

Montgomery County Board Minutes

For Tuesday, March 8th, 2022 – 5:30 PM

The following are minutes of a regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

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

Roll call was taken - 20 members present, 1 member absent.

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

Members Absent: Bev McCoy

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Jim Havera. Board Chairman Evan Young instituted a moment of silence for former County Board member Glenn Painter who passed away on Feb. 17th at 97 years of age. Young stated Painter served on the board for 34 years from 1972 to 2006. Young also instituted the same moment of silence for the current war situation in Ukraine.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE Beason, Beck, Beeler, Bergen, Deabenderfer, Donaldson, Fogle, Havera, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Loucks, Miles, Ritchie, Robinson, Sneed, Wendel, Whitworth, Yeske 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, February 8th, 2022. All in favor, motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Ambulance Billing Report** -- Mona Lewis – No report was 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 was present for questions.
6. **Health & TB Department Report** ---Hugh Satterlee was present for questions.
7. **Highway Department Report** ---Cody Greenwood – Report was submitted.
8. **Probation Office Report** ---Banee Ulrici – Report was submitted.
9. **Public Defender's Report** ---Erin Mattson— No report was submitted.
10. **ROE – Monthly, Quarterly & Annual Reports** – Julie Wollerman – Report was submitted.
11. **Sheriff's Report** ---Rick Robbins was present for questions.
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 13 ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Whitworth and second by Johnson to approve the 13 items on the Consent Agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- **708 Board** – Robinson stated there is nothing new to report.
- **CEFS Board** – Fogle stated they will be expanding Head Start and looking into a building in either Litchfield or Hillsboro.
- **911 Board** – Bergen stated there is nothing new to report.
- **Health Department** -- Sandra Johnson stated there is nothing new to report.
- **IL Association of County Officials** -- Bergen and Beeler stated there is nothing new to report.
- **MCEDC** – Yeske stated Deabenderfer will give this report during the committee reports.
- **Planning Commission** – Deabenderfer stated they are still hammering out the battery storage ordinance. He reported they are feeling pressure for two reasons: 1) they are losing members due to the reporting requirements of new economic interest form, and 2) they are feeling the pressure to complete the ordinance as soon as possible because have to have it in place before construction on a battery storage facility begins at the VISTRA plant so that facility would have to meet the ordinance’s guidelines. Beason asked if the Planning Commission had contacted someone from the Morris Fire Department regarding the lithium battery fire there. EMA Coordinator Kevin Schott said someone from the Morris Fire Department will be meeting with him here sometime in April. Deabenderfer also reported the county needs to work on updating their comprehensive plan.
- **Senior Citizens Board** – Deabenderfer stated there is nothing new to report.
- **UCCI** – Miles stated there is nothing new to report.
- **U of I** – Beck stated there is nothing new to report.
- **WCDC** –Wendel reported they met in February and hired a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). His name is Ben Beckwith. Wendel also stated new CEO Matt Jones has “hit the ground running” and is doing a great job.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COORDINATING COMMITTEE: Given by Chairman Evan Young:

1. **Information Systems Report Update:** Young reported Information Services is working on dot gov (.gov) registration due to legislative requirements, and all of Montgomery County’s URL and email addresses will eventually change to .gov addresses once it’s completed.
2. **EMA Report Update:** Young reported EMA Coordinator Dan Hough is hoping to do a campaign for volunteerism in order to address their low number of volunteers.
3. **Committee Structure Discussion Update:** Young stated this discussion is on hold for the moment.
4. **Rules Committee Meeting Update:** Young stated the Rules Committee has not yet been able to meet.
5. **Board Member Resignation Approval:** Young reported board member Jim Havera submitted his letter of resignation effective March 8, 2022. **Motion by Beason and**

second by Beck to accept the resignation of Jim Havera, effective after the conclusion of the Montgomery County Board meeting on March 8, 2022. 19 members voted yes, 1 voted no (Sneed), and 1 member (McCoy) was absent. Sneed stated he will miss working with Havera on the County Board, and said he brought much knowledge and experience as he served. **Motion carried.**

6. **Grain Belt Transmission Lines/Liberty Solar/Wind Farm Update:** Young reported Grain Belt Express will be hosting another meeting on Wednesday, March 9th, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Event Center of Montgomery County in Hillsboro. He stated they will have to hold another meeting in the near future in order to meet their legal obligations, and it will take place in April. Johnson asked if this was the same company who tried to build this same transmission line a few years ago, and what the difference is this time around. Young stated it is the same company as before, and the difference now is they have been granted public utility status by the ICC; therefore, they can utilize eminent domain to acquire land.

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

1. **Maintenance and Cleaning Issues and Report Update:** Sneed reported JayTec representative Nolan Ferguson called in to the meeting to present a water treatment program of putting chemicals through our boilers in all three buildings to help with corrosion and to protect pipes.
2. **Building Security Audit for Historic Courthouse Update:** Sneed reported County Clerk Leitheiser facilitated a building physical security audit of the Historic Courthouse, and the committee discussed the results in closed session.
3. **New locks for Historic Courthouse Update:** Sneed reported they will be installing electronic locks on the handicap and north doors of the Historic Courthouse, which will be accessed by key fobs similar to those used at the Courthouse Complex. He also reported Leitheiser received an election security grant to help pay for upgrades to physical security for the election area of the basement.
4. **Sidewalks at Historic Courthouse and Jail Update:** Sneed reported Hillsboro Mayor Don Downs attended the committee meeting, and they discussed the need for the City and the County to work together to repair the sidewalks surrounding the county buildings downtown.
5. **Other Business:** Sneed stated there are three things on the board's radar: a roof for the new courthouse, concrete sidewalks, and boilers for all of the buildings in the courthouse complex. He also reported Centrica's energy savings agreement stipulates they have to save the County \$28,000 each year, and they reportedly saved the County \$31,000. He said the committee decided to not have a third year assessment completed with Centrica.

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

1. **MCEDC Update:** Nothing new to report.
2. **Revolving Loan Fund Update:** Deabenderfer reported the interest rates from this loan fund can no longer compete with banks. He stated the RLF has also been used to lend money to municipalities to help with the demolition of old buildings. He said State's Attorney Affrunti notified them they may not be legally permitted to loan money through

the RLF in its present structure. Deabenderfer said something is going to change with the RLF, but details have not been worked out.

3. **Tourism – Grant Round #4 Update:** Deabenderfer reported tourism grant applications are due March 24th, and they are available online as well as in the Coordinated Services office.
4. **Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau Endorsement Letter Approval:** Deabenderfer reported there is no charge to join the bureau, but they have to have an endorsement letter from the County Board. **Motion by Deabenderfer and second by Ritchie to approve the endorsement letter regarding rejoining the Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau. All in favor, motion carried.**
5. **Planning Commission Update:** Deabenderfer stated there is nothing additional to report aside from what has already been discussed earlier in the meeting.
6. **West Central Development Council/Job Center Board/CEO Board Update:** Deabenderfer stated there is nothing additional to report aside from what has already been discussed earlier in the meeting.
7. **Waggoner Bike Trail Clean-up Update:** Deabenderfer reported progress has been made on the cleaning up of the bike trail. State’s Attorney Affrunti stated he has updates on the bike trail issue, and he will discuss it with the committee at their next meeting.
8. **American Made “Initiative” and Resolution to Endorse Products Made in USA Update:** South Litchfield Township resident Bob Buda addressed the board regarding a proposed “American-made Initiative.” He stated two local companies (Atlas 46 and Hardcore Hammers) are currently looking to expand throughout Montgomery County. Buda reported Atlas 46 CEO Brian Carver wants to add 500 jobs to the area, and he said the county needs to be able to fund an incentive program to award new businesses or existing ones looking to expand. He said the three things they would like to see happen include: 1) reimbursement for training of new employees, 2) reimbursement for jobs created, and 3) reimbursement for property rented, leased or purchased. Buda urged members not to sign the proposed resolution if they are not prepared to spend money to help. He concluded his presentation by encouraging members to imagine a sign as you enter Montgomery County stating “Montgomery County–Where American Made Matters.” Whitworth stated the idea is intriguing, and she assumes Atlas 46 and Hardcore Hammers are not just talking about Hillsboro, but Montgomery County as a whole. Buda said this will be a major undertaking and notified board members Atlas 46 is being pursued heavily outside of Montgomery County. He stated they already have facilities in Vandalia and Carlinville. Jones stated he loves the fact that these companies are considering moving into Montgomery County’s cities and villages and repurposing our existing buildings. Deabenderfer said this resolution will be presented to the board for a 30-day review.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Russell Beason:

1. **SOA Report Update:** Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
2. **Capital Improvement Fund Reports Update:** Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
3. **IMRF Update:** Treasurer Lohman reported the IMRF balance reserve amounts have increased and the balances as of December 31, 2021 in our SLEP account went from \$3.3 million to \$4.5 million. She stated the Regular IMRF fund balance went from \$10.7

million to \$14.9 million and the ECO IMRF fund balance went from \$1.9 million to \$2.6 million.

4. **Elected Officials Salaries and Resolution #2022-03 Approval:** Beason reported the Sheriff, County Clerk and Treasurer positions need to have salary increases decided this year at least 180 days before they are set to take office. He proposed a salary increase of \$2,200 per year for the next four years for the Sheriff, County Clerk and Treasurer, starting on December 1, 2022. Deabenderfer asked about the percentage of this increase. Beason said they did not determine the increase based on percentages, but it's between 2.5 and 3 percent. **Motion by Beason and second by Ritchie to approve Resolution #2022-03, which provides for a salary increase of \$2,200 for each year of the four-year term for the positions of County Treasurer, County Clerk and County Sheriff, beginning December 1, 2022. Beeler abstains. All others in favor, motion carried. (For copy of Resolution, see Resolution Book 19, pages 26-27).**
5. **Circuit Clerk Technology Grant Award Update:** Circuit Clerk Daniel Robbins reported all software and hardware has been received other than one copier, which should arrive in three weeks. He said it will all be paid for in the next month, and we will get the grant money in July. Beason said the entire \$53,000 grant was awarded to the county.
6. **Ambulance Special Service Area Levy Language Update:** Beason reported some reorganization is probably in order regarding the ambulance special service area levies and the way billing is done, but it will take some time to discuss and figure out. He said one option being considered is doing away with the individual special service area levies for ambulances and implementing one for the entire county instead. Bergen asked if this means all of the tax levy money will be combined into one fund. Beeler replied affirmatively, though it should not change the way the ambulance districts operate or how much money they get. She stated there is no need for any of the districts to be alarmed.
7. **Intergovernmental Agreement Between Montgomery and South Litchfield Township Approval:** **Motion by Beason and second by Beeler to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between Montgomery County and South Litchfield Township for Multi-township Assessment services.** South Litchfield Township resident Bob Buda asked if the position of South Litchfield township assessor was still open and if they are still looking for someone. Beck said she is sure they would hire somebody if they could, but they haven't been able to find anyone. **All in favor, motion carried. (For copy of agreement, see Resolution Book 19, pages 28-29).**
8. **Resolution #2022-04 Approving the Declaration of Trust of the IL Trust and Authorizing the Execution Thereof and Authorizing Certain Officials to Act on Behalf Approval:** Beason reported Treasurer Lohman did her homework and she feels this is a good place to invest county money. Lohman said our investment rates through this program would be beneficial. She said this resolution does not take action, but rather just gives her permission to pursue more investment options. Beeler said she called one of the local banks, and they said they would like the opportunity to keep money invested locally and she would like more detailed information about this new investment source before proceeding. Lohman agreed to provide this information, and also endorsed investing locally when feasible. **Motion by Beason and second by Fogle to approve Resolution #2022-04 approving the Declaration of Trust of the Illinois Trust and Authorizing the Execution Thereof and Authorizing Certain Officials to Act on Behalf. All in favor, motion carried. (See Resolution Book 19, pages 30-31).**

9. **Finance/Budget Control Policies and Procedures Update:** Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
10. **Bellwether & America Recovery Plan Act (ARPA funding) Update:** Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
11. **County ARPA Lost Revenue Standard Allowance Ordinance #2022-05 (Rescinds Prior Lost Revenue Ordinance #2021-09 approved 10/12/2021) Approval:** Beason stated the majority of the Finance Committee would like to see the ARPA money distributed in a timely fashion. Whitworth stated by passing the ARPA Lost Revenue Standard Allowance Ordinance it allows the County to distribute the full grant amount. Beeler asked if this resolution rescinds the lost revenue ordinance previously passed. Lohman and Leitheiser said the Bellwether consultant assured them it would. **Motion by Beason and second by Hughes to approve passing the ARPA Lost Revenue Standard Allowance Ordinance #2022-05. 19 voted yes, 1 (Beeler) voted no, 1 (McCoy) was absent. Motion carried. (For copy of Ordinance, see Resolution Book 19, pages 32-33).**
12. **Municipalities' ARPA Allocation Update:** Beason stated there is nothing new to report.
13. **FEMA Grant Update:** Beason stated the FEMA grant has been submitted and signed.
14. **Forgiveness of \$50,000 loan to 911/ETSB Approval:** Beason reported the Finance Committee discussed the remaining \$50,000 loan balance for 911. Deabenderfer reported there have been statements made that the money was not taxpayers' money, but he stated that coal money does belong to the taxpayers. Whitworth agreed. Beeler also agreed it is taxpayers' money, but it is not property tax money. Deabenderfer said he does not want to see the County Board make a habit of allowing loans to be forgiven after ten years of inactivity. **Motion by Beason and second by Beeler to forgive the remaining \$50,000 left on the loan to 911/ETSB. Deabenderfer Voted No. All others in favor, motion carried.**
15. **Other Business:** Treasurer Lohman reported the County only owed \$612 for worker's compensation this year after the audit was completed, and she stated our insurance representative Eric Braasch was very happy with the outcome. In another update, Beason reported Chairman Young informed the Finance Committee there was an error with the ambulance billing office writing checks for too much money, and their account was overdrawn at the bank. Beason said they would like to look into taking Ambulance Billing out of the General Fund and put it into its own fund so it is easier to track. Whitworth said it is very concerning when someone stops her in a public place and asks what is going on with ambulance billing account being overdrawn by an excess of \$50,000 and stated there is a need for more oversight to that office.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Given by Committee Chairman Bill Bergen:

1. Bergen reported the Personnel Committee did not meet due to inclement weather. As a member of the 9111/ETSB Board, he also thanked the County Board for forgiving the remaining \$50,000 loan balance.

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

1. **Village of Walshville Street Issues Update:** Miles stated there is nothing new to report. He said he instructed Road & Bridge committee member Whitworth to tell Walshville Village President Joy McDonald to not attend the committee meeting because County Engineer Cody Greenwood was unable to be there this month.
2. **Executive Session for Right of Way Acquisition for Section 15-00138-00-BR Whitetown Bridge Update:** Miles stated there is nothing new to report.
3. **Small Equipment Purchase Update:** Miles reported there is no longer a need for a trailer because an agreement has been reached with the Health Department for Highway Department use of their trailer, as long as they maintain it, which Miles said they will.
4. **Other Business:** Miles reported Hillsboro Mayor Don Downs attended the Roads and Bridges Committee meeting to discuss the future of the old Highway Department property. Miles stated Downs is going to have a discussion with the Hillsboro City Council and then return to the committee to discuss it further. Miles also reported the oil and culvert letting will take place on April 5, 2022 at 9 a.m. at the Highway Department. He also reported Greenwood will be applying for a Hazard Mitigation Grant to purchase a generator. Miles stated the Highway department is still waiting on parts for the fuel pumps, but they are still useable so any county employees who want to use them are able to do so.

SAFETY & ELECTIONS: Given by Committee Chairman Mark Hughes:

1. **ETSB/911 Update:** Hughes stated there is nothing to report.
2. **Ambulance Billing Office Update:** Hughes stated the ambulance billing office wrote checks for the incorrect amounts which caused their account to be overdrawn, but the issue has been found and it is being remedied.
3. **Ambulance Billing Clerk Position Update:** Hughes reported the committee will hold a special joint meeting with the Personnel Committee on Thursday, March 10th at 5 p.m. to interview two applicants for the open Ambulance Billing Clerk position. He stated Ambulance Special Service Area contracts will also be discussed.
4. **Nokomis Ambulance Billing Update:** Hughes stated there is nothing new to report.
5. **FY 2022 Ambulance Billing Agreements Update:** Hughes stated there is nothing new to report.
6. **Elections Update:** County Clerk Leitheiser reported her staff received training recently on the new election equipment. She also stated the filing period for county candidates to file petitions to run at the June 28th, 2022 General Primary Election began Monday, March 7th, and will end on Monday, March 14th, at 5 p.m.
7. **EPA Report Update:** EPA Administrator Daniels reported she and assistant David Jenkins conducted a few inspections on Tuesday, March 1st. She said one inspection was a follow-up on the Waggoner end of the County's Green Diamond Bike Trail. Daniels noted significant progress has been made on the clean-up of the property; however a lot of work still remains. She said they will be conducting more inspections as the weather continues to improve.
8. **Electronics Recycling Drive Events Update:** Daniels reported the dates for this year's electronics recycling drives are as follows: Litchfield on Saturday, April 30th; Nokomis on Saturday, May 14th; and Hillsboro on Saturday, September 17th. All drives will be held from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

9. **Animal Control Facility Program Update:** Hughes reported the new pressure washer is not completely installed because they are waiting on one part.
10. **Animal Control Municipal Contracts Update:** Hughes reported the committee agreed to present the Animal Control municipal contracts to the mayors, and they will do so during the Mayors meeting on March 23rd, 2022.

APPROVAL OF 7 COMMITTEE REPORTS & MINUTES:

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Young announced Grain Belt Express will hold a public meeting Wednesday, March 9th, 2022 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Event Center of Montgomery County. He also stated there will be a Mayor's Meeting Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: None

APPOINTMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

PAY BILLS AND PAYROLL: Motion by Hughes and second by Yeske to pay all approved bills and payroll. All in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURN: The next regular full board meeting will be on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room, Hillsboro, Illinois. Motion by Beason and second by Loucks to adjourn the Full Board Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:11 p.m. Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Montgomery County Clerk and Recorder Sandy Leitheiser.