

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

November 25, 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 Monday, November 25th, 2024 at 6:06 p.m. This meeting was presented via teleconference for viewing only. The YouTube channel link can be found on the County website. You can view the meeting on the Knox County YouTube channel. After the meeting is over you review it and are able to download it.

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 2 Greg Bacon
- District 3 Pamela Davidson
- District 4 Jared Hawkinson
- 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 3 Samuel Cohen
- District 4 Todd Olinger
- District 5 Patty Boone

And those absent: District 5 Ricardo “Rick” Sandoval
 District 2 Robert Bondi

Also present were County Clerk-Recorder Scott Erickson and 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 with additions for discussion only. He said he would like to add under Items for the Chair Item #A for discussion and presentation for departing elected officials. He removed Item #11.

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.

Greg “Chopps” Bacon he said that as of November 1st, 2024 the Knox County Nursing Home is the only Medicare Certified Facility in Knox County with a Five-star rating and this is a big deal. Currently the Knox County Nursing Home employs 154 people including 75 nurses and CNA’s. The average census over the last quarter was 108 residents with a current census of 115. Managing a census this high and obtaining a Five-star rating is truly a statement to their commitment to providing exceptional care and assistance to their residents. CMS the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services a division of the federal government determines an overall star rating for nursing homes based on three important sources. Health Inspections which evaluate their facilities compliance with Federal and State regulations as well as their ability to provide a safe and healthy environment to their residents. Staffing which assists in their facility and nursing staffing levels including the number of Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Certified Nurse Assistants. Quality Measures which examines their facilities performance of quality indicators of residents that have improved in their ability to perform from daily living activities and the percentage of residents that are free from pressure ulcers. As you can see a Five-star rating is accomplished only by the hard work of every employee of Knox County Nursing Home. This is truly a proud moment for Knox County. They would like to invite all of you to a celebration that will be held on Thursday 12/12/2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Garden Room at Knox County Nursing Home. Please join them in celebrating this tremendous achievement. Thank you very much.

Zack Binder said he serves as the Pre-k thru 12th grade at Williamsfield Schools. He understands that Rowva Schools are considering adding a school resource officer to their staff and as a partner in their co-op he wanted to take an opportunity to express his positive experience having an SRO in our building for the past two years. They have had the opportunity and privilege to work with Sarah Hall and her impact on their school community has been nothing short of outstanding. First and foremost, Officer Hall ensures the physical safety of all of our students in our school whether greeting students at the door or providing security in the mornings. She’s a calm and visible presence to the parents and their staff. She fosters a sense of security that cannot be understated her ability to deescalate situations even at the beginning of the day and provide immediate support has been invaluable. Second, Officer Hall plays a pivotal role in their education and prevention. She leads classroom discussions on topics such as digital citizenship which is an ever-growing concern in our schools, substance abuse prevention and conflict resolution. These lessons are tailored to our individual students based on the relationship she’s been able to build with them from being inside their building. This makes these critical life

skills relatable and impactful. She's not just teaching but she is building relationships with our students and keeping them safe each and every day. Third, she has become a mentor and role model to our students in a way that Administration and staff sometimes just can't do. Officer Hall connects with students in a way that breaks down barriers and creates positive relationships with and break down stereotypes of law enforcement officers. She does this in a way that builds positive relationships and cares for their students in a genuine way. Finally, she serves as a resource for their students and families. Officer Hall has supported staff in handling difficult situations, provided valuable insights during safety planning meetings and has offered assistance to families navigating complex legal or social challenges. The positive impact of an SRO in our building as a principal of eleven years at Williamsfield Schools cannot be understated or overstated. The positive impact has been tremendous and he highly encourages this partnership. He said thank you for your consideration. They are deeply grateful for the support that allows them to have an SRO in their building and they ask for the continued backing in this vital program. Thank you for your time and your ongoing commitment to the safety and success of all students. Thank you!

Emily Bean she said that she is from the Rowva School Board. She said she can't follow that was wonderfully written speech and thank you for your support. She comes here as a Schoolboard member but also as a parent of three young students in the school district. She can't underscore enough the importance of safety and security in their school district. Also, how much they could build on their current foundation and keep investing in the structure that their school has in place. Also, drug prevention, mental health and just building relationships within the community with the police officers. She said when she was at the homecoming parade last October they had a deputy that was part of their parade and the music stopped and he began beatboxing over the intercom. She thinks that it puts a smile on kids' faces, puts a smile on the parents faces and it adds a layer of security to any event. She can't underscore the importance enough that this would bring to the Rowva School District. Thank you for your time and she knows it is difficult to allocate resources with what limited resources you have but we would really appreciate your support in bringing that position to Rowva. Thank you!

Ken Springer said he is with the Knox County Partnership for Economic Development and wanted to give an update on things that are happening with economic developments. He apologized for not being able to be here last month. In early October there was a huge project announcement by Thrushwood Farms to renovate and occupy the former Maytag Facility. This is a project that is going to invest 45 to 50 million in the community. It will create between 150 and 180 jobs. This project was made possible by a development agreement with the City of Galesburg and comes on the heels of Thrushwood Farms expanding its downtown Galesburg headquarters earlier in 2024. This is a really big deal. This is a big deal for the region. It is something they are very excited about. This is going to fill the largest vacant building remaining on the market down here. Kudos to the City of Galesburg and their team for the work to make this project happen. This is a really exciting time for the community. Secondly, he wanted to mention that KCAP's team is currently out recruiting students for the next CEO class. If you have any high school juniors or sophomores that are interested in learning entrepreneurship and leadership. Please encourage them to check out the program. They will be visiting all of the high schools in Knox County in the next couple of months. They have already started that process. The program has room for 15 to 18 students each year. So, they are always looking for sharp

students if you have them in your network send them their way. They have a Facebook page and have a web page for the program at knoxcountyilceo.com. He also wanted to highlight some other really cool things that are happening with Workforce Development in the area. The Galesburg Area Vocational Center had a manufacturing and skill trade showcase at the end of October. That event was an amazing success. The program had over 1,700 students and over 30 employers meeting up for a job fair career exploration event. Adam and Don at GAVC did a really great job with that event. They are seeing really good momentum with vocational trades in this community. Lastly, there was a great career exploration program recently called Welcome to the Real World that was held at Carl Sandburg College. This is put on in the spring and the fall of every year by the Regional Office of Education, Delabar CTE and the U of I Extension. It gives eighth graders and opportunity to meet with industry professionals, learn money management, learn different tips and tricks about being an adult. Abby from his team facilitates a discussion panel of young professionals each time they do one of these and he also wants to note that our very own Clerk Scott Erickson was there teaching young people about how to participate in the voting system. Again, great stuff going on with the Workforce Development space and with the youth. He appreciates the opportunity to give an update.

Scott Lake said he is Board President at Rowva High School. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. He said that he is also going to suffer compared to what Zach shared with you guys. He is here to talk about the opportunity to add a school resource officer up at Rowva. He thinks that it would be a great opportunity for them to improve on their safety and security at the school. They've done quite a bit of improvements in recent years. He was searching on the internet a little bit today looking for information on some of the past events that have occurred in the United States and in Illinois in particular. As he was going through that he thought that there's no purpose in this right because it's the next event that we really want to prevent. He thinks having a school resource officer on site there which is just part of it but it does improve on the safety. It improves on the deterrence hopefully, even more importantly it helps the students to become more comfortable with and have a better understanding of law enforcement. There is also a lot of opportunities from an educational standpoint that they can offer the students with having the school resource officer on site. Again, he says thank you very much for the opportunity to speak tonight and thank you for your consideration on this action item.

Dr. James Dunlap said he is Superintendent of the Rowva School District and no surprise that he is here to talk about the school resource officer position. He said that he can't really add a whole lot to what's already been shared. Especially what Mr. Binder shared with all the wonderful benefits that a school resource officer brings in allowing our students to interact with law enforcement on a daily basis and build those relationships in a way that changes the view of law enforcement. He shared something a little bit personal that his sister-in-law teaches in Appalache High School in Georgia. Appalache High School in Georgia this year faced one of those events that we don't ever want to talk about or have to face. She was in her classroom and heard gunshots. Appalache High School had not one but two school resource officers that were able to stop that incident very quickly. He said that we live in a very rural community not like there that sometimes our police are so far away that if we were to have an incident like that it would take a while for them to get to Rowva. Having that resource officer on their campus provides the safety and security that their students need in the event. They hope it never does but,

in the event, that something like that would occur they would be able to stop it much more quickly and provide that safety and security. Safety and security are first and foremost in our minds for our students. Yes, they also get all those other wonderful benefits of the school resource officer working with our students, teaching them about law enforcement, teaching them maybe a little about forensics and crime scene investigations. The safety and security are of utmost importance and thank you for your consideration of the SRO this evening. Thank you for your decision.

Chair Hawkinson thanked everyone for speaking.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the following items of the consent agenda: 1) minutes of the regular Board Meeting on October 25, 2024 and 2) sales tax and various taxes for the month of August 2024 in the amounts of \$150,684.83 and \$36,923.78 and public safety tax in the amount of \$249,319.54. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Abstain---(1). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that they had a recent election. He recognized the three elected officials in Knox County that are departing their duties. He thanked Knox County Board Member Amanda Smith for her time, effort and service to the Knox County voters in Knox County and especially in District 1. Thank you very much. He said the next one up is Greg “Chopps” Bacon. He said that a lot of folks don’t realize that Member Bacon already served on the County Board for 12 years and was the Board Chairman for 8 of those years before stepping away for 6 years. He jumped back in the ring and has led the nursing home committee since then. Again, thank you very much for your time and your service as an elected official to your District 2 and to Knox County. Last but not least this gentleman served in the coroner’s office since 1998 when he was taken under the wing of John Watson as a deputy coroner. He was elected as Knox County’s Coroner in 2004. It has been a tough 20 years of being in service. A lot of people don’t realize the job that the coroner has to do. This is 24 hours a day that you are on call and at people’s worst time. He has seen things that we do not ever want to see. It is more than just Mark Thomas’s personal endeavor, his time, his wife Trisha and his two children Adam and Luke have also been apart of this Knox County for a long time. Thank you, Mr. Thomas for your service to Knox County and everybody that’s around.

Chair Hawkinson said thank you again for all three of your service to the county to this board, your guidance and thoughts that you’ve all provided. He said that since it is a discussion item he opened it up any questions, comments or discussion on those three.

Member Kramer wanted to just add that as being the coroner Mr. Thomas you got to stand in as the sheriff. Thank you for your service, thank you for stepping up when the county needed you to and thank your Mr. Thomas.

Chair Hawkinson said that Mr. Thomas was the one and only person that he thinks has ever had to do that.

Member Davidson said thank you to Member Smith for everything that you’ve done for all your committees that you were on. As this was your first time and last term she doesn’t know what that says for that but she just wanted to say thank you. She wanted to say thank you to Member Bacon. She knows that he had a huge vision for the nursing home and this Board. She

hopes a little of it was fulfilled. Don't think the phone calls won't stop coming because they won't of asking him for advice. To Mr. Thomas and his wife Trish, she said she loves them both. She thanked Mr. Thomas for everything that he has done and how he has been there for the whole county with the ups and downs. For the understanding through the changes that have come within the Coroner's office but you still stayed faithful to this county. You will never be forgotten and thank you.

Member Nache said thank you to all three but with Mr. Thomas it is kind of a little closer because she has had to see him a couple of times this year for the good. She is just glad he was there and he was the first person they thought of when they were asked. She thanked him for everything he does. She thanked Member Smith and Member Bacon also but Mark's job is one she wouldn't want to have. Thank you!

Clerk Erickson asked if he could break protocol and jump in. He said Mr. Coroner it has been an honor and privilege to work with you. Our offices work very close together with Death Certificates and things. It has been an honor and privilege from day one. He said they came into office at the same time and you're the smart one getting out while the getting is good. Thank you for all those years of service to the county and like the Chairman said that nobody knows what that job does. All the dedication and time that not only yourself but Tricia and the family have put in so thank you appreciate that. He said to Member Smith thank you for your time we appreciate your service and Member Bacon as well we appreciate all your time you have put on to the Board. It has been an honor and privilege from the County Clerk's office to work with you all so thank you.

Mark Thomas said thank you for having him be coroner for the past 20 years and thank you to the Board as it has changed over the last 20 years that he has been here. That they made sure to provide his office with things that he needed to be able to do the job as they needed to do it so thank you for your support for the past 20 years.

Chair Hawkinson said thank you everybody.

Member Friedrich said that the monthly report from the Ways and Means Committees are in the packet. He said that it was a pretty easy month as far as the budget. They wrapped up with just a few changes this month to go through but nothing major. They got it worked through pretty easily. They didn't have any budget meetings and outside of the normal meeting on Thursday. He said that they have a lot of items to go through and most of the items you will hear him say is just normal year end stuff. This is what they do at year end of the month so nothing extravagant there.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the Resolution on Deeds of Conveyance. Member Friedrich said that there are two of them. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the appointment to Zoning Board of Appeals of Terry Boydston. Member Friedrich said that this is a re-appointment and he's been on there for a while. The Assessor has no issues with him and would like to get him back on there. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Bacon to approve Case CU-07-24 – Request for Solar Energy Farm in “A” Agricultural and “C” Conservation Districts by Channel Cat, LLC. Member Friedrich said that this a pretty big project between London Mills and Hermon in that area North of them. It is 540 acres and not all of that will be solar panels. They passed around the maps at committee and went through them. He said that he thinks they said that the project starts in 3 years by the time they get it done. Their map goes around certain wet areas and anything of historical significance around so nothing will be impacted. There is no concrete that goes in the ground just simply posts. It is a 40-year project and a 40-year lease with several farmers there. At 40 years there is money set aside to decommission it and basically the poles and wires would be pulled out of the ground. There is nothing really permanent in there.

Chair Hawkinson said that he did make a comment that it is steel posts and that there is no concrete that is being buried. It is just the post going into the ground. There are three residents that asked for during Thursdays committee meeting that the project that butts up next to them that a greenery or a shrubbery barrier would be built into the plan. It passed the ZBA unanimously and it does meet all of the ordinance and state regulations for such a project. He said that he did ask a question about any tile that might be in the ground that could get damaged of the farmers. They are required under law to do their surveys and repair any damages that incurred to the existing groundwork. There was a lot of good discussion at the committee meeting and like Vice-Chair Fredrick said it did pass at the committee.

Member Davidson said that she truly gives her approval of this. This is our future it will help with our energy and our feedback to our county is just remarkable. She is saying yes.

Member Friedrich asked if anyone remembered the number of homes this could do. He asked Channel Cat to come up and answer that for him. He said it surprised him of the number.

Jeff Sargent said that he is with Channel Cat Solar. He said that in total the 100-megawatt project will roughly generate enough power to power 177,000 homes. It will bring in over the 40-year span about \$20 million or so in additional tax revenue to the county. As mentioned they have meet with all land owners in the surrounding area and provided them ample notice. They have worked with them to ensure that the project with work with the local community.

Member Bacon said from the meeting please state about the decommissioning process. He said people are probably wondering about that part of it.

Mr. Sargent said absolutely. He said that through the Department of Agriculture with the State of Illinois they are required to enter into what is known as an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement. Within that agreement it provides a lot of requirements towards the facility including a decommissioning escrow. So, through the early stages of construction and early of the project the full cost of the entire decommissioning project will be put into escrow. So, regardless of circumstance the project will be fully paid for the removal and remediation of the ground.

Member Friedrich said the ground would be mowed as necessary. They typically mow it once a year but if needed they will mow it twice a year.

Member Boone asked in regards to if there would be a hail storm and if they had to have clean up. Also, if there were contamination.

Mr. Sargent said yes. He said that all of the panel arrays are relatively replaceable panel by panel. So, if one panel breaks it is as simple as taking that one panel out and replacing it. These panels are made with relatively common materials such as silicon, aluminum, and a lot of

just commonly industrial materials. They have been shown over studies the past 10 years to not leech any chemicals into the local area.

Member Bacon said that you did mention that the grass you are going to grow or the plants you are going to grow are sustainable to the ecology.

Mr. Sargent said yes, they work with environmental engineers and pollinator specific researchers. That go in and plant a combination of pollinator specific and native plants within underneath the panels that will usually get around three or four feet. They will be maintained on an as needed basis. Those plans underneath all the panels help with not only bringing pollinators and nutrients to the ground. They also help with reducing soil erosion by slowing down groundwater. He said thank you all for your consideration.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Abstain---(1). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the Resolution for State’s Attorney Appellate Prosecutor. Member Friedrich said that this is something they do every year at the end of the year.

Chair Hawkinson said that the amount due is \$21,000.

Member Boone asked with the rate that is paid yearly if that covers all appeals that they would handle. She asked of the \$21,000 if we would have to pay any more then that.

Chair Hawkinson said no, that covers all activities that we have to get with the State Appellate Prosecutors office. If there is something that has a conflict of interest with the State’s Attorney’s office they cover that. They cover Appellate cases if we not have the staffing for then they will assign people to assist. He believes that it is based on county size and population.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the Letters of Engagement for Auditor. Member Friedrich said that this gives the auditors permission to get started. He said that according to Treasurer Davis they are already ready to get going and start digging up some information to get ready for the audit. This is just giving information to get started.

Member Davidson asked if they had any department that is hesitating to not being able to do their audit.

Member Friedrich said not that he has heard of.

Member Davidson said that we have had that in the past.

Member Friedrich said yes, we have. He said nothing like we have had in the past and he thinks they are good.

Member Davidson said ok.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Olinger to approve the Resolution Authorizing County Clerk and County Treasurer to Issue Warrants for Certain Claims

during the period the County Board is not in session. Member Friedrich said this is what they do every year. It is just authorizing Clerk Erickson and Treasurer Davis to pay the bills when they are not in session for recurring bills. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the List of Monthly Recurring Manual Checks. Member Friedrich said this is the checks that we are approving that they pay that recurred every month and are payed off cycle.

Member Davidson asked for a list of them.

Chair Hawkinson said that it is in everyone's Board packet. He said Devnet, Treasurer's Office from McDonough County, Pitney Bose, election judges and jurors.

Member Davidson said ok.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that Item #11 needs to be removed.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve the Budget Changes for FY2024-2025 Budget. Member Friedrich said that this is approving the budget changes for the new budget for next year for the changes that they did Thursday night.

Chair Hawkinson said since the budget was approved and put on display last month. It has been on display since. State law requires that any changes to the budget that was put on display have to be reviewed and individually itemized. He said starting with the General Fund of the budget change regarding the establishment of the education incentive program. The line item was added for \$1 and the contingency was reduced by \$1. The General Fund for the State Appellate Prosecutor was originally budgeted for \$23,000 and they reduced it to \$21,000 which they were able to put the \$2,000 back into the reserve. For 50 East Main St. they had in their lease income a revenue of \$241,000 that they were expecting it to come in after December 1st. They have already received that payment so they can't budget that revenue for next year so that was reduced to \$1. Permanent security was added for \$1 as a placeholder and part-time security was added for \$1 as a placeholder, postage \$1 was added as a placeholder and equipment was added for \$800,000. The transfer and reserves were added and reduced to meet those line item changes. In the County Clerk's office, the overtime wage line proposed budget was \$8,000. It was increased to \$13,000 and that difference was taken out of reserves due to the additional overtime from the change in the exempt position FLSA requirements from the Department of Labor. The Public Defender salary reimbursement proposed budget was \$118,450 and that was increased to \$124,018. These budget changes were adjusted from the reserves as an adjustment from the State of Illinois for reimbursement. The K9 program a transfer in K9 donations original proposed budget was \$44,288 that was reduced to \$41,573. The donation expenses were changed from \$44,289 to \$41,574. These budget changes were for actual K9 donation and reserves. The Sheriff's Department Step Grant a line item was inserted for the Sheriff's Department Step Grant Revenue. The proposed budget was zero since it did not exist and the renew was increased to \$31,725. The expenditure of the exact same line item \$31,725 and this is because of a grant received from the State of Illinois for FY24-25. Also, the Sheriff's Retail Crime Payment Grant

revenue was zero and was increased to \$17,500. The sheriff's retail crime overtime was zero and was increased to \$2,500. The retail crime equipment was zero and that was increased to \$15,000. These budget changes to account for the new State grant costs for FY24-25. For the IT Department permanent for sheriff there was none in the budget so was zero and the new proposed budget is \$1 as a placeholder. Equipment replacement for the sheriff previous budget was zero and next years budget is \$1 for a placeholder which reduces the contingencies by \$2. These budget changes are to air mark additional staff and cost associated with the sheriff's computers that may no longer be paid to the City of Galesburg. The Mary Davis Home the Education Reimbursement that did not exist was at zero. The new budget increases that to \$1 as a placeholder and reduces the contingency by \$1. This was before establishing the Education Incentive Program. The Veterans Assistance Commission the education reimbursement new line item that did not exist the proposed budget was zero and the new proposed budget is \$1. This reduces their contingency by \$1 and this is also a budget change establishing the Education Incentive Program. The nursing home for the solar farm proposed budget for FY24-25 was \$550,000 which was reduced to \$1, opposed farm rebate was \$550,000 which was reduced to \$290,748, transfer in reserves \$293,498 which was reduced to zero, contingencies was \$697,129 which was changed to \$694,378. These budget changes are for the solar expenses that are being paid in fiscal year 2024. Also, for the nursing home education reimbursement was zero and go to \$1 for a placeholder which reduced their contingencies from \$694,378 to \$694,377. The nursing home referendum for a solar farm proposed budget was \$550,000 that was reduced to \$549,999 for the new budget of \$1, solar farm rebate budgeted at \$550,000 and new budget is \$290,748. Transfer and reserves proposed budget was \$346,124 and the new proposed budget expense is \$55,377 this budget changes are for solar expenses paid in this fiscal year 2024. Highway Department education reimbursement proposed budget was zero and the new budget is \$1, contingencies proposed budget was \$110,000 the new budget is \$109,999 these budget changes are for an establishing education incentive programs, landfill closure professional services was \$250,000 the proposed new budget is \$300,000, closure activity cost is \$2,500,000 the new budget is \$2,650,000, transfer from reserves original budget was \$2,767,499 the new proposed revenue is \$2,967,499. Also, landfill education reimbursement the previous budget was zero and the new budget is \$1, contingency was \$228,000, new budget is 227,999 this budget change is for establishing an education incentive program. Special contingency transfer in nursing home the proposed budget was zero and proposed new revenue is \$786,000, transfer in reserves proposed budget is \$612,749 proposed revenue budget is zero, transfer in other funds proposed budget was \$1 million proposed new budget expense was \$1,173,251. Drug Court Mental Health Board Revenue original was zero and new proposed budget was \$75,000 revenue, Mental Health Board Grant expenditures previous budget was zero and new proposed expense budget is \$75,000. That was the budget changes.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Knox County Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Chair Hawkinson said that the decapsulation projected assessed valuation for 24-25 is 1,140,090,881 the estimated rate setting EAV based on that figure is 1.23693 which is less than this current fiscal year's actual EAV at 1.26367

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 with the changes discussed on Item 12. Member Friedrich said this is approving the budget for next year. He would like to thank everybody on the committees that helped put this together to get it done and Treasurer Davis and her Deputy Treasurer Bailey. It was excellent having Deputy Treasurer Bailey there this year to help. It made it easier for Treasurer Davis and easier for them too. She was able to make the changes instantly and had questions answered for them which was nice so Treasurer Davis could stay concentrated on what she was working on as well. He said he appreciates them two and all the committee chairs as well as the department heads that helped them get through this year. Next year will be harder because we are still living on some Covid money that they will not have next year so it will be tougher.

Chair Hawkinson said that the final budget number for the entire County for fiscal year 24-25 with the amendments approved is \$96,713,778. He confirmed with the Treasurer if that is what she also shows. He said that there was a nod by the Treasurer.

Member Davidson said thank you to the Finance Committee which will always be the Finance Committee to her and/or the Ways and Means. Especially thank you to the Treasurer's Office it shows that you just can't take someone inexperienced to run a Treasurer's Office and make sure that all the things that Treasurer Davis and Chief Deputy Bailey does including her whole office does to help this County stay in place. She wants to say to the Board Members we need to pay more close attention to these departments and the money that goes out. Especially these contracts and everything because like Member Friedrich said it is going to be so much harder next year. We won't have any money for ARPA and different things that are going out. We are all elected to make sure that we are doing our jobs by following the budget. Most of all thank you to all the people that worked on the budget with the long hours. She said thank God it wasn't her. She said all jokes aside we need to pay close attention of where the money goes for our County because it's just not us it's taxpayers that are paying for it. Thank you.

Member Nache said she is echoing the sentiments from Member Davidson and all the hours Treasurer Davis and Chief Deputy Bailey put in. Also, how hard Ways and Means works on this and their committee. She thanked everybody involved and just like Member Davidson says we're going to have to watch ourselves a lot closer without all the money they are used to having since it is not going to be there so thank you everybody.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Member Friedrich said thank you again to everyone on the Ways and Means Committee for helping them get through this and they will start again next year.

Member Kramer said that the monthly report from the Public Safety and Justice Committees are in the packet. He said that this is his first term as being a Board Member and his first term as being a chairman. He thanked all his departments that had patience and helped him work through everything. Being a chairman of this committee there is a lot to know. First Mr. Thomas this is

something that this Board had to navigate through with not having somebody that had been in the business. He appreciates the time that Mr. Thomas spent by sitting down with them and the chairman by going through in depth what the Coroner's office entailed and what they were going to need moving forward. So, thank you and thank you for your time Mr. Thomas and your wife Tricia. He thanked Mary Davis Home Administrator Steck for her time at the Mary Davis Home. He really appreciates it and enjoyed working with you all out there and look forward to it in the future. Thank you as a whole for everybody. Also, thank you to Clerk Erickson and Deputy Clerk Byerly, Deputy Adams, and Deputy Teel for collecting his bills on Monday mornings and for everyone getting them in on a timely basis. Monday's fall on holidays and unfortunately County Board business still continues so getting ahold of them and to our committee meetings on Monday nights which was very nice. He said that he can't forget the Sheriff Harlan and it was his first term as sheriff so they worked through growing pains together, Judge Doyle as being the judicial leader and meetings that they had together. Circuit Clerk Ostrander for her time, Public Defender Hansen for his time, and State's Attorney Lawson-Weaver. He said that it has been an unusual time with Mr. Karlan's departure and her taking over. He appreciates everyone's time, effort and patience with him.

Motion was made by Member Kramer and seconded by Member Boone to approve Agreement for School Resource Officer with Rowva School District. Member Kramer said the purpose of the agreement is to be entered into between the Rowva School District and the Knox County Sheriff's Office. He said that it is in the packet and he is just going to read just the information on the big-ticket items that questions are usually asked on. Funding for the SRO program will be shared by the district and the county. Grant funding will be obtained by either party will first be applied to the total cost of the program and cover Rowva School District's portion. The remaining budget amount will be funded 75% by the school district and 25% by the county. The district will reimburse the county monthly for the district share of the SRO program expenses including the pay and benefits of the SRO and other documented reasonable costs associated with the program including but not limited to vehicle cost and maintenance. Said monthly expenses to be funded 75% by the district and 25% by the county. The district will cover 25% of the vehicle cost and equipment per year. The agreement will begin December 1, 2024 if it is approved this evening. Termination of this agreement will be terminated upon expiration of the stated term or any extensions thereof or upon material breach of the terms of this agreement by either party. Provided however that before in such termination the party alleging material breach will be provided 120 days written notice to intend to terminate the contract and specifying the factual matters which constitutes grounds for termination. The agreement may be terminated upon failure of defaulting party remedy which default in 120 days with such notice.

Chair Hawkinson said that this agreement was already approved by the Rowva School Board on October 31st and signed off on.

Member Kramer thanked the Rowva officials that came and spoke on wanting this program and the Williamsfield Principal for coming and speaking so highly of their deputy and the job that they did. Two of them sitting on the Board have worked in the school as a School Resource Officer. Those relationships that they have built with students he can't put a dollar sign to those relationships.

Member Davidson said during the Second Amendment sanctuary several people came and said that they're never worried about shooting out in the county and their schools and everything.

She said Sir when you spoke up during open session saying that this can happen and such. The police officers and sheriff are so far away. I wish you would have been there then to say that because it does happen. Especially, she is said to say that in this climate of the United States we have more children in more schools that have live shooters more then ever. One of her issues is yes, they're paying 75% but if the county comes up on hard times the contract might have to look different because they will not have the money like they have had before. She said she usually votes no but she is going to vote yes, this time only because your payment of 75%. It is not because you don't need it. It is because the county and the taxpayers might not be able to afford it. She did want to stress that it is a safety thing bebopping is one thing but the safety of the children is another thing.

Member Boone said that it is not just gun violence that they are looking at. They are looking at any kind of violence. Kids can get violent in P.E. class. She said we has a community are not just a small school district here and a small school district there. Galesburg High School has their resource officer and as a county it is their responsibility as elected officials to provide for the safety of all the children in their county. That is what really matters to her. Every single child and it is important to have the person there instead of 30 minutes later an officer might show up. That is why she will absolutely vote yes, every time under any circumstance for the safety of the children.

Member Nache asked if they foresee in the future any more of these contracts coming forward. If it is good for the children she is just wondering how many more are going to reach out and ask for their help.

Member Kramer said that he can't predict the future but he wouldn't be surprised. He said you heard the principal from Williamsfield how highly the deputy in the school there has helped out there. That word travels quickly. The officials speak amongst one another and talk so he would not be surprised if other school districts in the future ask them.

Member Nache said ok, thank you.

Member Thierry said in anticipation that this continues and grows, she asked if they are looking for uniformity and fairness in the contracts with each school or if they will be specific to the school district and how does the contract compare to Williamsfield. Also, if they are anticipating this as part of budgetary concerns.

Member Kramer said that there is uniformity and are the same. He wanted to add that there is some stuff that needs to be changed in the Williamsfield one that they are going to straighten out but, it will be 100% of what they have for the Rowva one.

Member Thierry asked if the officers are local from the community, if they are members of that community and how does that work.

Member Kramer said that in the agreement it talks about the selection of the deputy. It will come down to working between the school district and the sheriff on who gets selected.

Member Thierry asked if he prefers someone from the community.

Member Kramer said that it will be a deputy from the Sheriff's Department. Somebody that has already been there from Knox County.

Member Thierry asked about them not being just from Knox County but specifically from the community the school is in.

Member Kramer said that it comes from the Sheriff's Department so it'll be a deputy that is already hired and trained on the road. He is sure that the sheriff will have several meetings with Rowva staff and probably to an interview selection on who they are going to select. That is how it usually works.

Member Thierry said her point is more or less about mileage and the cost of the vehicle going back and forth. If there would be mileage expense incurred with that.

Member Kramer said that they will still have a Sheriff's patrol vehicle.

Member Thierry said all right.

Member Bacon asked if these positions are put up for bid in the Sheriff's Department.

Member Kramer said that they will put out a letter to see who is interested in it. Then whoever puts in for it will go through a process with the Sheriff and the school district.

Chair Hawkinson said for the selection it is in the agreement that once the deputies that want to participate in the program they will go through an interview process with the Sheriff and the school district. Then the best candidate is selected based on an interview process. There are other requirements such as they are going to be assigned there for three years. They have to have three years of law enforcement experience. It cannot be a brand-new person right out of the academy. They have to have knowledge of child welfare and the Juvenile Justice System and a lot of other requirements. The school district has a very large input of who they want in their school.

Member Olinger added that he is the SRO at the Galesburg High School. They have to go through a lot of training every year. He has to be certified and have to be recertified every year. He has to have so much education throughout the year to maintain that certification that all comes down from the State of Illinois. They have State Statutes that SRO's have to fall under that are different than that of just law enforcement statutes.

Treasurer Davis asked about it being approved at Public, Safety, and Justice she wanted to know why it was not brought to Ways and Means so it could have been included in the budget. She said now they are going to have to do a budget change.

Member Kramer said he can't speak on why it wasn't brought to Ways and Means.

Chair Hawkinson said that we will have to do a budget change like they have to do on everything else.

Member Kramer said that he doesn't think that the Williamsfield one was brought to Ways and Means either.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Olinger and Boone— (11). Noes—Smith and Cohen--- (2). Motion carried.

Member Kramer said that he just wanted to thank the committee and Member Boone for taking the minutes. He appreciates everybody's patience and everything.

Member Thierry presented the monthly report from the Infrastructure Committee and stated that the monthly report and information is in your packet.

Motion was made by Member Thierry and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the Invoice for Knox County Jail Draw #4 – Laundry & Medical Project in Amount of \$16,971.75. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Bacon, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (11). Noes— Nache and Davidson---(2). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Thierry and seconded by Member Weiss to approve Motor Fuel Tax Salary Resolution – Section 25-00000-00-CS for Highway. Member Thierry said that your information is in your packet.

Chair Hawkinson said that they are required every year to pass a resolution appropriating the motor fuel tax to pay the County engineer’s salary. The current salary is \$155,500 and the new salary will be \$170,500 for December 1, 2024 to November 30, 2025. That is the amount budgeted but they have to pass the resolution in order for the motor fuel tax to pay for that.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Thierry and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the Bid and Bring Back for Two New Portable Traffic Signals for the Highway.

Member Davidson asked to address to Highway Administrator Ratermann. She asked him where they are going or if he just needs them.

Highway Administrator Ratermann said that they are portable so they will be used throughout the county.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Thierry and seconded by Member Olinger to approve the Purchase of Kubota SVL97 Skid Steer Loader for the Highway.

Chair Hawkinson said that the price is \$90,949.21 from German Bliss from Princeville. This price was a result of the competitive price solicited by Sourcewell which is the purchasing Co-op for local governments. It will be paid for from the equipment replacement line 006-000-750000-30

Member Nache said she asked the same question at the committee meeting and she is asking it again. She asked if they know where they are made. If they are made from a plant here in the United States or some parts of them being made here in the United States by union labor.

Highway Administrator Ratermann said that he did not do anymore research on that.

Member Nache said so we don’t know if they are being made here or not. She said ok, thank you.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (12). Noes— (0). Abstain--- Davidson---(1). Motion carried.

Member Bacon presented the monthly report from the Health and Human Services committee. He said that the monthly report is in the packet and he thanked Member Nache for taking the minutes.

Motion was made by Member Bacon and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Bid for the Carpet Replacement in the Break Room for the Nursing Home. Member Bacon said that you will see in your Board packet that it is rather high but this is because they have to mitigate asbestos tiles. That is why they are so high on this bid. Roll call vote is recorded as follows:

Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Bacon and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Invoice from MSI for Documents for Nursing Home Performance Contract for Nursing Home. Member Bacon said they are going to be putting some money in the nursing home. These are for the documents to get all the architectural drawings to be able to start replacing some of the infrastructure in the nursing home in the next couple of years. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Bacon and seconded by Member Kramer to approve Invoice from MSI for Documents for Nursing Home Solar Project. Member Bacon said they are going to have a 4 to 4 ½ acre solar farm out there to meet some of their capacity of their electrical usage. They are going to go a little greener out there and try to from now on buy electric stuff. It is going to be out on the South side of the nursing home and you could go out there and look for stakes. He doesn't think there's any stakes out there yet in the yard yet to show you where it is supposed to go but they are supposed to be there.

Member Davidson said about time. She has been trying to get solar panels out there for 10 or 12 years and it seemed to fall on deaf ears. She doesn't know what he did Member Bacon but thank God for it moving forward.

Member Bacon said thank you.

Chair Hawkinson asked what the amount is.

Member Bacon said 1.045 million dollars and some change.

Chair Hawkinson asked if Member Bacon had the exact amount.

Member Bacon asked if it was in the packet. He knows the two bills are. He said he thinks they took \$581,000 from the nursing home. The two bills say the total is \$1,045,582.20.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Member Bacon said that he is going to do a little grandstanding before he goes. He said that they have money in the bank and the last time he talked to Treasurer Davis it was like 1.6 million dollars or 1.7 million dollars in the Nursing Home Account. In the Referendum Account like 1.6 million dollars. They used no money from the referendum again for operating expenses. They haven't used any since the two years he has been chairman. All this is good stuff but it is not him doing it. He is just out there hanging out. It is the nursing home management people and all people that work there from the nurses, LPN's, and CNA's that have a job no one wants to do and they do it well. Everyone needs to give them credit. He is out there all the time and walks around to tell them what a good job they are doing. Administrator Mines has been a pleasure to work with. He has to kick her chair every now and then to keep her from going wild but it works. He thanked Treasurer Davis for helping him get figures all the time. Without her telling him what to say he wouldn't now where to go. Thanked Clerk Erickson and Chief Deputy Byerly for helping make his agenda. The County Board is awesome and he said they rock. He said to keep it going and this is the local level that you make more of the difference to peoples lives then

they do in the federal way. He said all the stuff that you see out there on the news takes along time to trickle down here. The decisions the Board makes here are immediate. People see this right away not months or years down the road. Just what it takes to implement it. This is grass roots stuff that they are doing. He said that it has been a pleasure being here and a pleasure serving with these folks. He is going to miss it but there is plenty of beer, fish, and worms to keep him busy. Thank you again and he just can not say enough good about the County Board. That is why he came back again. Thank you all for letting me make a difference in your lives.

Chair Hawkinson thanked Member Bacon.

Chair Hawkinson stated that the reports from some of the 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 Weiss and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve Opening of Budget for Line Item Changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said for the budget line item changes there are several pages due to being the end of the year and the normal end of the year stuff that the Treasurer's office does. All the Department Heads have to get together and provide the details. It is in everyone's packet. As well as the public packet.

Motion made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Kramer for the approval of Proposed Line Item Changes. Member Friedrich said that he would like to thank Treasurer Davis office throwing everything together last minute and he knows last week was hectic for them. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

Chair Hawkinson said that the manual check review is in the packet. There were a couple. The Sheriff's office had some manual checks due to a clerical error in the CIC system. Also, the elections and the normal manual checks that are issued mid-cycle which is also listed in everyone's packet.

Motion was made by Member Bacon and seconded by Member Weiss to approve the claims by Members for per diem and mileage for the Committee Meetings of November 2024, Board Meetings in October, and other claims for per diem from Meetings. Chair Hawkinson said the total was \$4,508.77 and it is in the G-drive as well. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

**Revised total was \$3,180.00.

Motion was made by Member Weiss and seconded by Member Pugh to approve the claims against Knox County, Illinois for the period of October 24, 2024 through November 25, 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 \$4,388,763.25. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes— Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried.

The next Regular Meeting notice the date change due to the Christmas Holiday that will be held on Monday, December 23rd, 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. The Knox County YouTube channel is available for live viewing or to download and watched later.

Chair Hawkinson said thank you to Member Smith and Member Bacon for everything.
Member Bacon said thank you.

Motion was made by Member Smith and seconded by Member Bacon to adjourn the meeting. Roll Call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Nache, Bacon, Davidson, Hawkinson, Weiss, Pugh, Thierry, Kramer, Friedrich, Smith, Cohen, Olinger and Boone— (13). Noes— (0). Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.