

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD  
KNOX COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

**December 22, 2021**

STATE OF ILLINOIS        )  
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COUNTY OF KNOX        )

Proceedings of the Regular Meeting of the Knox County Board held in person at the Galesburg City Council chambers on Wednesday, December 22, 2021 at 6:14 p.m. Due to the coronavirus precautions, this meeting was presented via teleconference in order to alleviate the need for the public to be in person at the meeting.

The Meeting was called to order by County Board Chair Jared Hawkinson and upon roll call the following Members reported present:

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| District 2 | Robert Bondi            |
| District 4 | Jared Hawkinson         |
| District 5 | Ricardo “Rick” Sandoval |
| District 1 | Darla Krejci            |
| District 2 | David Amor              |
| District 3 | Pamela Davidson         |
| District 5 | Brian Friedrich         |
| District 1 | Cheryl Nache            |
| District 2 | John Hunigan            |
| District 3 | Kyle Rohweder           |
| District 5 | Jeff Link               |
| District 3 | Tara Wilder             |
| District 4 | Todd Olinger            |

|                   |            |                   |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| And those absent: | District 1 | Roland Paulsgrove |
|                   | District 4 | Sara Varner       |

Also present was County Clerk Scott Erickson and County Treasurer Robin Davis. Department Heads present were Nursing Home Administrator Jodi Mines, Highway Administrator Duane Ratermann, Landfill Administrator Rod Clair, and Labor Attorney Keith Braskich.

County Clerk Erickson delivered the Proclamation. Chair Hawkinson led the Members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. In lieu of a formal invocation, Chair Hawkinson asked that a moment of silence be observed.

Chair Hawkinson asked for additions or deletions to the agenda. No items were added or deleted.

Chair Hawkinson asked for public comments. There was no public comment at this time.

Motion was made by Member Olinger and seconded by Member Bondi to approve the following items of the consent agenda: 1) minutes of the Regular and Closed Board Meetings for November 24, 2021, 2) claims for Members for per diem and mileage for the meetings of December 2021 and other claims for per diem from meetings, and 3) sales tax and various taxes for the month of September 2021 in the amount of \$141,008.51 and \$32,216.21 and public safety tax in the amount of \$233,795.90. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder, and Link—(12). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve a Proclamation for January as National Mentor Month. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder, and Link—(12). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Nache to approve the appointment to the HSTP Rural Sub-Committee of Joseph Coffin a new appointment. Chair Hawkinson stated that the information from KCCDD was in the packet, along with the request form, details about the position, a short work history and that Coffin has worked for KCCDD for 11 years. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder, and Link—(12). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Link and seconded by Member Bondi to approve the hiring of IT Employee. Bondi stated that the Board hired a Firm out of Chicago called Link Technology. They said to hire the employee right away for full time and salary based on the budget. Chair Hawkinson said that through the process, all resumes were reviewed and this IT person was their recommendation. He said that additional staffing will be needed of either a full or a part-time person and is in the packet. Member Bondi stated that with hiring him, we can stay up to date on certifications, programs and we need an on-site person. He said hat off to Jared for getting the certifications in proper footing and his consideration for staff needs. Member Amor stated that he was going to vote in favor but had talked to Member Bondi about some concerns. He has some significant reservations and had a recommendation to allow a 90-day probationary period. During that time to look hard, to make sure problems get resolved and more solved. Member Davidson stated that she will be voting no, not because we do not need the position but because of her concern of his education. Since he does not have a Master's Degree. She said he should be part time and hire someone else for the full-time position. She said that he lives in Iowa, has not worked for Office Specialists for a long time, and there were other resumes with long-term employment. She stated that she does not know about IT and knows they are in a time crunch. She also asked the question about the expenses so far of Office Specialist. Member Nache stated that she will also be voting no and has the same reservations as Member Davidson. She said she has not meet him yet. She said it is not our policy of hiring. We usually interview the top three candidates. This is how we hired our labor attorney Braskich and we still have him. She was there for his interview. She asked what if we need him in twenty minutes but he lives in Iowa and he would take an hour and twenty minutes to get here. Member Hunigan stated that it

was a good question about him living in Iowa. Chair Hawkinson stated that he would be onsite during business hours and if called in on the weekend the majority if not 100% could be done remotely. Member Davidson asked if the IT person would be a department head. Chair Hawkinson said no. Member Bondi said that they are all good questions. He said that Office Specialists have done their best to resolve the issues and problems. Some things have taken 3 or 4 steps to resolve and they had 2-3 people on staff to help oversee licensing and other operations. They are a large company and we need someone onsite full time. Chair Hawkinson said they have done a great job and we are better off today than before. Member Friedrich said he understands Member Davidson concerns and wished they had time for interviews but we need to make the move now. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Olinger, Friedrich, Rohweder, and Link—(8). Noes— Wilder, Davidson, Nache, Hunigan ---(4), Abstain--- Amor---(1). Motion carried

Member Friedrich presented the monthly report for the Finance, Insurance, Treasurer, Judicial, Veterans, and Clerk/Recorder Committee. The reports are included in the packet. He said this was an easy month because not a lot was going on. It is the wind down in December.

Motion made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Amor to approve the resolutions on deeds of conveyance. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder, and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Bondi to approve membership dues to United Council of Counties of Illinois (UCCI). Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Nache to approve opening of FY 2020-2021 Budget for Line Item Changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes— Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Amor to approve Budget Changes for the previous fiscal year 2020-2021. Member Friedrich stated that Treasurer Davis made the two changes and they are in the packet. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes— Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

County Clerk Erickson spoke about adding a Board Packet Documentation Policy. He would like to streamline things to have more full and complete documentation for the Board so they can make a proper decision. Implementing a Friday deadline and if the information does not arrive in time then it would wait until next month. Also, to have proper documentation ahead of time for Bid and Bring Back so that the committee in charge of that department can review it properly. That way the Treasurer and he are not chasing down signatures and proper documentation. This would speed up the approval process because they would have all the proper documentation lined up ahead of time. Member Amor asked, if the Friday before was

sufficient time before the committees and he knows some departments are sufficient and some are not. County Clerk Erickson stated that if he would need a request for proposal that the Bid out process would have to be quicker. Chair Hawkinson said that the committee chair should have full information on Bid and Bring Back so they already have knowledge to make an easier decision. Member Hunigan stated there needs to be standard forms. Chair Hawkinson stated that for budget changes, everyone uses different form. The forms need to be super simple and the same for the offices. Member Friedrich said thanks.

Member Sandoval presented that the monthly report from the Sheriff, Jail, Mary Davis Home, Animal Control, and Building Committee. He stated the reports are in the packet.

Motion by Member Sandoval and seconded by Member Hunigan to approve Bid for Performance Contracting for Knox County. Chair Hawkinson stated that the RFQ was approved by the full Board last year and then went dormant. The company would put together plans for energy savings projects. Scope and approval of projects would lead to the Bid & Bring Back but that the company would spearhead and be fronting all the funding. Member Wilder asked if this would be a new company to go for Bid. Chair Hawkinson said that a company responded to the committee and said they would be willing to move forward gather and approve the scope. Member Bondi asked if we would be paying MSI to do this. Chair Hawkinson said no. Member Bondi said the review and the MSI part was misleading. Chair Hawkinson stated that Smart Watt had done a review before but nothing moved forward. He said this project is months away. Member Bondi asked if MSI was approved. Chair Hawkinson said no it would be a Bid and Bring Back. MSI was the only one to respond. Smart Watt knew it was out for Bid again. Member Amor was confused about the Bid part and stated that he thought it was changed to a motion to approve the company qualifications. County Clerk Erickson said they bid for a RFQ company that had the qualification and willing to enter into the process. This was to make clarity not to approve. Member Davidson asked who set up the specks to put out Bids for this. She was concerned that engineering was on contract and if using MSI would be a conflict. Chair Hawkinson stated that RFQ was a unanimous vote. Member Davidson said that it was not because she voted no. Chair Hawkinson again confirmed that it was and the specks had been vetted through the States Attorney office and reviewed. Member Davidson was concerned with being a conflict of interest and that we need to be transparent. Chair Hawkinson stated that this has nothing to do with money we are just approving the qualifications of the contractor to move forward with the process. Their qualifications were provided and stated the importance of going to the committees and asking questions. Member Hunigan stated that he does have concerns with our onsite company of MSI, but not saying they are not doing a good job. He also wanted to know if they did not agree with the RFQ was there another route for what needs done. He did also have concerns with Smart Watt with their limited vendors. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes— Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, , Amor, Olinger, Friedrich, Rohweder and Link—(9). Noes— Wilder, Davidson, Nache and Hunigan (4). Motion carried

Member Bondi presented the monthly report for the Assessor, Zoning, GIS, Highway, IT, and Landfill Committee. He stated that the reports are in the packet.

Motion made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the purchase of two used vehicles for the Landfill not to exceed \$70,000 total. Landfill

Administrator Clair said that the needed vehicles are hard to find. They had an earlier bid for a Ram truck but they are not building those vehicles right now. He found 2 4x4 single cabs but even an SUV or extended cab would work but not the best. He just wanted to clarify that it did go out for bid but they have no active bids and he needs to be allowed to move forward on his search. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Rohweder to approve agreement with Foth Engineering for 2022 for the landfill. Member Bondi said Highway Administrator Ratermann supplied the contract. Member Hunigan stated that Forth Engineering are very valuable to the landfill. Member Davidson said we are lucky to have them. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Bondi and Member Sandoval to approve Engineering Services Agreement for the County Highway 12 CIR Project, Section 18-00021-03-ORS. Member Bondi said the location is 6 miles east of Knoxville off US 150. He said about 850 vehicles use it and most use it to get to Oak Run. It is a hot mix of 1999 asphalt and will be done in two phases. Member Bondi said it is the recommendation of the committee to approve. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Rohweder to approve the Bid and Bring Back for Hydraulic Tree Shear for the Highway Department. Member Bondi explained that the tree shearer attaches to the end of a boom and cuts through trees. If the trees were ignored, they would fall on the roadways and become a safety issue. The trees are on steep slopes and it would be a safety issue for workers to clear them. The cost would be \$25,000 and there is \$265,000 in the budget to plenty to cover the cost. The committee requested approval. Member Rohweder asked how big of trees would it cut. Landfill Administrator Clair said 15-16 in trees. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Nache to approve resolution on County Motor Fuel Maintenance, Section 22-00000-00-GM for the Highway. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Member Hunigan presented the report from the Nursing Home committee. The report is in the packet. He said that Covid started effecting the Nursing Home in 2019 and was devastating. Then they went nine months without a case. They had only one case a couple of months ago. He wants to applaud the staff and leadership for how well they have handled this devastating disease. Negotiations will be January 5<sup>th</sup>. There was a deposit put in from phase four Cares Act. They are going to make sure deposits get turned in a more timely matter keep things

balanced. They discussed the vaccination process following OSHA and CMS dates and deadlines.

Motion made by Member Hunigan and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the plan for staffing reductions. Member Hunigan said they have to because of the Budget. They only have 110 residents and that is not even close to the numbers they need. They have to make reductions to staff by eliminating two positions and seven positions will be reduced in hours. This will not affect nursing staff. The staff affected by reduced hours will be offered the ability to get their CNA certification at the cost of the County if they are willing to stay in the position for 2 years as an incentive to keep good employees. Chair Hawkinson asked when this would take effect. Member Hunigan said January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Chair Hawkinson said the financial stability of the nursing home is not good. The expenses need to be reduced. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Rohweder to approve hiring of Dietary Manager. Member Hunigan said they are working with Ryan Harris to step up to Dietary Manager at \$25,000 per year and changes to staff reducing charging overload. Member Amor asked if Nursing Home Administrator Mines was confident with his qualifications. Administrator Mines said she is more than confident. Member Hunigan said the food is better already. Administrator Mines said it still is not the best it can be but better. Member Bondi asked if he has his Health Department Certification. Administrator Mines said he would be getting it. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(12). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Motion by Member Hunigan and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the ending of the temporary wage increase. Member Hunigan said that it would end December 30, 2021. On December 16 they notified the Union which is a 14 day notice so they are in compliance with the Union. Member Nache asked how the news went over. Administrator Mines said hopefully it will make them want to ratify on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried

Chair Hawkinson reported that the reports from the outside committee assignments will be included in the packet if provided. If anyone has a question in regards to an outside committee or their report, they should contact the Board Member that is serving on that committee and ask them directly.

Chair Hawkinson discussed the review of checks that were paid during the time the Board was not in session. There were only the regularly approved checks for this month. There were no Budget Line Item Changes to be approved.

Motion was made by Member Nache and seconded by Member Amor to approve the claims against Knox County, Illinois, for the period of November 25, 2021 through December 22, 2021 (ordering that invoices be accepted and approved and that the County Clerk and County Treasurer by authorized and directed to issue County Warrants in payment of the bills in

aggregate amount approved by the County Board). Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder, and Link—(13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

The next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in person and via zoom at the council chambers at Galesburg City Hall.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Sandoval to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bondi, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Krejci, Amor, Davidson, Olinger, Friedrich, Nache, Hunigan, Rohweder and Link—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.