

# Annual Report to the County Board from the County Executive

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**Darlene A. Kloeppel, County Executive**

**May 19, 2022**

# - County Governance



## County Offices

- Complete turnover on Board of Review in Sept 2021
- Merger of County Clerk & Recorder offices in Dec 2021
- Redistricting of County Board seats finalized in Dec 2021

# County Finances – 2022 budget

## Mushrooming county budget

2022 - \$179,767,329

2021 - \$136,939,369

2020 - \$129,689,501

2019 - \$122,974,563

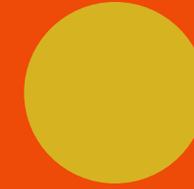
**Up \$55m**

**46% in 4 years**

## Budget Impacts

- ❖ COVID-related grants (CARES/CURE/ARPA)
- ❖ Increase in cannabis & on-line sales taxes
- ❖ Increase in motor fuel tax/rising fuel costs
- ❖ New animal control contracts & fee schedule
- ❖ Increase in revenue stamps
- ❖ Reduction in court fees/fines
- ❖ Large expenditures:
  - ARPA purchases
  - roof/air conditioning unit replacement
  - OT , hiring bonuses, and salary adjustments due to staff vacancies
  - out of county boarding for jail inmates
- ❖ 5-7% cost increases for commodities

# County Finances – balancing the budget



## Progress on reducing NH Liabilities

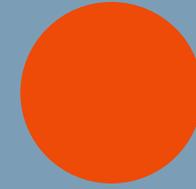
- ❖ Received last \$110,000 from NH purchase escrow holdback in 2022
- ❖ Completed last NH legal settlement in 2022
- ❖ County still waiting on state audit for any last accounting reconciliation between county & NH
- ❖ Reallocated FY2022 NH Property Tax Levy of \$950,000 to pay back the Tort Immunity Fund for NH Self-funded Workers' Comp Ins claims
- ❖ \$4.8m still owed from NH to other county accounts

## Potential revenue-generating strategies

- ❖ Add solar panels to county's flat roofs to reduce ongoing utility costs - research in progress
- ❖ Liquor license fee - last updated in 2005; county currently much lower than City of Champaign; difficult recent 2 years for bars
- ❖ Gaming machine license fee - county doesn't currently have fees in this allowed category
- ❖ Operate a "community garden" at the jail to provide both outdoor activity and fresh food



# American Rescue Plan Act investments - \$21m in 2022



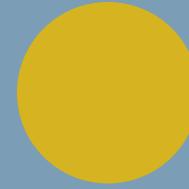
## County Department Projects

- ARPA project management
- County jail - full body scanner and COVID testing
- EMS mobile command vehicle
- Cybersecurity, county records digitization and IT system upgrades
- County employee premium pay
- Election equipment
- County Plaza purchase
- Circuit Court and Circuit Clerk's Office technology & partitions
- State's Attorney's video evidence management system
- Sheriff's community outreach activities
- Head Start Early Childhood facility

## Community Initiatives

- Mental health services
- Winter low-barrier emergency shelter
- Mortgage, rent & sewer bill arrearage assistance
- Immigrant services for language access and mental health
- Rural housing rehabilitation
- Countywide broadband coverage
- Mahomet Aquifer mapping & hazardous waste collection project
- Rural water/sewer/drainage & crop cover projects
- Housing stability - Family Emergency Shelter renovations
- Community violence prevention (projects to be determined)
- Small business assistance (projects to be determined)

# Economic development investments/partnerships

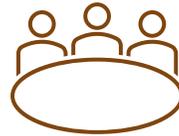


- Participation in Champaign, Fisher, Homer, Mahomet, St. Joseph & Urbana TIF Districts
- Partner with Douglas County and Urbana Enterprise Zones
- Extended industrial bond support for Countryside School
- Purchased and planning renovation of County Plaza in downtown Urbana
- Funded ARPA broadband, water infrastructure, housing and workforce development projects

- Corporate memberships in
  - Champaign County Economic Development Corporation
  - Visit Champaign County
  - Champaign County Chamber of Commerce
- Partner in
  - Champaign County Regional Planning Commission
  - Metropolitan Intergovernmental Council
  - Champaign County First Coalition
  - Willard Airport Advisory Committee
  - Central Illinois Land Bank Authority

# County Workforce

- ✓ growing number of staff vacancies became critical for several departments (47 positions / 9% of county jobs vacant overall in April 2022; majority are justice-related)
- ✓ taking longer to negotiate bargaining unit contracts
- ✓ partially remote work became an option for many department staff (likely to remain)
- ✓ becoming harder to obtain consultants for expertise on the county's special projects
- ✓ adding mandates for personnel (sexual harassment training, COVID-19 testing)



- added sign-on bonus for sheriff's deputies
- added salary increases for officer lateral move transfers
- added 8 staff positions (public defender, coroner, sheriff, animal control, zoning & IT)
- cost of time off increased - 3 winter weather days; extra election day holiday; OT pay to cover vacancies
- used ARPA funds for employee premium pay
- proceeding with county workforce study

# County Facilities-

- ❑ remodel of Animal Control, Circuit Clerk, Public Defender & CCRPC to increase distancing and increase workstations
- ❑ replacement of roofs/HVAC from 2020 hail damage still in progress
- ❑ finally in progress on jail consolidation
- ❑ purchase County Plaza & in progress on renovation design phase

## On the horizon -

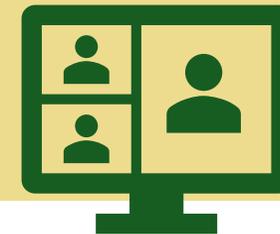
- demolition of old nursing home (2022)
- future of humane society facility (2023)
- relocation of county offices to County Plaza (2024)
- future uses for Brookens facility (2024)
- demolition/future of downtown jail property (2024)

# County IT



- ERP implementation in progress
  - accounting modules rolled out Jan 2022
  - payroll/timekeeping in progress
  - budgeting for 2023
  - HR performance mgmt. to come
- 2-factor authentication rolled out Jan-April 2022 to improve cybersecurity
- implementation of law enforcement data management system upgrade (shared with municipalities)

- began expansion of State's Attorney video evidence mgmt. capability
- technology changes increasing on-line notification & applications for services, payment options, vote by mail, etc.
- digitization of county records



## Other issues on the radar -

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- supply chain delays in purchasing/contracting accompanied by huge price increases
- new unfunded mandate to track/report minority/women-owned/veteran status of all vendors/subcontractors
- management of number of "special projects" in progress - staff is stretched with additional meetings, legal issues, reporting, public relations activities

- The board reduced the incoming Executive's salary from \$122,00 to \$70,000, while giving all other countywide elected officials significant raises - is the intention to make this a part-time position?

(League of Women Voters study recommendations on county governance structure relating to Executive, Auditor, Coroner also will be out soon)

# County Government Challenges-

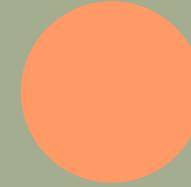
## WORKFORCE !!!

- Nationally - boomer generation is retiring - talent drain of experienced staff
- Statewide - population of IL is declining
- Locally - recruitment/retention of employees as an employer of choice is more expensive and competitive
- Sector - Recruitment/retention of elected and appointed officials in all districts of local government

- Maintenance costs for SAS (software as a service) as county upgrades IT
- County facility maintenance
- County land use issues
  - urban annexation
  - wind farms
  - deteriorating highway and drainage infrastructure



# The bottom line...



County level government is responsible for the county's vital and property records, elections, public services for unincorporated areas of the county, tax collection for all local governments and the justice system.

People want quality services.

People want to pay only what is necessary to make this happen.

We are expected to be:

Accurate

Cooperative

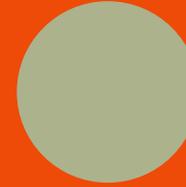
Effective

Efficient

Fair

Thrifty

# Positive foundation -



## Pandemic recovery -

- Businesses have continued to adjust with changing conditions, business income shifted among sectors - hardest hit sectors were hospitality/entertainment and growth was experienced in on-line services and construction.
- Local governments did not experience revenue losses as great as anticipated.
- Individuals shifted to on-line service options and remote/flexible work - this is likely to continue where possible.

Champaign County has maintained its population count, unlike surrounding counties and the state as a whole.

We have established working relationships among our local governments, non-profits and businesses that help us problem-solve.

ARPA funding has given us some room to catch up with deferred expenses.

# Specific recommendations -



**Clarify the county's form of governance**

**Reduce the size of the board to 15-17  
with one representative per district**

**Re-introduce orientation for all county  
elected & appointed officials**



**Nurture constructive problem-solving**

**Identify 1-2 shared goals each year that  
the board can move forward**

**Make better use of the county's  
budgeted partnerships to meet  
strategic goals**

**Build maintenance and replacement  
costs into county budgets from the  
beginning**