

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Economic Development Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Economic Development Committee Minutes
May 2, 2017**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., in the Administrative Building's Conference Room East in Sycamore, Illinois. Chairman Bagby called the meeting to order. Those Members present were Mr. Brown, Mrs. Emmer, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Osland, and Chairman Bagby. Mr. Faivre was absent. A quorum was established.

Others present were Robin Brunshon, Christine Johnson, Dianne Leifheit, Tracy Jones, Dan Cribben, Scott Zak, John Mataitis, Ryan Cardinali, and 23 other members of the public.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Mrs. Emmer, seconded by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2017 meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Mrs. Emmer, seconded by Mr. Brown, and it was carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Mataitis, a Sycamore resident, provided documentation to the Committee outlining the property where Chairman Bagby resides and how an adjacent neighbor of his is paying \$1,327 more in property taxes for the same size lot. Mr. Mataitis noted that he wanted to make the Committee and County Board aware of these discrepancies and how if it were to be taken to the Board of Review, there would possibly only be a quarter taken off Mr. Bagby's neighbor's tax bill because that seems to be the trend lately. Mr. Mataitis reiterated that he previously shared with the Executive Committee that there were 313 appeals heard by the Board of Review last year and 479 decisions were made and 166 disappeared. He noted that he found 8 which equaled \$88,000. Lastly, he expressed his discontent with the current Board of Review Members and how he thinks the current individuals serving were never vetted by the County Board.

Ryan Cardinali, a Sycamore resident, explained that he and a neighbor went through the property appeal process last year. He noted that they have similar properties and both received the same amount off of their appeal judgement. Mr. Cardinali alluded that something wasn't quite right with the Board of Review and that the County Board should look into their actions because it doesn't seem right for both of the neighbor's properties to come out with the exact same reduction for two different homes with two different prices per square foot after their appeals.

Mr. Cardinali additionally displayed a map of the north side of Heron Creek Subdivision in Sycamore that showed that every lot around the pond, even if they do not have the same lot size, are assessed with the exact same land value and not a single one has been changed in the rest of the subdivision. He added that these are just a few of the issues they are finding on the surface and didn't take long to investigate and find. Mr. Cardinali noted that there is no consistent formula being used for per acre assessments and also shared that he reviewed Mr. Bagby's property and noticed that large discrepancy in what he is paying as opposed to his neighbor. He questioned how this is happening and feels it is due to the entire assessment system being broken.

Mr. Cardinali continued to discuss his experiences through reviewing his property cards and having his current home assessment increased.

It was questioned how long the current Chief County Assessments Office and Board of Review Members have been serving. The DeKalb County Chief of Assessments Officer, Robin Brunshon, was appointed in 2011. The Board of Review Members: Gerald Wahlstrom: August 18, 1982, John Guio: October 16, 2013, Robert Merriman: January 1, 2014 as Alt and October 21, 2015 as full time, Michael Miner – Alt: October 19, 2011, and Daniel Cribben – Alt: January 1, 2014. It was also clarified that there are no residency requirement for the Chief County Assessments Officer for DeKalb County.

Mr. Cardinali questioned the qualifications and process for becoming a Board of Review Members with the Chief County Assessments Officer Robin Brunshon. Ms. Brunshon explained that in order to be recommended to the Board of Review, you first have to pass the Board of Review Exam that is administered by the Illinois Department of Revenue and there is no cost to take the exam.

The role of the Township Assessors were brought up and that they are Elected Officials or contracted for their services through the Townships. Ms. Brunshon additionally provided a brief detail of what her role is within the assessments process.

Mr. Cardinali continued to provide examples to the Committee supporting on why he thinks the assessments process is broken.

BOARD OF REVIEW APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The Committee continued their discussions with Ms. Brunshon focused around the appointments and qualifications of the Board of Review Members. Ms. Brunshon noted that the individuals seeking to be on the Board of Review need to have knowledge of real estate (selling, market analysis, cost/market approach, an appraiser) and the assessment process. Individuals also have to take the Board of Review Exam administered by the Department of Revenue. Once the exam is taken, your name is held in good standing for three years. She also added that when she was appointed to Chief Assessments Officer in 2011 she required all of the Board of Review Members at that time take the Board of Review Exam and pass it, in order to remain on the Board. It was added that there are no continuing educational courses required of the Members either.

Ms. Brunson shared even for qualified individuals, the time commitments and flexibility for the amount of pay (\$10,600/yr.), doesn't bring too many individuals forward that are looking to be on the Board of Review. She added that she has heard from several individuals that have expressed that the money isn't worth the time that needs to be put in. Mr. Cardinali asked if the time of the hearings could be changed in the even in order to better accommodate the public and allow for Board Members to have regular full-time jobs as well. Ms. Brunson expressed that she doesn't have the amount of staff or budget for overtime that would support holding any evening hearings and building security would be an added issue.

Ms. Brunson additionally addressed the Mr. Mataitis's statements regarding missing 166 decisions. She explained that those were not generated by individuals they were held by the Board of Review to obtain more information and all came from one area and Township Assessor. She additionally shared with the Committee and audience the days that the Board of Review Members worked in 2015 and 2016, which were more than was previously noted and shared what all they are required to do.

The Final Assessment Notice was brought up as well. Ms. Brunson noted that it is a generated form from the Devnet Program used by the County and several other surrounding Counties.

Mr. Jones noted and suggested that a real good thing for the Committee to do in the future is to hold an educational workshop for the County Board and public on the step by step process of the entire property tax system and how it works. He added that there are a lot of misconceptions about the system and there are many factors that play into the system as a whole and thinks it would be good to review that process with all who are interested. Chairman Bagby agreed and added that it doesn't hurt at all for them to revisit these issues and will certainly be added to the Committee's list of goals.

ASSESSMENTS / APPEALS PROCESS

The Committee, public, and Mr. Brunson continued their discussions on the Township Assessors and the appeals process.

The conversation moved again to the Final Assessment Form and how it is very hard to interpret the reasons given from the Board of Review. It was explained that because of how vague the generated form is, it makes it very hard to retrace the steps of why an assessments was or was not lowered for any given reason and what formulas or tools were used to arrive at those decisions. The form was said to not be transparent at all and would possibly be accepted better if there were even a couple short sentences that gave a brief reasoning instead of a general generated response.

After further deliberations the Committee thanked the members of the public for coming and discussing these matters with them and noted that they will be continuing to work on these issues and coordinate an educational Property Tax System Workshop in the months to come.

COMMITTEE GOALS

Chairman Bagby passed around the Committee's Goals that they had previously constructed to review. He noted that they would add the addition of the Workshop that was previously suggested as well.

The Chairman additionally shared that The National Association of Counties (NACo) has granted DeKalb County a 2017 Achievement Award for its program titled "Business Incubator Project" in the category of Community and Economic Development. Additionally the Economic Development Coordinator has been hired.

Lastly, the CEDS Planning Committee is having their final meeting in a couple weeks. The Steering Committee met on the 20th of April and are currently working through their goals and prioritizing them.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no additional Committee Members comments provided.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mr. Osland and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Tim Bagby

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary

DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF REVIEW

March 2, 2011 THROUGH FEBRUARY 24, 2012

➤ Exemptions

- 168 New Home Improvement Exemptions granted
- 251 New Senior Exemptions granted
- 1884 Senior Assessment Freeze Exemption applications reviewed and approved
- 25 Exempt Property Petitions reviewed and recommendations sent to the Illinois Department of Revenue

➤ Certificates of Error

- 288 Certificates of Error issued in 2011 against the 2010 year*

➤ Assessment Complaint Forms

- 461 Complaint forms filed and docketed on 464 parcels for the 2011 assessment year
 - Of Parcels Scheduled:
 - 55 Confirmed Assessments
 - 409 Reduced Assessments

➤ Assessment Changes

- 1313 Assessment changes made on the Board's own Motion (includes Mapping Department changes)

*Certificates of error are issued for those not filing for exemptions in a timely manner (90%), for properties granted exempt status by the Department of Revenue after the Board of Review adjournment, for assessor and/or clerical errors.

Board of Review Members

This Entity consists of 3 Board Members. The Clerk of the Board of Review (Supervisor of Assessments) helps the Board of Review collect and analyze property transfers and property appraisals when a taxpayer files a complaint about their property taxes. The board of review shall consist of (35ILCS 200/6-15) 2 members affiliated with the political party polling the highest vote for any county office in the county, and 1 member of the party polling the second highest vote for the same county office at the last general election prior to any appointment made under this Section. Each member of the board of review shall receive an annual salary to be fixed by the county board and paid out of the county treasury.

As of May 1, 2017: Annual Salary is \$10,600

Board Member	Original Date Appointed	Expiration of Appointment
Gerald Wahlstrom	August 18, 1982	April 30, 2017
John Guio	October 16, 2013 (Fill unexpired for Johnson)	April 30, 2018
Robert Merriman	January 1, 2014 (as Alt.) / October 21, 2015 (as FT)	April 30, 2017

Board of Review - Alternates

As of May 1, 2017: \$70.00 per diem

Alternate Board Member	Original Date Appointed	Annual App. for Alts.
Michael Miner	October 19, 2011	April 30, 2017
Daniel Cribben	January 1, 2014	April 30, 2017

2015 Board of Review
Meeting and Hearing Schedule

February 17, 2015	10:00 a.m.	Meeting to convene for 2015
April 9, 2015	10:00 a.m.	Meeting
May 6, 2015	1:00 p.m.	Meeting
May 26, 2015	11:00 a.m.	Meeting
June 19, 2015	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
June 30, 2015	10:30 a.m.	Meeting
July 29, 2015	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
August 20, 2015	10:00 a.m.	Meeting
September 8, 2015	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
October 2, 2015	10:00 a.m.	Meeting
October 21, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
October 23, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Meeting
October 27, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 3, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 5, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 6, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 10, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 12, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 13, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 19, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 20, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 23, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 24, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 1, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 3, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 4, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Hearings

Page 2 Board of Review Meeting and Hearing Schedule

December 10, 2015	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
December 15, 2015	8:45 a.m.	Meeting
December 30, 2015	10:30 a.m.	Meeting
January 15, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
January 22, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting
January 26, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
January 28, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
January 29, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
February 2, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
February 4, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
February 5, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
February 8, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting for Decisions
February 9, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
February 11, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting for Decisions
February 16, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting for Decisions
February 18, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting for Decisions
February 26, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting/Adjournment

2016 Board of Review

Meeting and Hearing Schedule

March 24, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting to convene for 2016
April 22, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
May 26, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
June 9, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
June 24, 2016	1:00 p.m.	Meeting
July 14, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
July 26, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
August 2, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
August 9, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
August 16, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
August 23, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
September 8, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
September 20, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
September 27, 2016	1:00 p.m.	Meeting
October 12, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
October 24, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
October 25, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Meeting
October 27, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
October 31, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 1, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 3, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 7, 2016	1:00 p.m.	Hearings
November 10, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 14, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 15, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 17, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 21, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
November 22, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 1, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 5, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 6, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 12, 2016	10:50 a.m.	Hearings
December 13, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 14, 2016	9:25 a.m.	Hearings on Assessor changes
December 15, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
December 19, 2016	9:25 a.m.	Hearings on Assessor changes
December 20, 2016	9:25 a.m.	Hearings on Assessor changes
December 21, 2016	9:25 a.m.	Hearings on Assessor changes
December 22, 2016	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
January 9, 2017	8:45 a.m.	Hearings
January 10, 2017	8:45 a.m.	Meeting
January 11, 2017	9:00 a.m.	Meeting
January 17, 2017	9:00 a.m.	Meeting

January 24, 2017
February 8, 2017

9:00 a.m.
1:30 p.m.

Hearing
Meeting/Adjournment