

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, January 11th, 2022 – 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

The meeting was called to order by County Board Chairman Evan Young at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken - 18 members present, 3 members absent.

Members Present: Russell Beason, Connie Beck, Megan Beeler, Bill Bergen, Ronald Deabenderfer, Doug Donaldson, Tim Fogle, Mark Hughes, Sandra Johnson, Jeremy Jones, David Loucks, Bev McCoy, Gene Miles, Andy Ritchie, Earlene Robinson, Bob Sneed, Patty Whitworth, and Evan Young.

Members Absent: Jim Havera, Richard Wendel and Donna Yeske.

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by County Board member Andy Ritchie.

Mileage and Per Diem Approval: Motion by Miles and second by Sneed to approve the Mileage and Per Diem.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Beason, Beck, Beeler, Bergen, Deabenderfer, Donaldson, Fogle, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Loucks, McCoy, Miles, Ritchie, Robinson, Sneed, Whitworth, and Young. All in favor, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of Previous County Board Meeting: Motion by Deabenderfer and second by Donaldson to approve the Minutes of the Previous Regular County Board Meeting held on Tuesday, December 14th, 2021. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Ambulance Billing Report** -- Mona Lewis – Report was not submitted.
- 2. Animal Control Report** – Amanda Daniels – Report was submitted.
- 3. Circuit Clerk’s Report** -- Daniel Robbins – was present for questions.
- 4. Coroner’s Report** -- Randy Leetham – Report was submitted.
- 5. County Clerk and Recorder’s Report** -- Sandy Leitheiser reported the new Economic Interest Statement forms were distributed to members. She stated all appointed and elected officials at the local level are required by State Law to submit their statements to the County Clerk. Leitheiser said she cannot advise officials how to complete the form. State’s Attorney Affrunti said he also cannot advise officials on how to complete the form. Leitheiser said she has heard officials’ concerns about the new terminology in the new form, and said she is fulfilling her statutory duty in providing the form. She encouraged board members to read the definitions document distributed with the statements for further clarification. Affrunti said if officials read the definitions, he believes they will have a much clearer understanding when completing the statement forms.
- 6. Health & TB Department Report** --Hugh Satterlee was present for questions. Loucks asked if COVID tests are scarce at the Health Department. Satterlee replied they have been fortunate to have had test orders fulfilled per their requests to this point. He also stated a lot of people are choosing to go to hospitals’ emergency rooms to get tested, and this is behavior hospitals want to discourage.
- 7. Highway Department Report** --- Cody Greenwood – was present for questions.
- 8. Probation Office Report** -- Bane Ulrici – Report was submitted.

9. **Public Defender's Report** -- Erin Mattson— Report was not submitted.
10. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** -- Julie Wollerman – Report was submitted.
11. **Sheriff's Report** ---Rick Robbins – Report was submitted.
12. **SOA Report** ---Ray Durston -- Report was submitted.
13. **State's Attorney Report** –Andrew Affrunti - was present for questions.
14. **Treasurer's Report** -- Nikki Lohman - was present for questions.
15. **V.A.C. Report** -- Dave Strowmatt - was present for questions.

APPROVAL OF 15 ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Whitworth and second by Johnson to approve the 13 reports provided on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **708 Board** – Robinson reported they didn't meet this month.
- **CEFS Board** – Fogle stated he was passing along thanks to those who have volunteered for the CEFS Meals on Wheels program in Montgomery County.
- **911 Board** – Bergen reported everything is going smoothly.
- **Health Department** – Johnson reported there was nothing to add. Whitworth stated the board will meet next Thursday and their meetings are held quarterly.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Bergen stated there was nothing to report.
- **MCEDC** – No report was given.
- **Planning Commission** – Deabenderfer said they will meet tomorrow night to consider a county ordinance for battery storage.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Deabenderfer said the senior board hasn't met since Covid began, and they don't plan on meeting again while it is still an issue.
- **UCCI** – Miles reported there was a meeting scheduled, but he did not know if it will be held due to COVID.
- **U of I** – Beck reported U of I Extension employee Lisa Peterson is the temporary director of the Montgomery County facility but prior director Amanda Cole will be returning on June 21st, 2022.
- **WCDC**– Young stated the new CEO at WCDC will start in February. He said they are also still accepting applications for a Chief Financial officer (CFO) until Thursday, January 13th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by Chairman Evan Young:

1. **Information Systems Report Update:** Young reported Information Services Manager Curt Watkins has ordered parts for the equipment in the Sheriff's squads.
2. **EMA Report Update:** Kevin Schott was in attendance and stated there is nothing new to report.
3. **Committee Structure Discussion Update:** Young said he had discussions with board members regarding the committee structure. Whitworth said it was discussed at length at the November meeting; then at the Coordinating Committee she said Young stated things were said about the restructuring that were not true. Whitworth said she would like to know what the inaccurate information was, and Young stated he is not going to repeat

what was said to him in a private conversation. Jones said he was the one who made the motion to table the restructure changes and stated no one has talked to him. He asked why we are practicing to be smaller when we have another year of 21 board members and don't know who will be on the board or who will be the chairman after the November election. Young said new board members shouldn't have a large learning curve, and it will be in bad faith for this board to throw everything on a new board. Young stated if we find out it doesn't work in a few months, then it can be changed before November. Fogle stated we are not practicing anything, but being proactive to put together a new model for the new board. Beeler stated she was shocked by the pushback to restructure the committees, and said their intention was to streamline the committee workload with no ulterior motive. Jones stated there are certain people in a clique who know all the decisions before everyone else and the others are outsiders. He said his concern is when one takes more power, one has fewer people making more decisions. He added this causes people to feel left out, which is what is happening right now. Whitworth stated the board does need to consider streamlining committees when it decreases to 14 members, but she said she doesn't think it needs to happen right now. She said she thinks we need to implement those changes in December. Deabenderfer stated there is mistrust in leadership stemming from favoritism shown on both a political party and personal level, which he said is a problem the board has had going back years before this current board. Deabenderfer said he thinks the restructuring should not take place until next year. Donaldson said he thought the way restructuring was presented initially was a little clunky and invited more discussion. Young stated this is why he wanted the 30-day review of restructuring. Young said the Rules Committee recommended cutting the number of committees down to three, not including Coordinating. He stated this is not an issue of he or anyone else trying to do something through the back door. Miles stated he didn't know the board had such a problem with the way it is currently structured. Beeler said she wants to balance the workload among all of the committees, adding the Finance Committee meetings typically last the longest. Jones stated a lot of people who aren't a part of the clique don't get to make the decisions. Deabenderfer stated there is a chance of cronyism in this type of organization when all of the members of the Coordinating committee are from the same party and are handpicked by the Chairman. Hughes stated he agrees with Deabenderfer and suggested doing away with the Coordinating Committee. Miles said it sounds like the biggest problem is the Finance Committee meetings are too long. Beck stated more County Board Districts need to be represented on the committees. Ritchie reported he spent thirty years in the Navy and no one ever asked him who was going to be his commanding officer. He suggested the board try a table-top exercise to simulate lesser committees to see if they will work. Young suggested more members can be added to the Rules Committee as restructuring is considered. Leitheiser reported the current board did not adopt the Rules of Order when they were sworn in in December, 2020, which has typically been the standard practice of prior County Boards. Young stated State's Attorney Affrunti can advise if we have a current County Board Rules of Order.

BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Chairman Bob Sneed:

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update:** Sneed reported his committee heard a lengthy presentation from maintenance technician Phil Ernst, and they were pleased with his thorough report.
2. **New Locks for Historic Courthouse Update:** Sneed reported Information Services Manager Watkins suggested looking into an electronic key system for at least one of the outside doors of the Historic Courthouse if the Buildings and Grounds committee was interested in improving security. Watkins said he received a rough quote from the company who did a similar system at the Courthouse Complex. He said the price of placing an electronic key system on one door would be \$2,500. Sneed said the door chosen for the system would be the ADA accessible door at the street level entrance, and the committee gave Watkins the go ahead to move forward with the project. Sneed stated an electronic key system will greatly improve the building's security. Leitheiser reported at a recent County Clerk's conference, she learned of a free physical security assessment offered by Homeland Security. She stated she also has grant money for election security which can be used for physical security improvements for election offices; however, the free assessment would cover the entire building. Sneed stated the Building and Grounds Committee approved the physical security assessment be completed. Leitheiser reported it will be done on Thursday, January 13th.
3. **Ameren Electrical Service on Seymour Ave. Transfer to EMA Update:** Sneed reported the committee voted to transfer power at the old Highway Department facility on Seymour Avenue in Hillsboro from the Highway Department's expenses to the County's. He said Emergency Management Agency Coordinator Schott reported he has had to move some items from his department to the building on Seymour, including the MABAS trailer and PPE for Covid response. Sneed reported County Engineer Cody Greenwood doesn't want to pay for the power from his budget anymore since they are no longer at the facility. Schott said he still needs to move two more trailers over to that site. Deabenderfer stated neighbors of the old facility were glad when the Highway Department moved out, and the City of Hillsboro would like to utilize that site for a residential housing development. Schott said he and Young and a few others will be meeting soon regarding storage for EMA trailers and equipment, and he stated this is just a temporary situation until another storage area can be found.
4. **Other Business:** Sneed reported the committee will be considering the replacement of boilers for county buildings soon since they are nearing the end of their lifespans. He said the committee will also be looking at the fire alarms at the Jail since the current ones are now obsolete.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Vice-Chairman Ron Deabenderfer:

1. **MCEDC Update:** Deabenderfer stated there is nothing new to report since the last meeting.
2. **Revolving Loan Fund Update:** Deabenderfer reported the committee is looking into rewriting the RLF manual as well as changing the RLF completely.
3. **Tourism Update:** Deabenderfer reported the tourism application will need to be approved at the committee's February meeting. He said tourism grants to help with advertising will be offered and will be due on March 29th, 2022, and grants will be awarded after April

12th, 2022 for events scheduled between March and October, 2022. Beeler stated there are currently three facilities in unincorporated Montgomery County who collect a hotel/motel sales tax, however only two of them are paying the county. She said the third facility is an “Air B & B,” and further documentation is needed

4. **Planning Commission Update:** Deabenderfer reported the next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2022 at 5:30 pm at the Historic Courthouse. He said they will discuss creating a county ordinance for battery storage.
5. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update:** Deabenderfer reported Matt Jones of St. Clair County was hired as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of WCDC and will start in February. He stated there is still a job opening for the position of CFO (Chief Financial Officer) for WCDC.
6. **Montgomery County Bike Trail Update:** Deabenderfer reported Yeske met with State’s Attorney Affrunti regarding a dumping issue at the Green Diamond Bike Trail, and he will write a letter to the property owner instructing them to remove debris from the Waggoner end of the trail.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Russell Beason:

1. **Bellwether & America Recovery Plan Act (ARPA funding) Update:** Beason reported the committee received a lengthy report from Bellwether representative Bruce DeLashmit regarding ARPA funds. He stated the committee has a lot to digest as they move forward with the application/narrative process.
2. **SOA Report Update:** Beason reported there was a meeting last week to negotiate the assessment for the Coffeen power plant. He stated Vistra submitted a counterproposal to the County’s offer; however the two sides remain far apart. Beason reported Durston said county taxing body representatives met recently and agreed to submit another offer to Vistra.
3. **IMRF Update:** Beason stated Treasurer Lohman reported she has not received any updates on IMRF at this time.
4. **Capital Improvement Fund Reports Update:** Beason said there is nothing new to report.
5. **Ordinance 2022-01 Amending Lost Revenue Ordinance 2021-09 Approval:** Beason reported the county board needs to approve an ordinance to transfer ARPA Lost Revenue funds to be used for Election Equipment. **Motion by Beason and second by Fogle to approve Ordinance 2022-01 amending the Lost Revenue Ordinance 2021-09 approved on October 12, 2021 authorizing the transfer of \$235,175 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Lost Revenue Fund to the General (Corporate) Fund for the purpose of funding the Election Equipment Purchase project. ROLL CALL VOTE: Voting in Favor: Beason, Beck, Beeler, Bergen, Deabenderfer, Donaldson, Fogle, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Loucks, McCoy, Miles, Ritchie, Robinson, Sneed, Whitworth and Young. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, page 4).**
6. **Amend Resolution for Circuit Clerk Fees Approval:** Beason stated Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported a resolution establishing civil fees and criminal and traffic assessments has an incorrect fee listed because of a typographical error. Beason stated the original resolution reads the fee is \$266, but it needs to be changed so the fee is set at \$256. **Motion by Beason and second by Hughes to adopt Resolution 2022-02**

amending Resolution 2019CO-5 correcting the establishment of civil fees and criminal and traffic assessments to be charged by the clerk of the circuit court from \$266 to \$256. All in favor, motion carried. (For copy, see Resolution Book 19, pages 5-19).

7. **AOIC Technology Grant for Circuit Clerk Update:** Beason reported Circuit Clerk Robbins applied for a grant from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) for a grant for IT upgrades. He said the reimbursed amount from the grant should be for \$53,521.78.
8. **FEMA Grant Update:** Beason reported Treasurer Lohman had to submit detailed information regarding the preventative measures the county has in place for Covid for the FEMA grant. Lohman said EMA Director Kevin Schott deserves credit for taking photographs as he traveled to the various locations in the cold to obtain them.
9. **Senior Citizen Club Funding Update Approval:** Beason reported the county Senior Citizen Club Groups are starting to resume their activities, and the committee voted to recommend giving them one half of their requested funds as seed money. He said Coordinator Chris Daniels reported she has received calls from several of the six Senior Citizen Clubs to find out if they are going to receive their funding this year. Beason said the funds were held back last year since the clubs weren't meeting. Daniels said the clubs thought since they were starting to meet again, they could now get their funds. Beeler reported before COVID, the senior clubs would submit a request for funding and the County would reimburse them based on the amount levied for Senior Services. Beeler said it is her opinion the board should continue to pay as the money is requested rather than giving the groups all of their money at once. Loucks stated they could give the groups some of the funds as seed money and then hold onto the rest of the funds and release them as requested. Deabenderfer said we need clear-cut policy and procedures for the senior funds levied by the county. He said some senior citizens are concerned about how those funds are spent, and the senior clubs were told not to meet because of Covid. He also asked the status of the funds received from last year's levy, adding there is a big lack of communication regarding this funding. Beeler said the senior services fund levy is also to be used for Golden Circle Nutrition and Health Department Senior Services, and those two organizations have been receiving their funding. She said the six Senior Clubs would ask for money for their meetings. Beeler said because there is no designated Senior Services board for Montgomery County, the county board gets to decide how the senior citizen property tax funds designated for senior services are spent each year, with the understanding funds must be spent on the senior population. Treasurer Lohman said there currently is a balance in the Senior Citizen fund. State's Attorney Affrunti said this is the same situation as some of the ambulance special service areas where the County Board levies for the funds and then the County Board gets to decide how the funds are spent. Beason stated he will send a letter to the county Senior Citizens Clubs to clarify this funding. **Motion by Beason and second by Beeler to give the County Senior Clubs half of their requested funds according to what the clubs budgeted for FY 2022. All in favor, motion carried.**
10. **IRS Mileage Rate for 2022 Approval:** Beason reported the IRS recommended mileage rate is 58.5 cents per mile, which is an increase from the 56 cents previously allotted. **Motion by Beason and second by Ritchie to adopt the mileage rate of 58.5 cents per**

mile. VOICE VOTE: 17 voted in favor, 0 against, 1 (Deabenderfer) abstained. Motion carried.

- 11. Other Business:** Beason reported the committee will work on the process for setting salaries for Elected Officials because they have to be set 180 days prior to the officials taking office on December 1st, 2022.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Bill Bergen:

- 1. Employee Health Insurance Cafeteria Plan Amendment Update:** Bergen stated Treasurer Lohman reported the Cafeteria Plan Amendment for employee health insurance has been signed. He stated this plan is used for dependent care and flex benefits.
- 2. Hire of Part-time EMA Coordinator Approval:** Bergen said EMA Coordinator Schott requested two part-time employees be hired for the EMA department with each of them to be paid one-half of the \$24,000 salary budgeted for FY 2022. Bergen stated the two recommended individuals are very qualified, and the pay is \$25 per hour with no benefits. Schott reported Dan Hough will be the Operations Director and Joe Gasparich will provide administrative assistance with both individuals' combined hours totaling 20 hours per week. Schott stated Hough and Gasparich were volunteers for years and it is only fair to pay them now that budgeted funds are available. **Motion by Bergen and second by Robinson to approve hiring Dan Hough and Joe Gasparich as part-time EMA employees at a rate of \$25 per hour not to exceed 20 hours total worked per week. All in favor, motion carried.**

SAFETY & ELECTIONS: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

- 1. Ambulance Billing Office Update:** Hughes reported the committee will be working on setting up a meeting with representatives of each of the ambulance districts to figure out what to do with ambulance billing.
- 2. Animal Control Municipal Contracts Update:** Hughes reported he was unable to attend the last committee meeting so the mayors were told not to come. Bergen stated contracts were discussed briefly at the meeting, including the idea to increase of the per call rate for municipalities to cover the cost of animal control operations.
- 3. Animal Control Facility Program Update:** Hughes reported Animal Control currently has three cats and 13 dogs.
- 4. ETSB/911 Update:** Bergen reported things have been pretty quiet and finances with 911 are stable.
- 5. Elections Update:** Leitheiser reported the U.S. Congressional, Illinois State Senate and Representative maps have been finalized. She stated Montgomery County is still represented by one congressional district, but it has been changed from the 13th to the 15th. She also said there are now three State Representative Districts in the County: the 107th, 108th and 110th. The County will also be split into two State Senate districts as well: the 54th and 55th. Leitheiser also reported the petition circulation period for county candidates running in the upcoming Primary begins January 13, with petitions being filed March 7th through 14th. This year's primary, she reminded, is June 28th, 2022.
- 6. EPA Report Update/Approval:** EPA Coordinator Daniels reported there will be spring and fall events for electronics recycling drives this year. She stated there were a few events held back-to-back last year due to COVID, but the plan for this year is to spread them out more.

7. **Other Business:** State's Attorney Affrunti reported an email had been sent from the Illinois Association of County Board Members regarding the vaccine or test/mask mandate OSHA was requiring companies with 100 or more employees to implement. He said the dates the email mentioned were incorrect, and he clarified companies have until February 24 to be compliant. Affrunti said Montgomery County follows standards from the Illinois Department of Labor, not OSHA; however, the Department of Labor standards must be at least as strict as OSHA and may also be more stringent. He stated the IL Department of Labor has given governments until February 24 to be complaint. Regarding the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the legality of the vaccine mandate, Affrunti stated it appears the mask mandate may be upheld, but he is unsure at this time what the Court will rule regarding vaccines. Robinson asked what would happen if the board created a policy, but then voted against implementing it. Affrunti said the County would then be subject to fines for not being in compliance with IDOL. As for how Montgomery County qualifies for the Department of Labor standards in their mandate, Affrunti reported it is based on how many employees an employer has on its payroll and the County is well in excess of 100 employees. He stated if the Supreme Court upholds the ruling the mandate would apply to county employees and Affrunti said an employee is defined as a person who reports to work once every seven days.

ROAD & BRIDGE COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Gene Miles:

1. **Village of Walshville Street Issues Update:** Miles reported County Engineer Cody Greenwood wrote a letter regarding this issue. Miles stated Walshville Village President Joy McDonald was supposed to attend the last committee meeting but she was unable to because she was ill.
2. **2022 Township MFT Rock Letting Results Approval:** Motion by Miles and second by Whitworth to approve the low bids for the 2022 MFT Township Rock Letting. All in favor, motion carried.
3. **2022 County MFT Rock Letting Results Approval:** Motion by Miles and second by Donaldson to approve the low bids for the 2022 MFT County Rock Letting. All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Right of Way Acquisition for Section 15-00138-00-BR Whitetown Bridge Update:** Miles reported the committee hopes to have updates for this project at their next meeting.
5. **Small Equipment Purchase Update:** Miles reported the committee discussed but did not take action on a small equipment purchase at their last meeting.

APPROVAL OF 7 COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

Motion by Beck and second by Beason to approve the seven committee reports and minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Citizen Bill Schroeder said he appreciated the discussion about the committee restructuring request, and he believes newly elected board members should serve on committees according to their skills or knowledge. He suggested board members complete a resume to determine their qualifications for committees. He also said he believes the board should wait for the next board to decide what to do with committees.

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL:

Motion by Donaldson and second by Beason to pay all approved bills and payroll. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN:

The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Donaldson and second by Loucks to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.