

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

November 7, 2023

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
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COUNTY OF KNOX) SS

Proceedings of the Special Public Meeting of the Knox County Board held in person at the Knox County Courthouse on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 6:01 p.m. This meeting was presented via teleconference for viewing only. The zoom code used tonight will stay the same for future meetings and can be found on the County website.

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

District 1 Cheryl Nache
District 3 Pamela Davidson
District 4 Jared Hawkinson
District 5 Ricardo “Rick” Sandoval
District 1 Anthony Weiss
District 2 Erin Pugh
District 3 Kimberly Thierry
District 4 Joshua Kramer
District 5 Brian Friedrich
District 1 Amanda Smith
District 2 Robert Bondi
District 4 Todd Olinger
District 3 Samuel Cohen
District 5 Patty Boone

And those absent: District 2 Greg Bacon

Also present were County Clerk Scott Erickson, Sheriff Jack Harlan, State’s Attorney Jeremy Karlin and Treasurer Robin Davis. Department Heads present were Highway Administrator Duane Ratermann and Landfill Administrator Rod Clear,

Sheriff Harlan delivered the Proclamation and 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 to the agenda. There were no additions. Chair Hawkinson removed Item 4 from the agenda. He said that he just received the hard copy sixty to ninety minutes ago and instead they will do it during the full session meeting on November 22 which will probably be moved to November 21st.

Chair Hawkinson asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Employment Contract for Solid Waste Director. Chair Hawkinson said that the agreement is in the packet. There is a change of 3 years to 4 years and this will be provided to Rod Clear on final signature page to make it to a four-year contract. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(14). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Olinger and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve Resolution on Reappointing of County Engineer. Chair Hawkinson said that for those not aware, the County Highway Engineer has to be first approved by the State. He said that they gave their approval of Duane Ratermann and this is just the resolution to appoint him to the position. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(14). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Olinger to approve Employment Contract for Highway Engineer. Chair Hawkinson said that the contract is in the packet.

Member Bondi said he is just double checking that it is a 4-year contract.

Chair Hawkinson said yes.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(14). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Olinger to approve Resolution Amending Knox County Ordinance 2009-025. Chair Hawkinson said that this was on last months agenda and removed due to not having the hard copy. He said this updates fees and changes in language were modified. This was signed off on by the State's Attorney. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Kramer, Friedrich, Bondi, Olinger and Boone—(8). Noes— Nache, Davidson, Pugh, Thierry, Smith and Cohen----(6). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Olinger and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve Amending Certain Budget Line Items of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget for Sheriff Department. Chair Hawkinson said that the current budget personnel line item 1 is \$123,085.40 as of 3 p.m. this afternoon. He said the remaining is not enough in the line item to pay employees this Friday. This does not leave enough to pay hours already worked or for the remaining of the year. He said that he spoke to Treasurer Davis and she said that they would need \$210,290.07 more from contingency funds to cover. It is in the packet to move \$210,291 from contingency to pay for the remainder of the year's obligations.

Member Nache said to be patient with her while she reads her paper. She said that this is not a safety issue this is a budget issue. She said that department heads need to stay within their budget. This is not a short-term problem. With the new budget the Sheriff needs to reduce operating expenses and personal. She said that if we use contingency funds we are setting a bad example and can not do this. We need to live within our means and within our budget. She said that is why she is voting no.

Member Davidson said that this is not something new about the new Sheriff. She said that we have told him that he has been running high and she said she was told that he has worked with bigger budgets. She said that he was warned month after month. She talked about the jail being low on inmates. She said that there are 49 and only 10 federal and we are budgeted on 30 federal inmates. She said that we can not tell how the elected officials run their budget. She said but we can not and will not since the Sheriff was warned numerous times allow this. She knows \$210,291 might not seem a lot after millions in the budget since as a County Board we have spent \$9 million dollars on upkeep for mold, HVAC heating and new roof. She said that the Sheriff should have to control his budget since she has to work within her means and we can not let this happen.

Member Cohen said that he echoes what Member Davidson had said. He said that before the first of the year the Sheriff was told that he was going over budget and needs to be held accountable. Then two months in another warning and then again in June that there would not be enough.

Member Kramer said that we cannot jeopardize the counties safety. We have moved before and in the past. He said that what is new is that we have a new sheriff and playing politics. We have 9 Board Members in the city and the 6 rural Members would have no protection due to playing politics over \$210,291. We have the money in the contingency fund. He said that he has had phone calls all day about this and if this is really going to happen over \$210,291. He mentioned what the County Sheriff's Department accomplished of 2 investigations, 15 arrests, over 10 lbs. of narcotics, \$15,000 cash, 4 fire arms which one had the serial number removed and one stolen AR15. He mentioned Sergeant Bay who was rewarded for his life saving measures on a child and yet we are talking about moving \$210,291 due to politics. He hopes that every Board Member makes the right decision and votes yes.

Member Thierry said that if she does not vote for this it will not be due to politics. She said that she does not like politics and will not play politics. She said that she would like to table since it was just put on the computer today.

Chair Hawkinson said that he just wants to reiterate that we have the money. We do not have to take out a loan. He said that the sheriff inherited a budget that was not abstain able to run efficiently.

Member Davidson said that yes money was moved in the past but not moved in the last minute to make sustainable. She said that they have always kept to the budget and she is not playing politics. She has been elected to do her job to the best of her ability.

Chair Hawkinson asked if anyone had heard of the Illinois Wage and Collection Act. He said it says if we fail to pay no later then 13 days after the time period worked State will fine the county \$5,000 per day per grievance and litigation. Illinois State Statues 820- ILCS 1 and 4. He said with employee 5,000 per day and attorney fee 5% onto what is due to them that would come to \$7,935,000 versus \$210,291 which would be \$310,000 per day. He said we have the money in the contingency fund for the \$210,290 short fall. We have Members talking about payroll expenses and budget not being meet. He said he has heard it both ways. He said that they talked about the deficit they had yet they are making a big stink over budget and how we are paying a maintenance line item when we are over budget of \$677,435 with the CBA the total difference in the line item that was in 2022 not now in November 2023. He mentioned that at the end of September the past Sheriff was at 105.75% but still paid the jail. While other line items were over 115.9%, 118% and 126.30% and they all still got paid with no line item changes. He said that if this does not pass then they the Sheriff will have to lay them off tomorrow but if 2/3 vote yes on the \$210,291 then he would not have to. He said that if it does not pass then they will have to close the jail and will lose the federal inmates which will result in losing \$750,000 permanently, which will result in a reduction in staff, courthouse security will not work, and not have any police protection in the county and in Abingdon and Knoxville that the county helps cover. They would be all without police protection. He said that if this happens then his first call will be to FOP emergency number and he will sign up as the first witness. He said yes, the Sheriff is over by \$210,291 but the budget did not take in account for the retirement payouts of LT. Rickards, Captain Brady, Jail Administrator and some patrol officers. This did not get budgeted for by the current Sheriff or Board.

Member Bondi asked what the balance was in the contingency fund.

Chair Hawkinson said \$275,698.30.

Member Bondi asked if we would be needing it for anything else.

Chair Hawkinson said not that he was aware of.

Member Bondi said so we have adequate funds.

Chair Hawkinson said there are adequate funds in the contingency with the information he has been provided.

Member Olinger asked if there are any legislative penalties, consequences. He said our legal counsel sits over there. He said to State's Attorney Karlin so we will be violating State Statues correct.

State's Attorney Karlin said yes, true.

Member Olinger said that it is cut and dry then.

State's Attorney Karlin said there is also violation of law to go over budget.

Member Olinger asked if it is over \$5,000 per day.

State's Attorney Karlin said that this is legislative and not that a State's Attorney should get influence on. He said that everyone should follow the law.

Member Olinger said thank you.

Member Weiss said I know it is if we go over but we are not going over budget.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Olinger and Boone—(9). Noes— Nache, Davidson, and Cohen---(3). Abstain---Pugh and Thierry---(2). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve Resolution Authorizing Entry into Commercial Purchase Contract. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(14). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Weiss and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Resolution Authorizing use of ARPA Funds for Property Associated Expenses. Chair Hawkinson said that this is not to exceed \$25,000. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(14). Noes— (0).. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Weiss to approve Resolution Authorizing Purchase of X-Ray Machine. Chair Hawkinson said that this is for \$50,511 not to exceed if approved the vendor information is on the G-drive. He said the original quote was for \$46,511 and was an old quote during budget they were asked to take it out of next year's budget since there is enough in the line item of the building fund. He said that the \$46,511 to \$50,511 difference is the extended warranty of \$4,000.

Member Davidson asked if they can postpone for a few weeks for the \$210,291 to come out of the building contingency and wait for the new budget.

Chair Hawkinson said that we can but we removed it from next year's budget due to Treasurer Davis asking for us to and to purchase it this year.

Member Davidson said yes but that was before \$210,291 was removed out of it.

Chair Hawkinson said that we have the money available in the building fund.

Member Davidson asked Treasurer Davis how much we have in the building fund.

Treasurer Davis said that she does not know.

Member Thierry asked if they could get a building fund balance.

Chair Hawkinson said that he can look it up if they give him time. He said that he spoke to Treasurer Davis and since they had the extra funds it was the recommendation of Treasurer Davis.

Treasurer Davis said that she looked at it today and did say that at budget meeting but they no longer have that much in any single line item.

Member Thierry asked so you are saying that the building fund does have the money.

Chair Hawkinson said that he is trying to get the amount and asked what fund it would be in.

Chief Deputy Treasure Bailey said fund 49.

Chair Hawkinson said that it shows \$250,456.22 in the fund.

Member Thierry asked Chair Hawkinson to repeat the number.

Chair Hawkinson said \$250,456.22 and then said sorry I miss spoke. He said there is \$256,029.39 with 66.03% used.

Member Thierry asked how old the machine is.

Sheriff Harlan said 37 years old. He said that lots of stuff gets missed.

Chair Hawkinson said that we inherited it.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Davidson, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(13). Noes—Nache---(1). Motion carried.

The next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at Galesburg City Hall Council Chambers. Chair Hawkinson said that the meeting will probably be moved to November 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall Council Chambers. The Zoom option is for public viewing only. Board Members will be present in person for this meeting.

Meeting recessed at 6:44pm.