

*Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Executive 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

**Executive Committee Minutes  
October 14, 2015**

The Executive Committee of the DeKalb County Board met Wednesday, October 14, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Pietrowski called the meeting to order. Those present were Mr. Brown, Mr. Emerson, Mr. Frieders, Mr. Gudmunson, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Jones, Mr. Stoddard, and Mrs. Turner. All nine Members were present.

Others present were Gary Hanson, Christine Johnson, Paul Miller, Doug Johnson, Frank O'Barski, Jeff Whelan, Steve Reid, Jim Luebke, Ruth Anne Tobias, Kevin Bunge, Greg Millburg, Dianne Leifheit, Marjorie Askins, Chris Porterfield, Sandra Polanco, and Barry Schrader.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**It was moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Gudmunson and it was moved unanimously to approve the minutes from September 9, 2015.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Mr. Emerson and seconded by Mrs. Turner. Mrs. Haji-Sheikh asked to add Public Comments after Approval of the Agenda. The motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Barry Schrader noted that he will be attending the full County Board next week to address the Board but he also wanted to pass around a Mental Health Care Matters poster to the Committee Members to review.

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Pietrowski shared that on October 2<sup>nd</sup> he attended a Global Leadership Forum with Representative Kinzinger in Chicago. He shared that it was a very informative event and he was able to do a lot of networking.

Chairman Pietrowski and Mr. Paul Miller took some time to inform Board Members about the proposal coming before the Sycamore City Council regarding the annexation of 300 acres to the city for the allowance of residential development in the rural areas northwest of the city. Mr. Miller did inform that this project has been in the works for many years now and it the plan is within both the city's and the county's comprehensive plans. He also noted that if Board Members are to receive calls on the matter, they should simply refer them to the appropriate place, which is the City of Sycamore.

Lastly, Chairman Pietrowski announced that there will be an Economic Development Summit on November 17. There will be a morning session from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and an evening session from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. He encouraged all Board Members to attend and that the event is open to the public.

### **ELECTRICAL AGGREGATION REFERENDUM**

Ms. Christine Johnson took a minute to provide a refresher to the Committee Members regarding electrical aggregation which was initially brought forward last month. If the County Board so chooses place this issue on the ballot again it would go on the March 2016 ballot. The effected citizens in the area would be asked to vote on it and if it passes, it would automatically combine electric load for residential and small businesses for purchasing purposes, except for those customers who choose to opt out of the purchasing program. The County would then need to prepare a request for proposal to solicit bids for a provider and would be responsible for rebidding every time the contract expires (an estimated 1-3 years). Ms. Johnson also shared that it is important to note that there is no guaranteed savings with this option.

In March of 2012, DeKalb County placed this question on the ballot and the referendum failed 57% to 41% at the time. Ms. Johnson additionally passed around a list of the municipalities and townships that have and have not passed referendums on this issue. For DeKalb County to run this referendum again, the last day to certify a binding public questions or advisory referendum, is January 7, 2016 for the March Primary.

Ms. Johnson also provided a map that displayed the estimated population of township without electrical aggregation. Also since the last meeting, she surveyed 23 towns and townships with electrical aggregation and asked them if they have a contract, if so what the length of the contract is, who their supplier is, what their month/early termination fees are, and asked about their savings. She also gave them the opportunity to provide additional comments if they chose to. The survey showed: the average contract was 2 ½ years with none of them going longer than 3 years, there were 6 different suppliers, no one paid any monthly or early termination fees, in general they reported that their citizens are now saving between \$4 and \$17 dollars a month (the average being around \$10.40), they also commented that customers are now saving a significant amount less than when they first started the program.

Ms. Johnson shared that this referendum question would affect about 5% of the County's population. It is also important to note that the citizens have not asked that this issue be placed back on the ballot for consideration. Ms. Johnson also shared that when she tried to put together a list of pros and cons related to electrical aggregation, it was difficult to come up with very many pros.

Lastly Ms. Johnson provided some suggestions to the Board to consider as an alternative to running a referendum. She proposed that the County develop some documents explaining electrical aggregation, how it works, and how citizens can sign up for it themselves. This information could be placed on the County's website as well as follow up with some additional news releases to the local media so that people are aware that they have resources out there. This information can also be added to the County's social media page, the Chairman's Newsletter and become a resources for the citizens who might want to do their own research and make their own decisions on this issue.

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Chairman Pietrowski thanked Ms. Johnson for all her research on this topic and reporting to them. Mr. Emerson, Mr. Stoddard, and Mrs. Haji-Sheikh all provided that they think Ms. Johnson's alternative ideas are excellent and they feel that is the way to move forward with this issue instead of running another referendum question.

## **FY 2016 BUDGET**

### **County Clerk Budget Appeal:**

DeKalb County Clerk Doug Johnson joined the Committee to appeal the Administrative Recommendation denial of granting the upgrade of an Office Assistant B position to an Office Assistant A position due to increased job responsibilities in the Election Division. He provided a little background information and shared that an Office Assistant B's starting pay range is \$10.18 to \$11.20, with a max of \$16.13 per hour. He is asking for this individual to be reclassified as an Office Assistant A because the starting salary range is \$10.88 to \$11.97, with a max of \$17.23 per hour. It was noted that this is not a large difference, but *still* a difference. The Finance Department calculated that this request would be a \$3,000 increase to the County Clerk's Budget.

Mr. Johnson continued to provide information to the Committee for his reasoning behind his request that this individual's position be reclassified. With the amount of technology and workload that is being done in the County's Election Office, the longevity to be competitive with the outside market, he is taking these steps to hopefully retain valuable employees within his department. He also shared additional strides this individual has taken on their own to find ways to do the job for effectively and efficiently during hectic election times, and he would like to reward that.

**Mr. Stoddard made a motion to approve Mr. Johnson's appeal. Mr. Emerson seconded the motion.**

Mr. Stoddard noted that he thought a good case was made although he is aware that it would put them over their \$400,000 budget reserve goal.

Mr. Frieders noted that there are two more appeals that are going to be heard before Law & Justice and it will be the same argument.

Mr. Brown noted that the appeal Mr. Johnson made at Economic Development Committee was denied so he feels that he should stay consistent in voting to deny this appeal as well, although he feels both employees are very deserving, but that is another topic he mentioned.

**After other comments from Committee Members and discussion on the appeal, Chairman Pietrowski called for a roll call vote. Those voting yea were Mr. Emerson, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Stoddard, and Mrs. Turner. Those voting nay were Mr. Brown, Mr. Frieders, Mr. Gudmunson, Mr. Jones, and Chairman Pietrowski. Motion failed.**

## **COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS & REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT'S FY 2016 BUDGET**

There were no additional discussions regarding the FY 2016 Budget.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Chairman Pietrowski recommended the following appointments for approval:

- a. **Lee Community Fire Protection District:** Harold Armstrong appointed immediately to fill the unexpired term of Randy Dolister until April 30, 2017.
- b. **Housing Authority of the County of DeKalb:** Jerry Wahlstrom reappointed for a five-year term beginning November 1, 2015 and expiring October 31, 2020.
- c. **Board of Review:** Robert Merriman appointed immediately to fill the unexpired term of Marlin Chaplin until April 30, 2017.
- d. **Board of Review - Alternate:** Marlin Chaplin appointed immediately to fill the expired term of Robert Merriman until April 30, 2016.

**It was moved by Mrs. Turner, seconded by Mr. Jones and it was approved unanimously by voice vote to forward the recommended appointments to the full County Board for approval.**

## **APPROVAL OF THE COUNTY BOARD AGENDA**

Chairman Pietrowski asked to go around the table and hear an update from all of the Committee Chairpersons on what their Committees had done at their last meeting together and/or what they are anticipating in the months to come.

Mr. Emerson, Chairman of the Planning & Zoning Committee shared that the Committee is forwarding one resolution to the full County Board for consideration. The resolution provides a basis to open the door for discussion at Committee level to consider different zoning issues in order to become more business friendly. It was clarified that this resolution does not change any current zoning rules or regulations.

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee briefed that the Committee heard another appeal from County Clerk Mr. Johnson that was denied. They also received a request for continued support and funding for the IHSA Championship Games held at NIU during Thanksgiving weekend. The Committee denied the issuance of any funding but are forwarding a resolution to the full County Board to express the County's noneconomic support to the games. The Committee additionally approved a renewal of an intergovernmental agreement with Kane and Kendall Counties to reestablish the three-county workforce development area.

Mr. Gudmunson, Chairman of the County Highway Committee shared that the Committee is forwarding one altered speed zone Ordinance to the full County Board this month. He also shared that Committee took their tour of local projects. They visited four bridge projects and other sections of roads throughout the County that are going to be upcoming projects.

Mr. Stoddard, Chairman of the Finance Committee shared that the Committee is forwarding 12 delinquent property sale resolution to the full board along with a resolution that assigned interest to the Town of Cortland for 117 parcels there. It was determined that it would be in the best interest of the County to not be in the chain of title for these parcels and that is why interest is being assigned. The Committee is also forward two additional resolutions which are amendments to the County's Indemnification Policy and Cafeteria Plan Document. Mr. Stoddard also shared that the Committee started their discussion regarding salaries for Elected Officials and they will be finalizing that item next month.

Mr. Frieders, Chairman of the Law & Justice Committee shared the Committee has forwarded a resolution to continue an intergovernmental agree with Kane County for the Juvenile Justice Center. The County's and Kane have continued this agreement since 1997 and this is for the guaranteed housing of seven juveniles in need so secure detention. The Committee also received an annual report from the State's Attorney and an update on the Sober Living Home.

Mr. Frieders also shared that the Committee had unanimously approved to forward a resolution to the Board supporting a Communication's Center Fee Proposal for rural, non-contracted entities. The list included rural police and fire departments to split the cost of helping fund the Sheriff's Communication Center. Since the meeting though and after further discussion with the Sheriff, Chairman Frieders indicated that he would like the resolution to be removed from the agenda this month because there is no immediate rush to move this issue forward at this time. There would also be additional conversations with fire departments and villages prior to the Committee reviewing this issue again in a couple months. The Executive Committee agreed with the recommendation to remove the item from the agenda.

Mrs. Turner, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Committee, noted that the Committee is forwarding a land acquisition forward to the full Board of Commissioners to purchase approximately 1.3 acres of land that would connect the previously purchase Conro land to Prairie Oaks Forest Preserve. She also shared that at the next Committee meeting they will be voting on the Forest Preserve Districts FY 2016 Appropriation Ordinance and Levy along with a Wetland Bank land protection resolution and their Cafeteria Plan Amendment.

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Chairperson of the Health & Human Services Committee shared that the main topic that was discussed among this Committee was Mental Health. She noted that Mr. Barry Schrader joined the Committee and requested a letter of support/awareness to the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board urging for increased short-term and long-term inpatient mental health care within the community. The Committee reviewed the draft letter as well as talked briefly about the Kishwaukee Community Hospital and Northwestern Memorial Healthcare merger. Mrs. Haji-Sheikh additional shared that she is excited that next month the Committee will be joined by Dawn Littlefield of United Way to talk about a new 211 program. She encouraged everyone to come to her Committee's next meeting and learn more about this up and coming program.

**It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mr. Frieders and it was carried unanimously to approve the County Board Agenda as amended and to forward it to the full County Board for approval.**

#### **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Hanson shared that the Emergency Preparedness Committee has been meeting diligently to prepare a final Long-Term Disaster Recovery Plan. He noted that that plan has been distributed out to all Board Members and will being coming forward in November.

Mr. Hanson also mentioned that the County owns the land that the Voluntary Action Center is on and their 30 year lease is up. He plans for that item to come to Health & Human Services next month.


By the end of the year all Committees will have an opportunity to see the 2016 Committee Schedule and at that time they will also have the opportunity to evaluate their meeting times before the tentative schedule is posted.

Mr. Hanson also reminded that in the next couple of week Ms. Supple will be contacted everyone to ensure that all Open Meeting Acts trainings are up-to-date and filed with the Clerk's Office.

Lastly, the Jail Expansion Project's exterior design drawings were approved by the Public Building Commission last week. There is scheduled to be an early big package released in December and another one in early February to get site work done. Parking lot bids have come in today and they seem to be very high so now they are trying to determine of avenues to take. Early May is the estimated groundbreaking for the Jail Expansion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Mrs. Turner, seconded by Mr. Gudmunson, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.**



Chairman Mark Pietrowski, Jr.



Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary