

RESUME OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNTY BOARD, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
March 21, 2024

The County Board of Champaign County, Illinois met at a Regular Meeting, Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 6:32 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: Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Owen, Peugh, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Cowart, Esry, and Carter – 18; absent: Michaels, Rodriguez, Rogers, and Sexton – 4. County Executive Summers declared a quorum present and the Board competent to conduct business.

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

County Executive Summers read a poem about seasonal changes, 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 March 7, March 14, and March 21, 2024.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDA**

Board Member Taylor offered a motion to approve the Agenda/Addenda; Board Member Locke seconded.

Board Member Thorsland offered an amendment to move up item XVI. A. 1. (Update from the ARPA Project Manager) to be placed between VIII. (Consent Agenda) and IX. (Communications); Board Member Taylor seconded. The amendment carried by unanimous voice vote.

The motion as amended carried by unanimous voice vote.

**DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**Standing Committees:**

- A. County Facilities Committee  
Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

- B. Environment & Land Use Committee  
Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
- C. Highway & Transportation Committee  
Friday, April 5, 2024 at 9:00 AM  
1605 E Main Street, Urbana

**Committee of the Whole:**

- A. Justice and Social Services; Policy, Personnel and Appointments; *and* Finance  
Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

**County Board:**

- A. Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 6:30 PM  
Shields-Carter Meeting Room

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Board Member Farney offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Board Chair Carter seconded. The motion comprising 24 resolutions (Nos. 2024-40, 2024-41, 2024-42, 2024-43, 2024-44, 2024-45, 2024-46, 2024-47, 2024-48, 2024-49, 2024-50, 2024-51, 2024-52, 2024-53, 2024-54, 2024-55, 2024-56, 2024-57, 2024-58, 2024-59, 2024-60, 2024-61, 2024-62, and 2024-63) and one ordinance (No. 2024-3) carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Owen, Peugh, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Cowart, Esry, and Carter – 18

Nays: none

**Update from ARPA Project Manager**

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Manager Kathy Larson provided a brief update on ARPA-funded projects. Board Member Straub asked about the Housing Authority's lack of spending on their affordable housing assistance projects; Project Manager Larson noted that the Housing Authority has submitted invoices work is ongoing. Director of Administration Michelle Jett was invited to join the discussion; she added that the specific project is for renovations to the domestic violence shelter, and that the county is pushing for a concrete timeline for completion. Board Member Smith asked about progress on the Economic Development Corporation's low hurdle program;

Project Manager Larson stated that she will meet with the Small Business Development Center Director, and they plan to submit a proposal by April. Board Chair Carter asked for clarity on the deadline for spending APRA funds; Project Manager Larson explained that most of the projects have an end of year 2024 deadline, but the APRA mandated deadline is that all funding must be allocated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. Board Member Wilson gave an update on ARPA-funded programs at the Mahomet Area Youth Club. Board Member Fortado stated that the Board will receive updates from First Followers at the Regular County Board Meeting in May and the Farm Bureau at the June Committee of the Whole. Board Member Esry expressed a desire for St. Joseph to update on their water project; Director Jett expressed a desire to have multiple entities present updates on ARPA-funded water projects.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Board Member Farney commended County Clerk Aaron Ammons, his staff, and the election judges for their work on a successful election earlier in the week.

Board Member Thorsland spoke about voter turnout at the election and emphasized the need for more election judges.

Board Member Straub spoke about the Strides Shelter's upcoming new underwear donation drive and the need for bottled water donation for Cunningham Township.

Board Member Peugh noted the April 8, solar eclipse and urged people to not look directly at the sun.

Board Member Wilson thanked the Clerk's office for their work on the election, encouraged republican service as election judges and poll watchers, and spoke against electioneering by judges in the polling place. He also spoke about the recent Veterans Assistance Committee meeting, noting a planned June veterans' trauma clinic and a fall stand down.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Member Smith offered an omnibus motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the County Board of February 22, 2024, and the County Board Study Session of February 27, 2024; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

County Executive Summers noted that the Summaries of Action Taken for the County Facilities Committee on March 5, 2024, and the Highway and Transportation Committee on March 8, 2024, were received and placed on file.

## **AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

County Executive Summers noted that the Summary of action from the Committee of the Whole (Justice and Social Services; Finance; Policy, Personnel, and Appointments) on March 12, 2024, was received and placed on file.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board Member Lokshin offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-64 authorizing payments of claims; Board Member Smith seconded. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Taylor offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-65 approving purchases not following purchasing policy; Board Member Farney seconded; The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Cowart offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-66 authorizing the Champaign County Engineer to enter into contracts including joint participation agreements with the State of Illinois; Board Member Peugh seconded. Board Member Stohr spoke about the threat of road salt to ground water and aquifers and urged careful, limited use; County Executive Summers provided some details on county road salt use; Board Member Peugh asked Board Member Stohr to give a presentation on the adverse effect of road salt to the Highway and Transportation Committee. Board Member Wilson asked for clarification on the County Engineer contracts; County Executive Summers noted a change in state regulations to road salt, requiring the re-authorization resolution. Board Member Fortado provided details about county RFQ policies. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Chair Carter offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-67 authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement by and between Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, Champaign County, Illinois, and Housing Authority of Champaign County; Board Member Esry seconded. Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Director of Community Services Lisa Benson was invited to join the discussion; she spoke about housing needs in Champaign County. Board Chair Carter asked about low-income housing assistance programs; Director Benson noted programs by Habitat for Humanity and the Housing Authority; Board Member Farney added State of Illinois and United States Department of Agriculture have housing loan assistance programs. Board Member Fortado spoke about the effect of parking requirements for low-income housing in driving up the cost of developments. Board Member Cowart asked about rental assistance programs; Director Benson noted that RPC has a short-term rental assistance program, and the Housing Authority has low-income housing. Board Member Wilson asked about the property acquisition process; Director Benson stated that was handled by the Housing Authority. Board Member Farney asked which entity was responsible for the applicant screening process; Director Benson stated that is handled jointly by RPC and the Housing Authority. He then asked how many units are in development; Director Benson stated it is eight units with one resident per unit. Board

Member Wilson asked about the size of the units; Director Benson stated they are small, furnished one-bedroom apartments with a kitchen, living areas, and bathroom; Board Member Farney added that they are a typical, small one-bedroom apartment, similar to what would be found in student apartments in the campus area. Board Chair Carter asked if the occupants are time limited or screened for drug use; Director Benson stated that there is no limit on how long residents can stay in the apartments but there is a maximum income limit, and she stated that there is no sobriety requirement, but RPC does make supportive services available to residents. Board Member Straub noted that there will be an on-site office. Board Member Fortado spoke about Director Benson's expertise and thanked her for all her work and assistance to the County Board. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Board Chair Carter offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-68 approving Budget Amendment BUA 2024/3/90 for the RPC to enter into an agreement with the Housing Authority to purchase a property that is suitable for very low-income individuals who were formerly homeless; Board Member Straub seconded. The motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

Yeas: Farney, Fortado, Greer, Hanauer-Friedman, Locke, Lokshin, Owen, Peugh, Smith, Stohr, Straub, Taylor, Thorsland, Vanichtheeranont, Wilson, Cowart, Esry, and Carter – 18

Nays: none

Board Member Locke offered a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-69 authorizing the execution of an agreement to participate in a minimum guarantee fund for the University of Illinois – Willard Airport; Board Member Lokshin seconded. County Executive Summers stated that the resolution commits \$15,000, the same level as prior, similar agreements. Board Member Stohr expressed an interest in committing more funds; Board Member Hanauer-Friedman questioned a need to commit more. Board Member Locke noted that the financial commitment is needed by April 1, 2024, and that numerous other entities are also contributing. Board Member Farney asked from which fund would this draw; County Executive Summers stated that it would be the General Revenue Fund. Board Member Cowart expressed her support, stating it is a continuation of prior commitments. Board Member Peugh stated a preference to direct the funds to more pressing need in the community. Board Member Wilson stated that it would have an economic benefit that could create more funding for social needs in the long run. The motion carried by majority voice vote.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT**

County Executive Summers raised the discussion of the Asylum Seekers Emergency Fund. Director Jett was invited to join the discussion. Board Member Esry stated that the requested \$25,000 is for a contingency fund in case there is an emergency involving asylum seekers traveling through the County on their way to the Welcoming Center in Chicago, noting a recent example in Kankakee; County Executive Summers stated that any unspent funds will be reallocated. Board Member Wilson expressed concern that

the title is not direct enough in informing that it is an emergency, contingency fund; Director Jett stated that the project is very specific. Board Member Lokshin stated that the Board should defer to the expertise of the Champaign County Emergency Management Agency (EMA). Various Board Members, County Executive Summers, and Director Jett all stated that the funds are very specifically directed to address the immediately needs and transportation of asylum seeker groups traveling through Champaign County to Chicago, as a contingency fund in case it would be needed and not an assistance fund for individuals. Board Member Owen asked if the City of Champaign had created a similar fund; County Executive Summers stated that he would investigate. The Board indicated their support for funding the Asylum Seeker Emergency Fund (to be renamed) by a showing of thumbs.

County Executive Summers raised the discussion of the new county seal. Director Jett gave a short presentation of the updated designs. Various Board Members stated their opinions and preferences of the new designs, with the majority supporting design 5.1. Board Member Farney noted the complexity of the designs would make official, embossed difficult, and asked that the County Clerk, who is the keeper of the official seal, have input into the design. Director Jett stated that the designs are not intended to be the official seal, but more of a county logo; she requested that the Board make a final determination at the April Regular County Board Meeting.

#### DECENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS TO THE COUNTY BOARD

County Executive Summers noted the Decennial Committee Reports of the Joint Harwood Township and Road District was received and placed on file and is available for viewing on the county website; Board Member Wilson urged board members to read the decennial committee reports.

#### ADJOURN

County Executive Summers adjourned the meeting at 8:12 PM.



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