

STEPHENSON COUNTY BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2010
Stephenson County Board Room

The Stephenson County Board met in the County Boardroom on Wednesday February 10, 2010. Chairman Blum called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Newton gave the Invocation and Ms. Boynton lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called the roll. Members present; Samuel Newton, Bennie Brown, Charles Hilton, Debra Devine, Sheila Hooper, Peter Willging, Donald Parker, John Blum, Vicki Hooper, James Graham, Alvin Wire, Linda Dotson, J. Kuhlmeier, Thomas Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, Lynn Koch, Brenda Boynton, George Kinney Salvatore Détente and Forrest Senn. Members absent; Jeffrey Mikkelsen and Todd McKenna. Twenty members present. Two members absent.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Mr. Willging made a motion to approve the agenda as received. Second by Ms. Dotson. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve the agenda as received carried unanimously.*

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 13, 2010 MEETING MINUTES: Mr. Senn made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2010 meeting as received. Second by Mr. Gilmour. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2010 meeting as received carried unanimously.*

CLAIMS ON THE CLERK'S DESK: Ms. V. Hooper made a motion that all claims on the Clerk's desk be referred to the proper committees without reading. Second by Mr. Senn. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion that all claims on the Clerk's desk be referred to the proper committees without reading carried unanimously.*

COMMUNICATIONS: The Clerk presented the following communications;

*Public Defender Report for January; 189 New Cases, 216 Cases Closed, Income \$2,640.81

*ComCast franchise fee for quarter ended December 31, 2009; \$5,569.68

*Report of Official Acts October-December, 2009 from the Regional Office of Education

Ms. V. Hooper made a motion to receive all communications and place on file. Second by Mr. Willging. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to receive all communications and place on file carried unanimously.*

OLD BUSINESS: No old business noted

SHERIFF'S REPORT: Sheriff Snyders reported he had received several calls on today's earthquake. No injuries or damages were reported.

HIGHWAY REPORT: Mr. Isbell presented the following Resolutions

#10-02-1725 HD 10-07; Appropriating MFT Funds for 10-00000-00-GM. Mr. J. Kuhlmeier made a motion to approve Resolution #10-03-1725 HD 10-07. Second by Mr. Koch. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion. Members voting aye: J. Kuhlmeier, Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, Koch, Boynton, Kinney, Détente, Senn, Newton, Brown, Hilton, Devine, S. Hooper, Willging, Parker, V. Hooper, Graham, Wire, Dotson, and Blum. Twenty ayes. *Motion to approve HD 10-07; appropriating MFT Funds for 10-00000-00-GM carried unanimously.*

#10-02-1726 HD 10-08; Supplemental County Engineer Expenses from MFT Funds for 09-00000-00-CS. Mr. J. Kuhlmeier made a motion to approve Resolution HD 10-08. Second by Mr. Koch. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve HD 10-08; Supplemental County Engineer Expenses from MFT Funds for 09-00000-00-CS carried unanimously.*

#10-02-1727 HD 10-09; Awarding Bids for 10-XX000-00-GM, Township Maintenance. Mr. J. Kuhlmeier made a motion to approve Resolution HD 10-09. Second by Mr. A. Kuhlemeier. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion. Members voting aye: J. Kuhlmeier, Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, Koch, Boynton, Kinney, Détente, Senn, Newton, Brown, Hilton, Devine, S. Hooper, Willging, Parker, V. Hooper, Graham, Wire, Dotson, and Blum. Twenty ayes. *Motion to approve HD 10-09; Awarding Bids for 10-XX000-00-GM, Township Maintenance carried unanimously.*

Mr. Isbell reported that the Winneshiek Road resurfacing project was awarded to Civil Construction. Construction should begin in June.

ZONING REPORT: Mr. Groves presented the following;

MA#2010-1; Zoning District Map Amendment E-3 to B-3 for Kent Bank. Mr. Parker made a motion to approve MA#2010-1; Zoning District Map Amendment E-3 to B-3 for Kent Bank. Second by Mr. Koch. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve MA#2010-1; Zoning District Map Amendment E-3 to B-3 for Kent Bank carried unanimously.*

SU #2010-1; Special Use Single Family Dwelling for Bob Linquist. Mr. Parker made a motion to approve SU #2010-1; Special Use Single Family Dwelling for Bob Linquist. Second by Ms. Dotson. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve SU #2010-1; Special Use Single Family Dwelling for Bob Linquist carried unanimously.*

PECATONICA PRAIRIE PATH/JANE ADDAMS TRAIL: Mr. Groves reported Pecatonica Prairie Path Commission had met today and reviewed construction projects. Minutes of the Jane Addams Trail Commission's January 21st meeting were distributed.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT: No report

9-1-1 REPORT: Minutes of the February 8th 911 Board meeting, financial reports, statistics and projects were distributed.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mr. Beintema presented the following report;

- 24 positive hospitalized H1N1 cases and several hundred positive A influenza cases have been reported in the County since spring. The Health Department has completed 18 school based and 7 public based clinics in the County along with 40 clinics at the Health Department. About 6,200 people have been vaccinated by the Department. January clinics were held in the 3rd Ward area in 3 locations.
- The Health Department is co-sponsoring a "Voices for Children" press conference on February 11th.
- They have been notified of approval for a Women's Health Grant. The program is titled W.O.W. and is a 12-week walking challenge for women living in Stephenson County.
- Rankings on the health of all the individual counties will be available next week.
- The FQHC Resolution has been finalized and ready for passage by the County Board. This was not listed on the County Board agenda for this evening so will be brought back next month for approval.
- The Annual Report, Food Scores and Animal Control Report were distributed.

NURSING CENTER REPORT: Mr. Fortney reported he has been nominated to serve on the Board of Director's for the Illinois Council on Long Term Care. This will entail quarterly meetings and will give the Nursing Center great exposure. He reported the Red and White Ball went well and many family members attended. He thanked the Board and Community for their support.

PROBATION DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mr. Pauley reported Detention costs are at \$17,000 for the year. Since the retirement of Marge Mapes, the Department has shifted caseloads to other Probation Officers. The caseload average per officer is 114, which exceeds the recommended caseload per officer. Director Pauley is now doing the random drug testing and Assistant Director Eilders is taking over the DUI cases. Caseload totals were distributed.

STATE'S ATTORNEY REPORT: No report

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Blum presented the following report;

- First, I wish to inform you that Mr. Mikkelsen is dealing with some very serious health issues. He has spent the last two weeks in the hospital and is now in recovery. It will be a number of weeks before he regains his strength and resumes his duties with the County Board. I am in regular contact with his wife and have pledged our support.

- This is a reminder that the UCCI legislative reception and seminar is being held in Springfield on February 23 and 24. I plan to fly down the morning of February 23. If you would like to attend with me, please advise Mr. Mulnix by February 17, 2010.
- On February 2, 2010 Ms. Janet Vrtol assumed the duties of Workforce Investment Board Manager. She replaces J.C. Wilson who held the position for the past 6 months. Janet is a resident of rural Freeport. Her duties will include coordination and support for the LWIB4 board of directors and the five county CEOs. In addition, she will be assisting in the coordination of all workforce programs and be the liaison with communities, businesses, and schools. I welcome Janet to the workforce development team.
- I have reorganized the effort to appropriate the office and storage space within the courthouse. The ad hoc committee formed six months ago has completed their mission and will sunset. I have asked Mr. Détente and Mr. Snively to lead the effort to finalize a space utilization plan for the courthouse. This will include a space schematic that will outline actual space allocations to each office including options for records storage. They will coordinate their efforts with each courthouse-based department head including the chair persons of the Public Property and Court Services Committees. I have set a goal of having this schematic done in a rough draft form for presentation at the next department head meeting scheduled for March 8, 2010. We hope to reach a formal consensus of the allocation plan at this meeting and then submit it to each oversight committee for consideration and subsequent approval by this board. We will then begin the process of expanding and moving spaces according to the plan based on the availability of materials, labor, and funding.
- Work continues in earnest on the implementation of our economic development plans in conjunction with the City of Freeport and NIDA. The 4 standing committees are hard at work and there is a growing list of potential projects being worked. Cheryl Kneubuehl gave a complete summary of their activities at last weeks Planning and Development meeting and again yesterday morning at the NIDA board meeting. Both Mr. Graham and I were in attendance at that board meeting.
- A new private sector member recruitment brochure is being generated as an aid toward increasing the amount of business investment in the foundation. A sample copy of this brochure is at your desk for your review. It will be presented to the entire membership at the NIDA annual meeting planned for February 16, 2010.
- NIDA will present an annual report to Stephenson County during the Planning and Development Committee meeting on March 1, 2010. All County Board members are invited to attend this presentation.
- The Infrastructure Committee of NIDA will be hosting a working meeting with representatives of RTAC on February 16, 2010. RTAC is based out of Western Illinois University and helps coordinate the process of planning, implementing, and funding rural transportation programs. This meeting will be the beginning of the process to develop a county-wide public transportation system for Stephenson County.
- NIDA recently completed the required annual report to DCEO summarizing activities in the Mill Race Crossing EDPA. I have asked Mr. Kane to place this report on the County Website for review.
- We received official notification from IDOT today that our request for EDP funds to support a new business expansion in the Eleroy area has been approved. NIDA has been working on this project for quite awhile and received tremendous support from our County Engineer and Adam Holder of Fehr-Graham. IDOT approved more than \$1.8 million for these necessary road improvements that could begin yet this fall. These improvements will support the growth of new jobs as well as increase the safety on this stretch of US20. A formal announcement by the business defining their project should be made shortly.

- During the NIDA board meeting held on February 9, 2010 we were informed that Cheryl Kneubuehl, Executive Director of the organization has tendered her resignation effective in early March. She is leaving the organization to spend more time working in her family business. Cheryl has worked hard over the past 2 years or so to restructure NIDA and increase the value provided not only for the partners, but the community as a whole. It was understood that when she took over this leadership role that it would only continue until stability was restored and that another leader could be identified with more specific professional tools to lead the organization into the all important marketing effort. Cheryl will remain in our community and be involved in projects of local and regional value. An announcement of a new leader should be made by NIDA in the very near future. I certainly wish Cheryl well as she pursues her business and career interests.
- We are planning a formal meeting in March 2010 of all Village Mayors in Stephenson County to identify potential brownfield redevelopment sites. This will kick off the implementation of the new round of USEPA Brownfield grants recently awarded to Stephenson County in the amount of \$400,000. The date has not yet been determined.
- As you all know, the primary election has been concluded. My congratulations to those individuals that will move to the general election ballot in November 2010. The voter turnout was again relatively low at 18.2%. We still have to deal with the election canvas, possible recounts, party caucuses, and possible independent candidates before the November election comes into total focus.
- I would like to express my appreciation to all of the department heads, employees, election judges, and volunteers that helped this last election run smoothly and totaled by 9:15 p.m. election night.
- The public safety sales tax question failed to receive the necessary voter support. 72% of the voters declined the proposed increase to support public safety. While working to help inform our citizens of the need, the value, the application, and the possible disbursement of this proposed sales tax revenue it was apparent there was a lot of misinformation and confusion out in the public. There was not a lot of time prior to the vote to effectively clarify all of the questions.
- All of us on this board understood the seriousness of the question placed on the ballot. The majority of this board decided it was important to place this question on the ballot. Some of us worked in support of the question and some of us worked in opposition to the question. This is how democracy works. This is how citizens maintain formal control of taxing decisions.
- I can't help but compare the political process or the operation of local government to shoveling snow out of your lane or driveway. It snows; you get up early to move it out of the way so you can get to work or some other mission. You shovel and just when you get finished a snow plow goes by and fills the driveway back up with snow. You shovel, with frustration, as you clean up the new snow pushed into the driveway in a matter of seconds after you may have spent a good hour clearing it. Such is life, and such is government.
- I sometimes wonder what it would take to organize snow removal like they do at OHare Airport. Each plow, end loader, and truck has a job, is aware of the plan, and is able to line up and plow a runway in formation in a minimum amount of time with excellent results. If one truck goes at a different speed, or runs out of gas, or doesn't follow a procedure, the entire effort collapses. Again, such is life, and such is government.
- I am a firm believer that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but, as it was pointed out a long time ago, nobody is entitled to their own facts. Generic or unfounded statements made in the heat of political battle need to be measured, verified, and responsible. Otherwise, there will be a lot of the same snow to shovel again and again.
- What now. I believe the economy of our State will remain shaky for at least another 18-24 months depending on actions taken in Springfield and the health of the overall economy. We

must continue to closely monitor our revenue and expense performance in this current fiscal year. Our Committees and Department Heads are constantly examining our fiscal performance while still delivering the required services.

- We are reaching the end of the first quarter of our fiscal year. We will shortly have enough data to make a preliminary determination of trends in both revenue and expenses. If the trends indicate a continued erosion of revenue we will need to make any adjustments in our budget plan within the next 4-6 weeks in order to have any real effect for the balance of this fiscal year.
- These adjustments may include furlough days, office hour reductions, and even requests for financial relief within our collective bargaining agreements. Our contracts with a number of our represented employee units will open for negotiations in the near future. There is no question that the economy will set the tone for these negotiations.
- I am asking the Public Safety Committee at their next scheduled meeting to consider placing the Public Safety Sales Tax proposal on the November 2010 ballot. I am not asking this as someone who is pro tax, but I feel that the Committee revisit this question while the debate from the primary is still fresh and make a timely recommendation to the Finance Committee for their March 2010 meeting so that we can consider the question here on the Board floor next month. If we delay this decision, we will not allow appropriate time for proper engagement of the voters. If we decline to place the question on the ballot we then know it will not be a player in the 2011 budget process and can plan accordingly.
- Department Heads will again be asked to develop a financial contingency plan to reduce expenses by another 15%. Given the levels at which we are currently operating, this will be very difficult. I say again, these will be contingency plans. These plans will be discussed at our next department head meeting in March and must be ready to implement, if needed, by April 2010. In order to implement the plans this Board will have to make formal adjustments in the budget plan mid year.
- In case you can't tell, I am very frustrated with the limited options we have at the local government level to be able to provide necessary services as well as job and investment opportunities for our citizens. The high unemployment, the increase in poverty, the erosion of the quality of life, the degradation of housing, the reduction in opportunity, the decrease in our general physical health, increase in crime, and more that accompanies a poor economy are cause for concern and downright fear. Before I let my community, or my county, or my state, or my country, go down that road any further I find it time to take a stand. I am going to get very active vocally, legislatively, and politically to push for changes in our system that will at least define or even invent a new course. As examples: we cannot continue to burden under a growing tax system that stifles growth; we can't continue to maintain a costly membership in an outdated and somewhat risky state retirement plan; we can't keep operating at the local level under more stringent rules than our more senior government in Springfield in everything from FOIA to unfunded mandates; we can't continue to be constrained by labor agreements that do not allow for efficiency and flexibility. I'm not mad at our legislators, I am not mad at our unions, I am not mad at anybody. I just have a genuine and tremendously solid passion to stop operating in this environment where we have no control. I am a captain of a ship. There is no more awesome responsibility than that. The ship can be your home, your county, or your state, but we are all on the ship. With your support and your passion I plan to begin organizing our efforts toward a new path before it is too late. It won't be easy, it might not be popular in some sectors, but I feel it is needed.

APPOINTMENTS: The following reappointments of David Ylinen and Rose Kaseeska for the Convention and Visitor's Bureau were recommended to the full Board. Mr. Koch made a motion to approve the reappointments of David Ylinen and Rose Kaseeska. Second by Ms. Boynton. The Chair

called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve the reappointments of David Ylinen and Rose Kaseeska carried unanimously.*

Action Items from Standing Committees

Public Property: Mr. Senn made a motion to authorize the Probation Department to expand into the area previously used by the County Clerk, on the lower level of the Courthouse. Second by Mr. Detente. This will allow the Probation Department to properly segregate their juvenile clients from their adult clients. They will be doing the work themselves and there is no additional cost to the County. It was noted this expansion was part of the original plan. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to authorize the Probation Department to expand into the area previously used by the County Clerk, on the lower level of the Courthouse carried unanimously.*

Administration: Ms. S. Hooper noted the Comcast cable television franchise agreement will be brought to the Board next month.

Ms. S. Hooper made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreements for townships, for which the Supervisor of Assessment office does the assessor work. Second by Ms. Dotson. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve Intergovernmental Agreements for townships, for which the Supervisor of Assessment office does the assessor work carried unanimously.*

- Raffles (all fees and bonding in order)
 - 1543 Lena Lions Club, Manager Kirk Polhill
 - 1544 Lena Lions Club, Manager James A Brenner
 - 1545 Aquin Catholic Elementary, Manager Michelle Bunyer

Ms. S. Hooper made a motion to approve the raffles as presented. Second by Mr. Willging. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve the raffles as presented carried unanimously.*

Information from Standing Committees

Finance: Mr. Graham reported that revenues are tracking about 2% below budget and expenses are tracking about 1% below budget. The Health Insurance Fund showed a positive month. He addressed his concern with misinformation being provided to the public and encourages citizens to attend the Committee meetings. He understands there is a lot of animosity within the community and is exploring the possibility of better ways to communicate and get information out to the public.

Public Property: Mr. Senn reported that problems with the Courthouse HVAC system and the boiler at the jail have been addressed.

Administration: No further report

Court Services: Ms. V. Hooper reported that a Collection Committee has been formed.

Nursing Center: Mr. Détente reported another loan repayment will be coming next month. Money continues to be put aside for the roofing project. He hopes to have enough funds to proceed with the project by the end of the year.

Planning and Development: Mr. Parker reported Congressman Manzullo is seeking \$200,000 in Federal funds for further development of the Work Keys and Certificate of Employability programs. Cheryl Kneubuehl will attend next months Board meeting to make a presentation on NIDA’s structure and activities.

Public Works: No further report

CLAIMS

Finance & Procurement	\$ 1,341,160.25	
Administration	\$ 57,232.10	
Public Works	\$ 165,985.87	
Nursing Center	\$ 155,186.55	
Public Property	\$ 38,910.46	
Court Services	\$ 14,009.54	plus 529.66
Public Safety	\$ 49,294.25	
Planning & Development	\$ 342.11	
9-1-1	\$ 412,961.51	

Mr. Graham made a motion to approve the claims as received. Second by Mr. Gilmour. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion. Members voting aye: Graham, Wire, Dotson, J. Kuhlmeier, Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, Koch, Boynton, Kinney, Détente, Senn, Newton, Brown, Hilton, Devine, S. Hooper, Willging, Parker, V. Hooper and Blum. Twenty ayes. *Motion to approve the claims as received carried unanimously.*

Mileage & Per Diems – *Subject to review by Finance Chairman*

Blum 5 days, 0 miles-Boynton 3 days, 70 miles-Brown 3 days, 10 miles-Detente 4 days, 78 miles-Devine 3 days, 16 miles-Dotson 4 days, 144 miles-Gilmour 4 days, 0 miles-Graham 5 days, 0 miles-Hilton 3 days, 10 miles-S Hooper 3 days, 0 miles-V Hooper 2 days, 0 miles-Kinney 3 days, 38 miles-Koch 3 days, 72 miles-A Kuhlemeier 3 days, 95 miles-J Kuhlmeier 4 days, 92 miles-McKenna 2 days, 8 miles-Mikkelsen 0 days, 0 miles-Newton 1 days, 70 miles-Parker 4 days, 16 miles-Senn 4 days, 56 miles-Willging 3 days, 20 miles-Wire 3 days, 118 miles. Mr. Graham made a motion to approve the mileage & per diems as received. Second by Mr. Brown. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. *Motion to approve the mileage & per diems as received carried unanimously.*

OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Wire responded to Mr. Grahams remarks regarding animosity. He stated citizens are upset that we built the new jail with the intent it could be efficiently manned and federal inmates would be housed. They supported the original Public Safety Sales Tax and think they have done what they need to do. They are questioning if the Public Safety dollars are being spent properly. It was noted that the dollars are being used properly as set by state statute.

MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE: No comments

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chairman Blum requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss the following matters; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Union Negotiations; Side Letter of Understanding. Mr. Koch made a motion to go into executive session. Second by Mr. Graham. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion. Members voting aye: Koch, Boynton, Kinney, Détente, Senn, Newton, Brown, Hilton, Devine, S. Hooper, Willging, Parker, Graham, Wire, Dotson, J. Kuhlmeier, Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, and Blum. Nineteen ayes. Noted absence of V. Hooper. *Motion to go into executive session to discuss Union Negotiations, Side Letter of Understanding carried unanimously.*

REGULAR SESSION: Chairman Blum called the regular session back to order and announced that Union Negotiations; Side Letter of Understanding had been discussed with no action taken in executive session.

ACTION OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Senn made a motion to approve the Side Letter of Understanding between the Sheriff's Department and the Union as part of the impact bargaining. Second by Mr. Willging. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion. Members voting aye: Senn, Newton, Brown, Hilton, Devine, S. Hooper, Willging, Parker, Graham, Wire, Dotson, J. Kuhlmeier, Gilmour, A. Kuhlemeier, Koch, Boynton, Kinney, Détente, and Blum. Nineteen ayes. *Motion to approve the Side Letter of Understanding between the Sheriff's Department and the Union as part of the impact bargaining carried unanimously.*

ADJOURN UNTIL 6:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2010: Mr. Hilton made a motion to adjourn. Second by Mr. Gilmour. The Chair called for a voice vote on the motion. Motion to adjourn until 6:30 p.m. Wednesday March 10, 2010 carried unanimously.

*Mr. Newton will be responsible for the Invocation
Mr. Detente will lead the Pledge*

DRAFT