

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

POLICY, PERSONNEL, & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 8, 2009

Brookens Administrative Center, Lyle Shields Meeting Room

1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Ammons, Tom Betz (Chair), Matthew Gladney, Kevin Hunt, Greg Knott, Brendan McGinty, Alan Nudo, Jonathan Schroeder, C. Pius Weibel

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Kat Bork (Administrative Secretary), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Barb Frasca (Recorder), Denny Inman (County Administrator of Facilities & Procurement), Steve Moser (County Board Member), Duane Northrup (Coroner), Amanda Tucker (HR Generalist), Barbara Wysocki (County Board Member), John Allen

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Bork called the roll. Ammons, Betz, Gladney, Hunt, Knott, McGinty, and Nudo were present at the time of the roll call.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

MOTION by Ammons to approve the agenda and addendum; seconded by McGinty.
Motion carried with all ayes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Schroeder to approve the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee minutes of March 4, 2009; seconded by Ammons. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

John Allen spoke about the situation with the Sangamon Valley Fire Protection District, which was an open trustee appointment.

Weibel entered the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Allen spoke about his concerns with the Sangamon Valley Fire Protection District trustees and a new fire chief, including the resignations of 18 firefighters and fire trucks being moved from Dewey.

Duane Northrup spoke regarding the reform of county government subject and the possible effects on his position as Coroner. He has done research and volunteered to share his information with the County Board. Northrup stated the proposal of making the Sheriff act as Coroner would be a step backward in comparison with other counties. The counties where the Sheriff acts as the Coroner are less populated than Champaign County and he did not believe this approach would work in a county this size. Northrup pointed out that consolidating the Coroner's Office with the Sheriff's Office would be more expensive because the Deputy Coroners have lower salaries and retirement benefits than the Sheriff's Deputies earn, so having the Deputy Sheriffs cover Coroner calls would cost more. It would also result in the Sheriff's Deputies being tied up with Coroner's duties for hours and take time away from their law enforcement responsibilities. Northrup offered to provide his research and figures on this issue to the County Board. Betz asked Northrup to make his informational packet available to the committee when he has it ready. Northrup agreed to share his information with administration to be provided to the committee. McGinty suggested Northrup submit the documents in electronic format and Northrup agreed.

Barb Frasca stated that her office is different from other County departments because the Recorder's Office deal with day-to-day commence, banks, attorneys, and title companies. She asked that the County Board take the time to talk to people in local title companies, mortgage companies, and the banks before they make decisions regarding her office. She would like them to get an impression about how important the Recorder's Office is. Frasca wanted to make clear that the Recorder and County Clerk have nothing whatsoever to do with each other and their offices have completely different jobs. Frasca noted she could not speak to the County Clerk for the entire year because their offices are not linked. She felt the volume of documents done in the Champaign County Recorder's Office needs a separate office to work for everyone's best interests.

APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

MOTION by Weibel for an omnibus motion to appoint the following individuals to the following fire protection districts for terms commencing May 1, 2009 and ending April 30, 2012:
Bruce Ricketts to the Broadlands-Longview Fire Protection District,
Linda Barcus to the Edge-Scott Fire Protection District,
Patrick Quinlan to the Ludlow Fire Protection District,
Maurice Gorman to the Ogden-Royal Fire Protection District,
James Henry to the Pesotum Fire Protection District,
Michael McHenry to the Philo Fire Protection District,
Richard Jobe to the Sadorus Fire Protection District,
Paul Berbaum to the Scott Fire Protection District,
Richard Denhart to the St. Joseph-Stanton Fire Protection District,
Ramon Freese to the Thomasboro Fire Protection District,
Dennis Davis to the Tolono Fire Protection District,
David Dupre to the Windsor Park Fire Protection District, and

Stewart Williams to the Eastern Prairie Fire Protection District; motion seconded by McGinty. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

Regarding the three candidates for the Sangamon Valley Fire Protection District, Weibel described his selection process. He interviewed all three candidates, Jonathan Allen, Donald Hughey, and Ron Kuhns, all of whom have experience in fire departments and all live in the Dewey area. Allen is capable, but he does not have the same years of experience with the firemen as Hughey and Kuhns have. Though Weibel has heard stories about what occurred in the district, conducting an investigation is the role of the trustees and the citizens, not the County Board and Weibel wanted to avoid micromanaging the district. Weibel found both Hughey and Kuhns to be qualified and Kuhns is the current incumbent. Weibel asked each about what he would do to change the low morale of the Dewey area firemen and citizens' low confidence with the district. Hughey answered the low morale was trustees' fault because they ignore suggestions and transferred trucks from Dewey. Kuhns' answer was to have trustee meetings in Dewey, Fisher, and Foosland on a rotating basis. Kuhns stated that had Dewey fewer firemen than Fisher, who could better handle the fire trucks. If the number of firemen in Dewey was built to previous levels, then the trucks would return to Dewey. Weibel selected Kuhns based on his answers.

MOTION by Weibel to appoint Ron Kuhns to the Sangamon Valley Fire Protection District for a term commencing May 1, 2009 and ending April 30, 2012; seconded by Schroeder. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Vacant Positions Listing

The vacant positions listing was provided for information only. Busey noted there was only one full-time vacancy in the Sheriff's Office because the funding for positions was cut this year.

Ordinance Amending Champaign County Personnel Policy Regarding Job Content Evaluation Committee

Busey explained the Personnel Policy amendment updates the policy to reflect the change to an 8-member Job Content Evaluation Committee, which the committee and County Board approved last month.

MOTION by Ammons to approve the Ordinance Amending Champaign County Personnel Policy Regarding Job Content Evaluation Committee; seconded by Hunt. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

Employee Recognition Recommendations

Tucker brought together both committees who worked on the Employee Recognition Events and gathered ideas from employees and department heads. A number of suggestions were offered and the committees developed a compromise approach for the 2009 Employee Recognition Event. The compromise consisted of only inviting department heads, County Board members, and those employees who recognized to the event. Lunch would still be provided and the awards and

certificates would be distributed. The Lincoln Square event and Brookens Administrative Center event would be combined into a single event.

Schroeder exited the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Tucker explained the compromise was presented at the department heads meeting, where even more ideas were suggested and the support was mixed. Busey acknowledged that the question was raised at the department heads meetings as to why the County Board did not just hold the same type of event as last year. Last year's event cost \$4,400 and the compromise event would cost approximately half of that amount. The money comes from vending machine revenue, which substantially comes from employees in the County's buildings.

Schroeder re-entered the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

The issue of the Employee Recognition Event was there could be complaints if the County Board spent money on an event when the employees were being asked to take furlough days or the County was looking at layoffs. Busey thought the County Board could exercise whatever option it desired. Tucker added that all employees had been invited to past Employee Recognition Events.

Ammons asked for the latest date when this decision could be made. Busey advised the committee to reach a decision by the May or June meeting in order to allow sufficient time to plan the event. Ammons inquired whether the employees were surveyed for their opinions on the event. Tucker did not survey employees, but went to the department heads. She noted that some employees came to her with their opinions. Tucker performed follow-up after last year's events and gathered the employees' suggestions. Overall, people were very pleased with last year's events.

McGinty supported the recommendation presented in the agenda packet. The expense reduction was a show of good faith from a budget standpoint while still recognizing the employees. Weibel wanted retirees to be able to invite immediate members of their families to the event.

MOTION by Ammons to accept the staff recommendation to plan the 2009 Champaign County Employee Recognition Event as a lunch event with awards and certificates being given, the Lincoln Square and Brookens events combined into a single event, and only the department heads, County Board members, and the those employees being recognized invited; seconded by Nudo

Schroeder exited the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Weibel requested a friendly amendment to the motion allowing retirees to invite immediate family to the event. Ammons and Nudo agreed to the friendly amendment.

Nudo inquired about the employees' overall impression of the event and whether they wanted to attend it. Tucker felt employees were very pleased with last year's event, especially the opportunity to gather together with fellow employees. Nudo asked about the media exposure. Tucker stated the Employee Recognition Event is incorporated in the Champaign County Newsletter, but it is not publicized in the local newspaper. Nudo suggested the County might want to look into getting some free press for the press.

Motion carried with all ayes.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Senate Bill 1513 Property Tax PTELL Extension Levies

Busey provided information on the pending Senate Bill 1513, which would to exclude the pension levies from the PTELL calculation. This would remove Champaign County's IMRF levy from the aggregate when applying the tax caps calculation. This is being proposed because of the significant financial challenges the pensions will be facing in the next few years. She just wanted the committee to be aware of this legislation. Betz inquired about the effect of this bill on Champaign County. Busey explained the IMRF levy is estimated to have a \$700,000 shortfall next year. She believed the only levy that would receive any growth would be the IMRF levy. Betz asked if the committee members desired to take a position on this matter, noting the County would be in a crisis situation in the next couple, of years because all the levy growth would go towards covering IMRF. Knott does not support making this exception because this is why tax caps were put in place. The question could be placed on the ballot. Betz noted the County Board does not control the pensions, while the state legislature decides to add benefits to pensions. He felt the levy would always be out of control as long as the state legislature can increase pension benefits and that it why he could support exempting the pension levies. He asked the committee to think about how to make up the \$700,000 shortfall.

Schroeder re-entered the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Reform of County Government and Process for Addressing Change/Reform

Betz asked if everyone had received the materials on the Lake County government study, historical reports, and the state's attorney's opinion that went out to Knott, McGinty, and Betz on April 3, 2009. The committee had all the materials except for the state's attorney's opinion. Busey made copies of the state's attorney's opinion for distribution to the other committee members.

Weibel exited the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Betz stated that he wanted the committee to deal with the reform issue in a different manner than it has been addressed by past County Boards. He encouraged the County Board to re-familiarize themselves with past ideas, such as the ten point plan presented by Knott and McGinty, and consider ideas that might be deemed "out there." Betz wanted a timetable of six months or less to be developed to deal with the County government reform issues.

Weibel re-entered the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Betz wanted to hear in-depth presentations about what the Coroner, Recorder, and Auditor do and the effect of having those officials be elected vs. non-elected. He wanted to solicit other points of view, such as previous office holders and other experts in those fields from the community, university, or UCCI. Betz thought the County Board should be talking about the past suggestions about County Board size, an elected County executive, single member districts, and communicating with the public. He felt the issue was much broader than the Coroner, Recorder,

and Auditor Offices. He hoped people would keep their minds open and the process moving forward on the issues. He suggested soliciting the opinions of the League of Women Voters, NAACP, Urban League, Chamber of Commerce, Farm Bureau, and the general community, then holding public hearings. Betz thought this type of process would result in a surprising amount of consensus on a number of subjects. He was looking at the process taking 6 months in order to deal with the issues before the early primary and asked if the committee wanted to go in this direction.

Nudo distributed a proposed timeline with dates based on Policy Committee meetings and County Board study sessions. He incorporated ideas from conversations with Betz into the timeline. Nudo listed the home rule and County Board size issues towards the end because those are bigger issues than others. Nudo reviewed the timeline to get the committee in a mode of meeting more often during the 6-month period because the issues could not be addressed with only one monthly committee meeting.

Ammons liked the timeline and thought it was a very aggressive schedule. She wanted to carve out public participation and holding the forums so people would first have ample opportunity for input. Ammons wanted the current Recorder, Coroner, and Auditor to have a chance to present the complete aspect of their offices, so she can understand what those offices do. She questioned trying to squeeze it all into 6 months. Betz stated he was trying to give target because these issues have disappeared in past and a target would keep the committee's feet to the fire. The committee could take an extra month if the time was needed to receive specific information or a certain report pertinent to the issues. This timeline would also enable the County Board to have sufficient time to place propositions on the 2010 ballot, if that was the decision reached by the Board. Betz thought there was enough flexibility in the timeline to allow for public participation. He remarked how having the meetings televised would be useful as a way to get the public involved. Busey suggested that the County could ask to have the presentations by the elected incumbents videotaped in the Urbana Council Chambers so that the presentations could be rebroadcast to give the public opportunity to see the issues before they come to meetings to comment on said issues. Busey advised videotaping the presentations early in the process.

Moser advised hearing the Sheriff's and County Clerk's sides regarding any proposal to have the duties of the Coroner and Recorder combined into those offices. Betz envisioned hearing from as many elected officials, both current and former, as possible. He hoped there would be some expertise available through the University of Illinois, NACo, or UCCI. Betz stated his belief that this is not just about the three offices.

Gladney supported the 6-month timeframe and asked about the County Board size being addressed in October because it would be a high profile issue. Betz thought every issue would raise someone's hackles, but the County Board cannot take things off the table and forbid discussion because an issue is too volatile, which is what has been done in the past. The home rule discussion will make some people livid, however, Betz felt open discussion over County government reform was needed instead of taking options that are legally available to the community off the table. The County Board is comprised of elected officials and they should be able to have the discussion over these issues.

McGinty thanked Nudo putting the timeline together and supported using existing materials presented during Administrative Structure Special Committee meetings and the strategic plan. He

did not want to rush through the issues and agreed with taking 6 months to do a thorough job. He wanted the media to do a good job of making it clear what is happening at these meetings beforehand so people interested in the issues will attend. McGinty spoke about the ten point plan he and Knott introduced 2 years ago and what has and has not been accomplished in that time period. He appreciated that fact that Frasca and Northrup were present and were willing to provide information about their offices. The committee structure issue is being addressed at the Administrative Structure Special Committee and will come to the Policy Committee.

On the subject of the timeline, Nudo indicated the committee could hold more meetings in the 6-month period if desired. He encouraged members to make comments on the order of the issues and who should be invited to the meetings. He noted the last two times this was presented it died without reaching a vote, so he was committed to getting the issues to a vote by the County Board to reach some conclusions. He felt strongly about the 6-month timeline because there will be a single County Administrator and the County is facing budget concerns. Nudo wanted the County Administrator to hit the ground running and the County Board needs to make decisions to streamline and make the County operation run more efficiently and productively to address the situation the County is facing.

Ammons asked about outsourcing. Betz gave the example of the outside auditor. He did not know if the Recorder's or Coroner's functions could be lawfully outsourced. Ammons wondered how outsourcing the Auditor's Office would line up with the statute. Betz said the County's attorney would have to answer that question. McGinty thought if the elected Auditor position was eliminated then the County would continue to have the County's internal auditing functions and an annual independent outside audit. Nudo indicated the County could have an outside auditing firm perform surprise monthly audits on receivables, payables, and cash transactions in departments. That is just one idea and could assist with the year-end audit. Nudo was gathering some numbers on this idea. Betz liked ideas being suggested and recommended the committee put together a list of the 10 most likely ideas for review by the County's legal counsel. The committee could look at the original color-coded list of ideas beyond the ten point plan presented to the Strategic Planning Subcommittee. He asked if the subcommittee still existed and recommended it meet to review the colorful list to narrow down the list of ideas to be reviewed by legal counsel. Discussion continued about the subcommittee meeting.

Moser wanted background about an elected County Board Chair position and how many counties have one. Betz wanted to know the legal process for electing a county-wide Board Chair. Busey asked to focus on the 18 counties with over populations over 100,000 because counties with lesser populations were very dissimilar to Champaign County. Moser agreed that was an excellent idea.

Discussion continued about the timeline. Nudo said all the timeline dates were regular Policy Committee meetings or County Board study session dates. He was open to other suggestions for meeting dates. Betz asked if there was a general consensus amongst the committee to move forward with the 6-month timeline goal.

Frasca requested direction regarding the presentation about the Recorder, Coroner, and Auditor offices. She wondered if her presentation should be about why the Recorder's Office is fiscally responsible or if she is supposed to be defending her position. Betz stated Frasca should not

feel she is defending herself. The presentation should be about the office's statutory and legal responsibilities, functions in the community, interactions with other offices and outside agencies, and reasons why should it be an elected office versus not being an elected office. McGinty liked what Northrup brought up earlier with the idea of explaining why the current operation is more beneficial than combining it with another office. Discussion over the process continued and there was consensus from the committee to move forward with the proposed timeline.

OTHER BUSINESS

Semi-Annual Review of Closed Session Minutes

Betz received a communication from the State's Attorney's Office recommending the closed session minutes remain closed.

MOTION by Nudo for all closed session minutes to remain closed; seconded by Knott.
Motion carried with one vote against by Ammons.

Ammons raised the question of how to know whether the closed session minutes should remain closed. Betz remarked that most of the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee closed session minutes involve personnel issues, labor negotiations, or strategy and these subjects have to remain confidential. This committee mostly deals with personnel issues, which are inherently private. Busey noted the performance appraisal reviews are the equivalent of personnel documents and these are confidential forever. This was the first time David DeThorne conducted the semi-annual legal review and his objective was to be sure the closed sessions were appropriate. DeThorne might undertake a more comprehensive review for the next semi-annual review later this year. Betz noted the attorneys are trying to prevent litigation and take a conservative point of view concerning the minutes.

Closed Session Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 1 to Consider the Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of an Employee

MOTION by Weibel to enter into closed session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 1 to consider the employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of an employee. He further moved the County Administrators and the Recording Secretary remain present. The motion was seconded by Ammons. The roll was called. **Motion carried with a vote of 9 to 0.** Ammons, Betz, Gladney, Hunt, Knott, McGinty, Nudo, Schroeder, and Weibel voted in favor of the motion.

The committee entered into closed session at 8:26 p.m. The committee resumed open session at 8:51 p.m.

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

MOTION by Nudo to approve the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee closed session minutes of March 4, 2009; seconded by Ammons. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

DESIGNATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

Agenda items 6A-N, 7B, and 7C were designated for the consent agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 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.