

ADMINISTRATION AND LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE STATED MEETING - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2008

The stated meeting for the month of December was held in the Stephenson County Board Room on the above date with Ms. S. Hooper, the Chairman, presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Committee members present were Ms. S. Hooper, Mr. Kuhlmeier, Ms. Dotson, Mr. Mikkelsen, Mr. Kuhlemeier and Mr. Wire. Absent was Mr. Parker. County Board Chairman Blum was also present.

Minutes of the stated meeting of Wednesday November 5, 2008 were approved, without reading, on a motion by Mr. Mikkelsen, seconded by Mr. Kuhlmeier.

The County Clerk said that she did not have a report. Chairman Blum said that he had received a letter from Comcast regarding high definition cable television. Ms. Otte will include the Comcast letter as part of County Board correspondence, at next week's meeting.

A draft 2009 County Board calendar was distributed and reviewed. Only in the months of September and November were there any problems with the traditional meeting schedule. On a motion by Mr. Mikkelsen, seconded by Ms. Dotson, the September County Board and committee meetings were moved back one week. On a motion by Mr. Mikkelsen, seconded by Ms. Dotson, the November County Board meeting was moved to Thursday and on November 30th, the Planning and Development Committee meeting will start at 5:30 p.m. and the County Board meeting to approve the budget will start at 7:00 p.m. On a motion by Mr. Kuhlmeier, seconded by Mr. Kuhlemeier, the Committee recommended approval of the 2009 County Board calendar, as amended.

The County Treasurer reported that the 2008 property tax cycle has been completed and the final distribution made. She is working with the State's Attorney and DevNet on a voluntary payment program for real estate taxes.

The Supervisor of Assessment reported that to date, his office has received five assessment complaints. He has sent over 200 letters regarding assessment adjustments, for this year's flooding. He noted that foreclosure sales are not valid comparisons for assessment appeals.

Mr. Kane explained that DevNet and Harris are working together to get more data on the web site. Aero is pushing the fiber line to the Jail. He needs additional space for GIS. There have been several FOIA requests and appeals for assessment and property record information in a digital format. There is a question on just what assessment information is exempt from FOIA. The County spends nearly \$50,000 per year to maintain its GIS system. The State's Attorney is working with Mr. Kane on the FOIA requests.

Mr. Mikkelsen reported that he met with the Liquor Commission and his questions were answered. Mr. Parker's questions were answered before the Liquor Commission met. Chairman Blum explained that the State's Attorney wants to segregate regulatory responsibilities. He does not want to use the Liquor Code to enforce

zoning, safety or sanitation requirements. These other violations, when noticed, should be referred to the proper agency. The Liquor Commission plans to hold an informational meeting with the license holders to explain the changes. On a motion by Mr. Kuhlemeier, seconded by Mr. Wire, the Committee recommended presentation, of the new Liquor Code, to the County Board for review and lay over.

The State's Attorney has been requested to draw up a County ordinance adopting, by reference, the State's "Fair Housing" statute.

The County Administrator explained that each year UCCI asks for any legislative suggestions for the General Assembly. As noted earlier, the County could use further clarification regarding FOIA and the use and distribution of digital information for commercial gain. The Sheriff is looking for new laws to help with the collection of court assigned fines and fees. Any relief from unfunded mandates would be welcome.

The raffle license applications for Stephenson County Historical Society (1488) and Aquin Catholic Schools (1489) were approved, on a motion by Mr. Kuhlmeier, seconded by Mr. Wire.

Chairman Blum reviewed the issue of whether the Coroner is eligible for health insurance. It is the State's Attorney's opinion that the Coroner is eligible to participate in the employee health insurance program. An increase of benefits, like an increase in salary, is subject to the same 180-day notice. However, the State's Attorney is basing his opinion on the fact that the Coroner is the only elected department head not currently receiving health insurance benefits. To remediate this unfair and inequitable situation, the Coroner should receive the same health insurance benefit that other elected department heads receive.

The scheduled Executive Session was not needed.

Claims of \$75,203.18 were approved, on a motion by Mr. Mikkelsen, seconded by Ms. Dotson.

The Committee adjourned at 7:30 p.m., on a motion by Mr. Mikkelsen, seconded by Mr. Kuhlemeier.

Approved: January 7, 2009

Next Stated Meeting of the Committee:
Wednesday, January 7, 2009 6:30 p.m.
Stephenson County Board Room