser to receive and place on file the County Clerk Fees Monthly Report for September 2007; seconded by Schroeder. **Motion carried.**

COUNTY BOARD

Appointments/Reappointments

Appointment of Joseph Meents as Interim Supervisor of Assessments through December 31, 2007

Weibel nominated Joseph Meents to continue as the Interim Supervisor of Assessments through December 31, 2007.

MOTION by Moser to appoint Joseph Meents as the Interim Supervisor of Assessments through December 31, 2007; seconded by Putman. **Motion carried.**

Deputy Sheriff Merit Commission

Weibel nominated Jon Rector to the Deputy Sheriff Merit Commission

MOTION by Knott to appoint Jon Rector to the Deputy Sheriff Merit Commission for a term from December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2013; seconded by Putman.

Putman asked if there were any other applicants. Weibel said there were no others.

Motion carried.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Weibel nominated Eric Thorsland to the Zoning Board of Appeals

MOTION by Putman to appoint Eric Thorsland to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term from December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2012; seconded by Schroeder.

Putman stated that she had wanted Thorsland to be appointed to the Steering Committee to Guide Preparation of Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan and she was glad he will be on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Motion carried.

County Board Appointee for the Technology Oversight Committee

Weibel nominated Michael Richards to be the County Board appointee for the Technology Oversight Committee.

MOTION by Knott to appoint J Michael Richards as the County Board appointee for the Technology Oversight Committee; seconded by Hogue. **Motion carried.**

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Vacant Positions Listing

The vacant positions listing was provided for information only.

Request to Submit EMA Director Position to Job Content Evaluation Committee for Re-Evaluation

Busey reported the request to have the position re-evaluated came from Bill Keller, the EMA Director, during the annual performance appraisal process. The re-evaluation request came from the Justice & Social Services Committee.

MOTION by Knott to submit the EMA Director Position to Job Content Evaluation Committee; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried.**

Liability/Worker's Compensation Insurance Renewal

The recommendations for renewal of the liability and worker's compensation policies were provided in the agenda packet.

MOTION by Moser to approve the renewal of liability/worker's compensation insurance; seconded by Schroeder.

Betz stated he would abstain from voting because he does have fairly regular litigation with the one of the insurance companies.

Motion carried with Betz abstaining.

Federal EEO Report

Gremore thanked the committee for their support of the 2007 Employee Recognition Event. He said he did not bring everything that he hoped to bring for the EEO report to the committee. He wanted to bring a more comprehensive report with more extensive analysis of the workforce to the committee in January. Gremore explained the data provided at the meeting is based upon a review of the regular full-time employees on payroll as of June 30, 2007. He reported that over the last 8 years, the County has maintained an average of 3.24 percentage points above that reported by the Champaign County 2000 Census for black employees. Betz asked if Gremore was talking about the percentage of African-Americans in the total Census of the County for the federal Census. Gremore said the average of African-Americans employed with Champaign County over the last 8 years was 3.24% above the population base in Champaign County. Betz asked if it was based on the federal Census. Gremore said yes. He further said over the last 8 year, Champaign County has maintained an average of 3.23 percentage points above that reported by the Champaign County 2000 Census for white employees. The County has maintained an average of 6.61 percentage points below that reported by the Champaign County 2000 Census for other minority (non-black) employees. Gremore continued to review the summary report. Betz asked what minorities were included in the "Other Minority" category. Gremore said it included Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and American Indians. Betz asked if the figures reflected the legal eligibility of the minorities to work. There is a substantial population of Asians at the University of Illinois who cannot lawfully be employed, but they are counted in the Census. Gremore said this portion of the report does not reflect that. Betz asked if Gremore used the average for each year or selected 5 dates within a year for a picture of the County workforce. Gremore said it is based upon looking at the numbers on June 30th so it represents a one day picture for the entire year. Betz asked how it could indicate on Page 34 that the County is 3.2% above for white employees and 3.4% above for black employees at the same time. Busey pointed out the percent of other minorities had reduced. Gremore said he has to be very careful about what he does with the data to give a clear picture and not distort anything. Pages 36-42 were a breakdown that was reported to EEO over the last 4 reporting periods. Gremore was willing to answer any questions. Busey provided colored graphs to the committee giving the County demographics broken into General County, Nursing Home, and Corrections employees. Over 8 years, the County's workforce has increased by 34 employees. Gremore spoke about the changes that have occurred with the County's demographics over the 8 years. Gremore could not explain the shifts and he

asked to return with an explanation at a later date. Knott asked if RPC was included in those figures. Gremore said it was. Knott inquired about the increase in the total number of County employees. Busey stated the actual number of employees on a given day in a year is also affected by the level of unemployment at that particular time. Gross asked how Gremore obtained his information about classifying employees as to their race. Gremore said the employees self-identify by completing a personal information sheet at the time of their hire. Employees can decline to fill out the sheet. Gross asked if Hispanic was a different category under race. Gremore said his data does not have that distinction. Busey noted there is a category for an employee to claim more than one race.

McGinty exited the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Gremore reviewed more statistics with the committee. McGinty re-entered the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

MOTION by Knott to receive and place on file the EEO summary report and to direct Gremore to return with a more comprehensive EEO report in January or February; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried.**

Schroeder asked if there was a way to get a better handle on the number of openings. Gremore said he would try to get a better handle on that. Weibel asked about a breakdown of salaries based on race and gender. Gremore said he has that information and could easily provide it to the committee. Betz asked Gremore if he could have a comprehensive report ready by January or February. Gremore confirmed he could.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

There was no legislative report. Putman asked if the legislative report could include what is happening on the federal level as well as the state level. The committee was open to that idea. Putman would be forwarding the committee an email from NACo about possible federal funds to purchase law enforcement equipment.

CHAIR'S REPORT

There was no Chair's report.

OTHER BUSINESS

RPC Request for Exception to the Travel Policy

Dimit stated the request was for 2 travel vouchers to compensate the Regional Planning Commission Chair and Dimit to provide an opportunity for additional discussion with the new Executive Director at a mealtime. The Auditor's Office refused to pay reimbursement for the vouchers. The vouchers do not follow Travel Policy because the meals were not a meeting or a seminar located within Champaign County. Also, Dick Helton is the RPC Chair, not a County employee. The RPC could not formerly vote on this issue because the refusal occurred too close to the time of their meeting to include it on an addendum. The RPC informally took a straw poll that indicated the commissioners were comfortable with the expenditures. RPC is willing to take a formal vote to approve the expenditures at their next meeting if it is the pleasure of the Finance Committee. Dimit requested approval of the reimbursements in exception to the Travel Policy. Knott said he signs hundreds of these vouchers at his job and the expenses are completely in line with this type of search.

MOTION by Knott to direct the Auditor to grant the exception to the Travel Policy requested by RPC; seconded by Moser.

Putman stated the cost of 4 significant people to have dinner for \$143 is a very responsible amount. Fabri said his office was not opposed to having the vouchers approved, they simply did not fit into any policy

that allowed reimbursement. Dimit confirmed the RPC understood the Auditor's position. Betz ordered a roll call vote.

Motion carried with a vote of 7 to 1. Gross, Hogue, Knott, McGinty, Moser, Putman, and Schroeder voted in favor of the motion. Betz voted against the motion.

Consideration of Canceling the December Committee Meeting

Betz asked Weibel if there were any appointments or items to be considered in December. Weibel said there are a few appointments, but these could go to the full Board. No committee member objected to canceling the December meeting.

Calendar Recommendation for County Board & Committee Meetings for December 1, 2007 – November 30, 2008

Weibel asked to move the County Board meeting in March to a week later because of Spring Break at the University of Illinois. The committee agreed with the requested change. The committee discussed changing meeting in October due to Yom Kippur.

MOTION by Putman to move the October 2008 Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee meeting to 5:00 p.m.; seconded by Hogue. **Motion carried with one no vote.**

MOTION by Putman to approve the Calendar Recommendation for County Board & Committee Meetings for December 1, 2007 – November 30, 2008 as amended; seconded by Gross. **Motion carried.**

Holiday Schedule 2008

Provided for information only.

Joining Other Municipalities in Protesting Rate Increase by Illinois American Water

MOTION by Gross to approve Champaign County joining other municipalities in protesting the rate increase by Illinois American Water; seconded by Putman.

Weibel distributed a document about the intervention costs and introduced Dennis Schmidt, the Public Works Director for the City of Champaign, who was in attendance to provide details of the City's plans to intervene in the rate increase being requested by Illinois American Water. The City of Champaign is asking for financial help from the County and other municipalities in the cost of intervening against the 60% rate increase by Illinois American Water. The company claims the rate increase is to pay for the new plant. Schmidt explained the City knew Illinois American Water would be requesting a rate increase and as there are time limits on rate cases, the City began working immediately once it was announced. The City has hired a consultant in the amount of \$66,000. The amount the City is asking the County to contribute is \$31,855 based on 3,508 parcels at 4 people per parcel. This is the number of parcels billed by the UCSD outside the municipalities' corporate limits for sanitary sewer services. Schmidt volunteered to answer any questions from the County Board members.

Schroeder asked if the City of Champaign knew the amount of the increase being requested in advance. Schmidt said the City's staff is in constant contact with Illinois American Water staff. They knew a rate increase was coming, but the company never shared the amount they would be requesting. Schmidt thought a 60% increase was ridiculous. Moser asked how many of the smaller towns had agreed to contribute to the cost of intervention. Schmidt said he was surprised that no other entities than the City of

Urbana had joined. Savoy has expressed a strong interest. St. Joseph, Arcola, Sidney, and Tuscola have indicated an interest. There has been no interest expressed from Philo, Tolono, or the two water districts.

Knott inquired what the track record of intervention successes was. Schmidt said the City looked at other water companies with rate increase requests. In most cases the rate increase that is approved is less than what the water companies requested. Knott has been outraged by water company's tactics and the claimed rate increase. He asked how effective the Ameren intervention was since the County did participate in it. Busey said the savings experienced by joining the Consortium are hard to measure until the County has the next year's rates to compare with this year's rates. McGrath said the intervention was successful by the measure that Ameren got a lesser increase than it originally requested. Schmidt said the current rate increase is by far the highest increase request that has been seen in places in Illinois or other states with Illinois American Water. The Champaign-Urbana water group has intervened on 2 other issues with the company. One intervention failed, but the group has been more successful with boil orders in the community. Knott asked if Schmidt had an estimate on what amount of increase would be considered reasonable. Schmidt said no. Knott asked who the Cities and County would be paying. Schmidt said the group is Clark Pete's. Putman inquired about the costs. Schmidt said the cost is based on an estimate provided by the attorney, Richard Baylo, who has represented companies in these types of cases. Weibel gave his opinion that this would be a good use of the taxpayers' money.

McGinty expressed some skepticism with having an agreement in place for a specified amount and then getting the money afterwards when the other communities have not committed to the intervention yet. McGinty views this issue as a city matter. The success rate is hard to judge, as is whether intervention is the cause of a lower rate increase. He would like to see more entities involved outside of the Champaign and Urbana area. Betz noted that any lowering of the proposed rate increase would be a savings to the water bill for County buildings. Moser said he would like to see a firm commitment from Tolono and St. Joseph before the County agrees to join the intervention. Other committee members also expressed similar views about wanting to see participation for other entities. In answer to a question about the County's water bill, Busey answered the County pays \$60,000 a year for water. Betz ordered a roll call vote.

Motion failed with a vote of 4 to 4. Betz, Gross, Putman, and Schroeder voted in favor of the motion. Hogue, Knott, McGinty, and Moser voted against the motion.

ADDENDUM

Intergovernmental Agreement for Regional Emergency Coordination

MOTION by Putman to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for Regional Emergency Coordination; seconded by Knott.

Putman asked if this was the first time the committee has seen this agreement or if they have approved it every year in the past. McGrath stated it was the first time the agreement has been before the committee. The agreement will be signed by the Cities, the County, the University of Illinois, and the public health entities.

Motion carried.

Betz raised the issue of smoking on County property, which was discussed at the November County Facilities Committee meeting. The State of Illinois has passed legislation creating smoke free workplaces and this would prohibit smoking on all County grounds. This is an issue for the County Board because some of the County's labor contracts specifically designate smoking areas for employees. Betz asked if the committee wished to provide for some public accommodations for smokers on County property. Schroeder asked what happened to the smoking huts that were not the Courthouse. Inman stated those huts were moved to the old Nursing Home facility and will be moved to the new Nursing Home facility. Putman wanted to

provide accommodations for smokers, be they County employees or the public. Weibel inquired about the specifics of the state regulations. Betz said the State of Illinois forbids smoking inside a public building and within 15 feet of the entrance to a public building. This regulation goes into effect on January 1, 2008. Inman stated the County will have to have signage up at every entrance by January 1st. The latitude the County has concerns the outside areas. The County Board could ban smoking from all County property. Inman does not know what approach the Cities of Champaign and Urbana are taking to this issue. Designated smoking areas at least 15 feet away for the buildings would likely need some sort of windbreak for protection in bad weather. McGrath informed the committee there are fairly substantial costs if the County is not in compliance with no smoking with 15 feet of the building. Gross stated she would like to see accommodations for smokers with shelters. Moser asked about putting up a gazebo surrounded by plastic like Provena Hospital did. The committee, with a show of hands, supported the County Administrators developing a plan for designated smoking areas to comply with state law for presentation to the County Board in November.

DESIGNATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

Betz designated all appointments and agenda items XI C & F for the consent agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork
Administrative Secretary

Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.