



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

*Finance/ Policy, Personnel, & Appointments/Justice & Social Services Minutes*

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Shields-Carter Meeting Room

Bennett Administrative Center

102 E. Main Street, Urbana, Illinois

**MINUTES** – Approved as Distributed on September 9, 2025

**Members Present:** Jon Cagle, Samantha Carter, Aaron Esry, John Farney, Stephanie Fortado, Carolyn Greer, Elly Hanauer-Friedman, Jenny Lokshin, Brett Peugh, Emily Rodriguez, Jilmala Rogers, Tom ‘Ed’ Sexton, Bethany Vanichtheeranont, Jason Votava, Jeff Wilson, and Jennifer Locke

**Members Absent:** Lorraine Cowart, Ben Crane, Jake Fava, Matt Sullard, Eric Thorsland, and Daniel Wiggs

**Others Present:** Steve Summers (County Executive), Michelle Jett (Director of Administration), Travis Woodcock (Budget Director), Byron Clark (Treasurer), David Palmer (Chief Deputy Treasurer), Susan McGrath (Circuit Clerk), Laurie Brauer (Coroner), Julia Rietz (State’s Attorney), George Danos (Auditor), Liz Pollock (Public Defender) and Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

**Agenda Items**

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Locke called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

**III. Approval of Agenda/Addenda**

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Cagle.

**MOTION** by Mr. Wilson to **AMEND** the agenda by moving item VI. after item X., moving item IX. A. 2 after VII. E., and removing item VIII. A. 2e; seconded by Ms. Hanauer-Friedman. Upon vote, the **MOTION to AMEND CARRIED**.

Upon vote, the **MOTION as Amended CARRIED**.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

A. June 10, 2025 – Regular Meeting

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry to approve the minutes of June 10, 2025; seconded by Mr. Cagle. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

**V. Public Input**

Reynaldo Camas mentioned a group that spoke at the last meeting, noting that none of them live in Champaign County. He believes the elections in our county are very safe and does not agree with the statements they made. He suggested adding more accessible polling locations on campus in the future. Also, he spoke about the behavior of the County Board and specifically Ms. Carter. He read a post she made on social media and requested better from our elected officials.

**VI. Communications**

Mr. Peugh reminded everyone that the registration for the electronics recycling event will begin on September 1<sup>st</sup>. He also requested for administration to provide information regarding the set up of the Auditor's Office after a Finance Division is created.

Mr. Farney mentioned the passing of a long-time County employee, Donna Birkey. He shared some wonderful memories of Ms. Birkey and stated that she would be missed.

**VII. Justice and Social Services**

**A. CU One to One Mentoring Program**

Lauren Smith, Unit 4 Outreach Coordinator, gave a presentation about the Urbana and Champaign School District's Mentoring Program. She shared their mission statement, historical information and program details. She detailed how students are selected for the program, the steps that adults must take to become a mentor and how they pair students with mentors. This program has not only made a large impact on the students, but also on the adults as well.

During discussion with Committee members, Ms. Smith stated they serve approximately 400 students each year and there are 3-4 students at each school that are still waiting to be paired with a mentor. Mentors that attend the upcoming trainings will begin mentoring in October or November.

**B. Monthly Reports – All reports are available on each department's webpage through the department reports page**

- Emergency Management Agency – May & June 2025
- Probation & Court Services – May & June 2025 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Report
- Public Defender – June & July 2025
- Animal Control – June & July 2025

Received and placed on file

**C. Other Business**

None

**D. Chair's Report**

None

**E. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda**

None

**VIII. Policy, Personnel, & Appointments**

**A. County Executive**

1. Monthly HR Report – June & July 2025

Received and placed on file

2. Appointments/Reappointments (*italics indicates incumbent*)

- a. Resolution Changing the Terms of Current Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District Trustees and Updating the Term for Future Appointments

**MOTION** by Mr. Wilson to recommend County Board approval of a resolution changing the terms of current UCSD trustees and updating the term for future appointments; seconded by Ms. Lokshin. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

- b. Resolution Appointing *Debra Griest* to the Beaver Lake Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- c. Resolution Appointing *Dough Bluhm* to the Drainage District #10 Town of Ogden, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- d. Resolution Appointing *Bryan Schluter* to the Harwood & Kerr Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- ~~e. Resolution Appointing *Levi Kopmann* to the Kerr & Compromise Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028~~
- f. Resolution Appointing *David Mennenga* to the Longbranch Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- g. Resolution Appointing *Michael Buhr* to the Prairie Creek Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- h. Resolution Appointing Kenneth Decker to the South Fork Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- i. Resolution Appointing *Brian Buss* to the S. Joseph #3 Drainage District, 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- j. Resolution Appointing *Brian Buss* to the St. Joseph #4 Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028
- k. Resolution Appointing Keith Harms to the West Branch Drainage District, term 9/1/2025-8/31/2028

**OMNIBUS MOTION** by Mr. Farney to recommend County Board approval of resolutions appointing Debra Griest, Doug Bluhm, Bryan Schluter, David Mennenga, Michael Buhr, Kenneth Decker, Brian Buss and Keith Harms to their respective Drainage Districts; seconded by Mr. Esry. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

- l. Resolution Appointing Alejandro Gomez, Jr. to the Mental Health Board, unexpired term ending 12/31/2028

**MOTION** by Ms. Rodriguez to recommend County Board approval of a resolution appointing Alejandro Gomez, Jr. to the Mental Health Board; seconded by Ms. Hanauer-Friedman. Ms. Rodriguez thanked the previous member for his service on this board and stated this is the person he recommended as his replacement. Upon vote the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

- m. Currently vacant appointments – full list and information is available on the County’s website

Information only

3. Job Content Evaluation Committee

- a. Creation of the Building Supervisor Position in the Physical Plant Department, effective August 29, 2025

**MOTION** by Ms. Hanauer-Friedman to recommend County Board approval of a resolution creating the Building Supervisor position in the Physical Plant Department; seconded by Ms. Lokshin.

Ms. Rodriguez requested to abstain from this vote because her employer is renting space in the Brookens building.

Committee members expressed confusion because they thought the County was selling the Brookens building. Ms. Jett explained that due to the current uncertainty surrounding grant funds, the Regional Planning Commission is concerned about funding and would like to stay at Brookens. Also, their ICRT program needs a location, and they believe Brookens could make a good location for that program. This position would oversee the daily maintenance of the building and do all the work required for renting the space to different entities. Ms. Hanauer-Friedman clarified that this position would ideally be funded by those paying rent.

Several Committee members expressed concern about keeping another building and about creating a new position. Ms. Lokshin clarified that the position could be terminated if they decide to sell the building once grant funding is more stable. Mr. Esry asked if these duties could be done by the Facilities Director and Ms. Jett stated the Facilities Director does not have the required time to dedicate to this work.

Mr. Summers stated the Regional Planning Commission would be forced to cut services if they have to pay a much higher rent that is required for other buildings. RPC is a County Department, and they receive reduced rent, other entities would be required to pay a higher amount to rent space in the building.

Mr. Farney requested a roll call vote. Ms. Rietz reminded the members of the motion on the floor. Ms. Lokshin called the question. Upon roll call vote, the **MOTION CARRIED**.

- b. Recommendation to Reclassify the Legal Secretary Position in the Public Defender's Office to an Administrative Legal Secretary

**MOTION** by Ms. Locke to recommend County Board approval of a resolution reclassifying the Legal Secretary position in the Public Defender's Office to an Administrative Legal Secretary; seconded by Mr. Cagle.

Ms. Pollock explained that she has made several changes to automate processes in the department. This has changed the type of work that is being completed by the legal secretaries. They have done an amazing job taking on new duties, but their job description is no longer relevant and needs to be updated. However, there is a clause in the bargaining agreement that states the employees must receive a 10% increase when they are promoted to a higher pay grade. There are enough funds in her budget to cover the increase for FY25.

Committee members brought up the unintended consequences this change will cause; pay disparities between departments with employees of the same job title. Ms. Rietz joined the conversation to advocate for her administrative staff. Discussion continued with Ms. Rietz and Ms. Pollock regarding the work in each office and the number of staff budgeted. If these changes are approved, Ms. Rietz will be requesting a budget amendment to adjust the pay of her staff to be comparable.

Mr. Farney requested a roll call vote. Upon roll call vote, the **MOTION CARRIED**.

B. County Clerk

1. Fee Reports

- Monthly Reports – May, June & July 2025
- Semi-Annual Reports – June 2025

Received and placed on file

C. Other Business

None

Ms. Rogers left the meeting.

D. Chair's Report

None

E. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda

VIII. A. 2a-d, f-l

**IX. Finance**

A. Budget Amendments/Transfers

1. Monthly General Corporate Budget Amendment Report – July 2025

Information only

2. Budget Amendment BUA 2025/7/556

Fund 2671 Court Document Storage / Dept 030 Circuit Clerk

Increased Appropriations: \$115,000

Increased Revenue: \$0

Reason: Appropriation for the digitization of divorce case records from 1996-2020.

**MOTION** by Ms. Vanichtheeranont to recommend County Board approval of a resolution approving budget amendment BUA 2025/7/556; seconded by Ms. Rogers. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

3. Budget Amendment BUA 2025/8/22

Fund 2685 Specialty Courts / Dept 031 Circuit Court

Increased Appropriations: \$12,000

Increased Revenue: \$0

Reason: Appropriation of funds to support client-related costs in the specialty courts program through the remainder of FY2025.

**MOTION** by Ms. Carter to recommend County Board approval of a resolution approving budget amendment BUA 2025/8/22; seconded by Ms. Lokshin. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

B. Treasurer

1. Monthly Report – April, May, June & July 2025 – Reports are available on the Treasurer’s webpage

Received and placed on file – Mr. Clark provided the Committee with an update from his office. He detailed his priorities since he was appointed, the work they have already accomplished and the goals he has for the office.

Ms. Carter asked about some of the concerns regarding tax bills this year and Mr. Clark said there was a small delay, but they are working on coordinating with the other offices to make sure that doesn’t happen with future billings. Ms. Locke gave a shoutout to the front counter staff and their wonderful service.

C. County Executive

1. FY2024 Audit Update

Mr. Woodcock shared details about the status of the FY2024 Audit. Ms. Carter asked if the audit prep-work is going to stay with the Executive’s Office moving forward. Mr. Woodcock explained that is a decision for the Board to make.

2. Preliminary Research and Proposal per Board Request of Auditor’s Statutory Duties

Ms. Carter reiterated her questions about eliminating the Auditor from the audit prep-work going forward. She wants to see everyone working together. Ms. Hanauer-Friedman explained that the issue is that the work is not being completed by the Auditor’s Office, the County Board is responsible to ensure the external audit is completed in a timely fashion and they are exploring ways to avoid delays in future years. Mr. Peugh clarified that this proposal does not change any staffing in the Auditor’s Office for FY2025.

Mr. Farney clarified some of the terms and the duties that are required by the Auditor’s Office. Sometimes the old adage of “that’s how it’s always been done” doesn’t mean we can’t make changes to find the right process for Champaign County. Mr. Wilson appreciates being able to understand the roles and requirements of each office so they can make decisions to become more efficient. There is evidence that we are not meeting the needs of the County, and the answer is not to keep doing things the same way. Ms. Rodriguez clarified that administration needs some direction from the Committee on this item but there will not be a vote taken tonight.

Mr. Peugh asked if the Auditor’s Office needs more staff to complete the required duties of the office. Ms. Jett believes that the office has increased staffing size over the years, and they have added a more streamlined computer system, so it does not make sense why the work is not being completed. Also, there have been reports that the staff have been instructed to delay work intentionally.

Mr. Peugh asked Mr. Danos if he has enough staff in the office and he confirmed that he does. Mr. Danos continued to speak beyond the answer to the question, a point of order was called, Mr. Danos was thanked for his answer and dismissed from the microphone. Mr. Danos continued to speak, multiple members called a point of order and Chair Locke reminded Mr. Danos that he has not been recognized.

Chair Locke asked staff if there were any duties currently assigned to the Auditor’s Office that statutorily do not need to be performed by that office. Ms. Jett explained that she is not an attorney, but she believes the statutory requirements can be fulfilled while still moving the accounts payable duties to the Executive’s Office. Also, there are a couple other counties that have similar structures to this proposal. Mr. Danos continued to repeatedly speak over the recognized speaker. Ms. Lokshin, the recognized speaker, tried making

a statement but had to repeatedly remind Mr. Danos that she had the floor. Due to Ms. Carter yelling at other members, Ms. Lokshin was unable to complete her statement and Chair Locke called a **RECESS** at 9:06 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:08 p.m. Mr. Sexton, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Carter, and Mr. Esry left the meeting during the recess. Chair Locke noted a lack of quorum, and the that only informational items remained before adjournment.

Ms. Hanauer-Friedman requested that staff draft a resolution for this proposal and bring it to the August County Board Meeting.

D. Other Business

None

E. Chair's Report

None

F. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda

XI. A. 2-3

**X. Other Business**

None

**XI. Adjournment**

Chair Locke adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.