

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

August 28, 2024

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COUNTY OF KNOX) SS

Proceedings of the Regular Meeting of the Knox County Board held in person at the Galesburg City Council chambers on Wednesday, August 28th, 2024 at 6:02 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 4	Jared Hawkinson
District 5	Ricardo “Rick” Sandoval
District 1	Anthony Weiss
District 3	Kimberly Thierry
District 4	Joshua Kramer
District 5	Brian Friedrich
District 1	Amanda Smith
District 2	Robert Bondi
District 3	Samuel Cohen
District 4	Todd Olinger
District 5	Patty Boone

And those absent:	District 2	Greg Bacon
	District 3	Pamela Davidson
	District 2	Erin Pugh

Also present were County Clerk-Recorder Scott Erickson, County Treasurer Robin Davis, and Sheriff Jack Harlan. Department Heads present were Nursing Home Administrator Jodi Mines, Highway Administrator Duane Ratermann, Landfill Administrator Rod Clear, Knox County Public Health Administrator Michele Gabriel and Mary Davis Home Administrator Wendi Steck.

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 or deletions to the agenda. He removed Item #5 due to not being ready to present it but will put it on for next month. He added 6B for discussion slash presentation from the National Railroad Hall of Fame.

Chair Hawkinson asked if anyone had any objection. There were no objections.

Chair Hawkinson asked for public comment. He asked if there was anyone that did not get a chance to sign up before the meeting started.

David Amor from District 2 wanted to invite the Board and everyone from the community to the Galesburg Chapter NAACP Freedom Fund Gala with a dinner on Saturday, September 28th at Cedar Creek Hall at 571 E. North St. in Galesburg. The Galesburg Chapter of the NAACP does many important charitable events in the community including their annual Back to School fall cookout at Kiwanis Park. There are fun games and food with free backpacks distributed to children every year. They also reward college scholarships for local students, conduct voter registration events, and sponsor forum for the public to hear from local candidates running for public office. There will be an NAACP sponsored candidate next month at the Galesburg Public Library on Monday September 23rd. Their Freedom Fund Gala is the chapters major fundraising event of the year which helps make possible all these other activities. He encourages everyone to attend. Tickets are \$50 per person available through the Eventbrite ticketing site for an evening of good food and a keynote speaker this year Jane Elliott who is a nationally known educator from here in the Midwest. She is the creator of the "Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes" exercise to introduce children to the experience of discrimination. In 1968, the day after the assassination of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Ms. Elliott a third-grade teacher in Riceville, Iowa was trying to help her students mostly white students gain some understanding of the tension behind Dr. King's assassination. She divided the children between the ones with blue eyes and brown eyes. Originally told the students that people with brown eyes were more intelligent. The results were stark with the superior students not only performing better on tests than they did previously but also acted superior. While the blue-eyed students did worse and acted more timid and more subservient. The next day she reversed the order. Now, the blue-eyed students were smarter with similar results. The children wrote up their experience which was published in the local newspaper. The story was highly controversial locally and attracted national attention. Academics repeated the exercise and validated the results and that exercise is now become a standard approach to giving people, particularly children a more direct understanding of discrimination and prejudice. Ms. Elliot now approaching ninety is still a highly sought after and powerful speaker. Her appearance as the keynote for the NAACP Gala is an opportunity not to be missed. He strongly encourages everyone to attend and said thank you.

Ken Springer said he wants to highlight an economic development that KCAP participates in on behalf of Knox County. The Quad Cities Regional Economic Development Authority or QCREDA for short is a regional bonding authority that serves an eleven-county region that includes Henry, Knox, Mercer, Rock Island, Carroll, etc. It is one of several regional bonding authorities that are established across Illinois and have been established by the State Legislature. Each year the State of Illinois authorizes municipalities and counties to issue a certain amount of tax-exempt bonds to be used for economic development projects. This is called bond cap. What QCREDA does is collects and aggregates the pool of used bond cap that is seeded by municipalities and counties within that eleven-county region to QCREDA. A lot of times communities may not have projects that are lined up and ready to go for this bond cap financing. Sometimes the amount of bond allocation that the State gives is just too small to do a project. So, any bond cap that is left over can voluntarily be seeded to QCREDA and then QCREDA creates a big pool. QCREDA can pool that together and finance larger projects in the region. They can do a variety of different projects. They can do manufacturing, office, large projects for non-profits, private nursing homes, and multi-family residential. Generally, projects need to be within the one million to ten-million-dollar financing range in order to seek bond financing from QCREDA. A local example, in 2021 QCREDA provided sixteen million in bond financing for the Galesburg Towers Apartment located on North Henderson Street. That is an example of money being applied locally. In addition to those bond financing tools QCREDA also operates an independent enterprise zone which can be deployed within that eleven-county region. If you see QCREDA or Quad Cities Regional Economic Development Authority on any agenda this is how that functions. KCAP serves on that board and we have an officer on that board as well.

Secondly, he wanted to share the good news that he saw on the agenda. There is the proclamation for Workforce Development. He wanted to highlight that July of 2024 marks fourteen consecutive months of labor force growth for our area which is something we have not seen in the last fifteen years. He wanted to highlight some good news that appears on our labor force that is growing once more and said thank you very much.

Chair Hawkinson thanked everyone for speaking.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the following items of the consent agenda: 1) minutes of the regular Board Meeting on July 24, 2024 and 2) sales tax and various taxes for the month of May 2024 in the amounts of \$150,950.42 and \$32,981.81 and public safety tax in the amount of \$259,024.05. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone—(11). Noes—Nache---(1). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the Proclamation in Recognition of Workforce Development Month. Chair Hawkinson said he wanted a brief discussion before he read the proclamation into the record. He said we have Blanche Shoup here from Workforce Innovation. He said as the Chair of the Board he also serves on the board of directors as well for the group and Ms. Shoup wanted to present this

proclamation next month to their board. It is a very important key to our community, like Mr. Springer said in his public comment that we have seen some growth and we can attribute that to a lot of things to include Ms. Shoup's leadership.

Chair Hawkinson read the proclamation aloud then invited Ms. Shoup to come up and speak.

Blanche Shoup said she is the Director of the Workforce office of the nine-county area in western Illinois and on behalf of our Workforce Innovation Board thank you very much for recognizing Workforce Development Month. The nine-county area includes the CEO Board of thirteen members as Chair Hawkinson mentioned he is a member of that group who is responsible for the oversight and investment of the funds that come into our region both from federal and state funding. Their Workforce Innovation Board as you heard is combined of a number of different individuals from all sectors that touch workforce to help them talk about to look forward to the future and identify the things they need to address and one that she will always mention is the disengaged youth. The young people that are 16-24 years old that are not connected to jobs or education. They are always seeking those individuals to help them. That is an example of one of the priorities that they have. She said as Mr. Springer mentioned they are a great partner with economic development and other entities in the community to help make sure that our workforce for today and tomorrow is skilled for our businesses and our economy. She said thank you again for recognizing Workforce Development Month.

Chair Hawkinson said thank you to Ms. Shoup for everything she is doing. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the Proclamation in Recognition of September 11 as National Patriots Day. Chair Hawkinson read the proclamation aloud. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that Item 5 was removed.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the appointment of State's Attorney. Chair Hawkinson asked for a motion to modify to make the motion to State's Attorney of Sherry Lawson-Weaver effective September 5th at 12:01am or sooner if the vacancy occurs.

Motion was made to modify by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Friedrich. The vacancy need filled within 60 days by appointment by the County Board with the advice of the County Board Commissioners. He has selected Sherry Lawson-Weaver and has spoke with her at great length multiple times in the last month and a half. She has agreed to step forward and fill that position until the next State's Attorney is sworn in at 9am on December 2nd which is the first Monday of December. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Landfill. Chair Hawkinson said that MOU will take effect September 9th regarding the starting wage from 85% to 100%. This affects three employees and there is sufficient money in the current allocated budget that has been approved. It will require no additional funding for this fiscal year. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that this is a discussion/presentation regarding the National Railroad Hall of Fame. He asked Julie King and if her associate wanted join to approach to speak.

Julie King thanked Chair Hawkinson and the County Board. She said that obviously you are all aware that you secured a grant agreement with the National Railroad Hall of Fame that required us to meet a fundraising threshold in order to receive that money. She is really proud and pleased to say that they have achieved that and exceeded it by a bit. They have raised just over seven million dollars and that brings them to their ground-breaking goal. Their national fundraising events will continue but having reached this threshold they will move forward with the preparation of their final design phase, their construction documents, and if all goes well they hope to break ground sometime in the first half of next year. This is a moment of success that is shared by everyone from their organizers, people that have enabled this to happen, our great supporters from across the country, throughout the rail industry and from the community. She is thrilled to also have the support of the counties backing for this project also and said thank you.

Chair Hawkinson said thank you for taking time to share and glad they made their monumental goal.

Member Bondi said that tomorrow is their 30th anniversary since they began August 29th, 1994.

Member Friedrich said that the monthly report from the Ways and Means Committees are in the packet. He said that there are no action items. They started the awhile back the budget meetings with Landfill Administrator Clear and Highway Administrator Ratermann and now have been in a slump to get department heads and committee chairs to get going. They did one Monday and have two planned for next week. He said let the fun begin.

Member Kramer said that the monthly report from the Public Safety and Justice Committees are in the packet. He said like Member Friedrich said a lot of budget prep going on right now. We have a couple department heads getting ready to meet with us in a couple of weeks. He said that he has meet with Mary Davis Home Administrator Steck and they are in talks of making a priority of infrastructure issues that need to be addressed over there at the Mary Davis Home. They are working to move forward on those and will have more information the following meetings.

Member Bondi presented the monthly report from the Infrastructure Committee. He stated that the monthly report and minutes are in your packet. He asked if there are any comments or questions. If not, he will go on to the action items.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve Bid and Buy for County Fuel for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Member Bondi said they usually do this in September but Administrator Clear will be at training on that date so thought it was best to do this month. If approved the bids will be received at the County Clerk's Office until 11am on the 23rd of October the day of the full board meeting. A recommendation of the lowest bid will be presented to the full board, later that evening.

Chair Hawkinson said that they do a bid and buy since the bids are only good for three days before expiration. The fuel is used to fuel the whole county from the Landfill, Highway Mary Davis Home and Sheriff's Department.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Weiss to approve Engineering Services Agreement, County Highway 25, Section 20-00059-02-RS. Member Bondi read aloud that this project on County Highway 25 is 4 miles long, starting at the intersection of County Highway 10 and proceeding south to Lake Bracken. The average daily traffic on County Highway 25 is 1,000 vehicles. The last maintenance activity of County Highway 24 was an ultra-thin surface course applied in 1999. The existing pavement has significant map cracking and other deficiencies. The cold-in-place recycling will pulverize the existing hot mix asphalt material, incorporate an engineered emulsion to the pulverized material and lay it back down for the new road base material. The engineered emulsion additive will increase the structural capacity of the materials. Once the road base is placed we will add a seal coat and micro-surfacing. Hutchison Engineering will do all of the necessary surveys to complete the design and preparation of the plans, estimates and specifications required for a project letting. Payment for all engineering services provided by Hutchison Engineering shall not exceed \$32,500.00. The construction is estimated to cost \$1,500,000. It is scheduled in our Federal program for 2026. The engineering will be paid with Federal Aid Matching Funds from Line Item 008-000-560400-30. The current line item balance is \$28,000 with \$75,000 proposed in the FY 24/25 budget. It is recommended to approve the Engineering Services Agreement for County Highway 25 CIR Project, Section 20-00059-02-RS. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve Bid for Highway Office Storefront Replacement. Member Bondi read aloud that in December 2021, Klingner & Associates began work on renovations to the highway department office building. The building was built in 1960, with some upgrades to the electrical and HVAC systems in 2011. The renovations have to be completed in phases, due to the limited funding we have each year

for building maintenance. The first phase will be replacing the storefront of the building. This is essentially the windows from floor to ceiling. Klinger and Associates developed the bidding documents for the storefront project. Bids were opened by Scott Erickson, County Clerk, in the courthouse at 2 pm on Monday, August 19, 2024. There was one (1) bid submitted by First Glass of Galesburg. The base bid is \$105,000. They are going to eliminate three operable windows, or windows that can be opened, from the south and west walls. This will save \$6,000, reducing the base bid to \$99,000. The architect's estimate for the storefront project was \$100,000. There is \$90,000 in the 2023/2024 Highway Fund Budget Line Item 006-30-660-010-000 for this project. The remaining funds needed will be transferred from the Equipment Replacement line item, which has a current balance of \$45,000. The recommendation is to approve the bid for the highway office storefront replacement. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that Member Bacon is not present so Member Smith will present the report from the Health and Human Services committee.

Member Smith said that the report is in the packet and there are no action items. She said that a couple of highlights are they are working on funding for the potential renovations and the solar farm project out at the nursing home. The marketing program is going very well. As of the end of July they have 102 residents and the financials are continuing to improve greatly. They have a couple of maintenance projects that are either being completed or getting close to being completed.

Chair Hawkinson said we have a significant amount of cash on hand at the time of the report. They have gone another month of not utilizing the referendum funds for daily expenses that can be moved to updates to the facility. They will be talking about that soon.

Chair Hawkinson stated that the reports from several outside committees are in the packet. 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.

Motion made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Weiss to approve Opening of Budget for Line Item Changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that there are a handful of budget line item changes in the packet for TORT, CAC, Animal Control, Sheriff, Landfill, Nursing Home, Public Defender and 50 E. Main St. for maintenance at the new facility.

Motion made by Member Sandoval and seconded by Member Weiss for the approval of Proposed Line Item Changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson,

Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that the manual check review in the packet. He said that there was one out of the norm for the payment to Pitney & Bowes for the mail machine.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the claims by Members for per diem and mileage for the Committee Meetings of August 2024, Board Meetings in June, and other claims for per diem from Meetings. Chair Hawkinson said the total was \$3,922.03.

Member Bondi asked if this was for Board Meetings in June or July?

Member Friedrich said August Committee Meetings and July Board Meetings.

Member Bondi said that it says June.

Motion was made by Member Cohen to amend to saying Board Meetings in July instead of June.

Motion made by Bondi and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the amendment.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (11). Noes— (0). Abstain---Nache---(1). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the claims against Knox County, Illinois for the period of July 25, 2024 through August 28, 2024 (ordering that invoices be accepted and approved and that the County Clerk and County Treasurer be authorized and directed to issue County Warrants in payment of the bills in the aggregate amount approved by the County Board). Chair Hawkinson reported that the vouchers submitted were in the amount of \$3,030,640.62. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (11). Noes— (0). Abstain---Nache---(1). Motion carried.

The next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., at Galesburg City Hall Council Chambers. The Zoom option is for public viewing only. Board Members will be present in person for this meeting.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Weiss to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Weiss, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Bondi, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.