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DeKalb County Government  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Executive Committee Minutes  
August 10, 2022**

The Executive Committee of the DeKalb County Board met at the Legislative Center's Gathertorium on Wednesday, August 10, 2022. Chairman Frieders called the meeting to order at 7:53 p.m. Those Members present were Mr. Tim Bagby, Ms. Rukisha Crawford, Mrs. Laurie Emmer, Mr. Steve Faivre, Ms. Dianne Leifheit, Mr. Roy Plote, Vice-Chair Suzanne Willis, and Chairman John Frieders. Mr. Craig Roman was absent. A quorum was established with eight Members present and one absent.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Ms. Crawford and seconded by Mr. Bagby and it was carried unanimously by voice vote to approve the agenda as presented.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**It was moved by Mrs. Emmer, seconded by Mr. Plote and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2022 Executive Committee Meeting and July 13, 2022 Special Executive Committee Meeting.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR SUBURBAN APARTMENTS & ESTATES**

County Administrator Brian Gregory explained that Suburban Apartments and Suburban Estates were developed, constructed, and continue to be under DeKalb County jurisdiction. A common misconception is that the properties are within the City of DeKalb's corporate limits given it is surrounded on three sides by the City. Construction began in 1967 on the development that and grew into 24 buildings and 532 units. The buildings are two to three stories tall and likely do not meet currently adopted Building Codes based on the age of the structures. Suburban Apartments and Estates were constructed to meet the housing needs of the City of DeKalb and Northern Illinois University. Over the years, tenancy and ownership has changed multiple times. While no longer a primary destination for NIU Students, Suburban Apartments and Estates has filled a residential need for affordable housing in DeKalb.

In recent years, the County approved a special use permit for a solar garden on the approximately 80-acre development. The property is served by two private wells for potable water supply and fire suppression. The private system has been described as having bad odors, being yellow colored, and having low pressures by current tenants when calling for assistance. The low pressures were noted by a former Fire Official who raised concerns that if there was ever a fire, the Fire Department would likely have to bypass the current system and run hose across the property boundary line to bring in water to fight the fire. The development is connected to the Kishwaukee Reclamation District for sanitary sewer services.

Both the County and City frequently receive phone calls with concerns related to property maintenance within individual units and the common areas. Broken windows, broken pipes, water quality and pressure, heating and cooling issues, insects, and mold have all been among the issues raised by the tenants over the past five years. As the jurisdiction having authority, the County, which has limited code enforcement abilities under Illinois law, is significantly hampered in the tools it can apply to addressing complaints and proactively requiring improvements. Without being a home rule County, DeKalb County is limited to adopting only the codes afforded by the State of Illinois. The very fact that the Suburban development remains in unincorporated DeKalb County is problematic to address concerns raised by tenants, their family members and other concerned residents. With limited formal options, the County is left to liaise between the owner and tenants to find resolution. These challenges are prime examples of why residential developments are now steered toward municipalities that have the resources and authority to address concerns under state law. From a conventional planning standpoint, a development like this would no longer be recommended outside of municipal limits.

The County and City have had discussions regarding these properties for several years. These discussions have included, how to address the land use concerns, property maintenance issues, resident complaints and policing (as the County Sheriff's Office have primary jurisdiction). Over the past year, a new group of elected and appointed officials at both the County and City restarted discussions with a commitment to finding a solution that is in the best interest of residents within the development, the City of DeKalb and DeKalb County. This commitment comes on the heels of the City's adoption of the Annie Glidden North Revitalization Plan in 2018 and the measurable progress of the plan's implementation by the City and Opportunity DeKalb.

The Suburban Apartments and Estates have been listed for sale and are currently under contract with the Terraces at DeKalb, LLC. Principal Amy Rubenstein and her investment group are familiar with DeKalb, having purchased the former Hunter Ridgebrook development and immediately made a positive impact by improving the physical property and overall living conditions. Ms. Rubenstein and her company intend to acquire, repair, rehabilitate and raise the Suburban complex to market standards at an estimated cost of \$30 million.

With an interested buyer that is committed to the type of investment needed to improve the Suburban Apartments and Estates properties, the County and City arrived at a development agreement that allows for immediate improvements to the property while providing a gradual transition over a period of multiple years.

The highlights of the agreement are as follows:

1. The Terraces at DeKalb, LLC purchases the property and petitions the City of DeKalb for annexation into the corporate limits.
2. Given that property being annexed to the City would need to be connected to the City's water supply, the County will pledge American Rescue Plan Act Funds in an amount not to exceed \$862,500 toward the installation and connection of watermain to the property. The City of DeKalb will design and oversee the watermain project which will improve water quality and provide a dependable source for fire suppression.
3. The City of DeKalb's code enforcement, Crime Free Housing program, Landlord/Tenant program, and any other programs available to City residents can be utilized as needed immediately after annexation.

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4. The County Sheriff's Office will remain the jurisdiction having authority for two years from the date of annexation of the property, or three years from the Developer's closing, whichever shall be earlier. The City of DeKalb Police Department will continue to provide assistance during the transition. After the agreed timeline, the City of DeKalb will assume policing jurisdiction and the County will provide assistance as needed.

Mr. Gregory expressed that this agreement is an example of what government can do when they work together with a focus on what is best for the greater community. The result will be a "win-win" arrangement that will benefit residents of Suburban Apartments and Estates, the City of DeKalb and DeKalb County.

Chairman Frieders stated that this project has been a long time coming and that he appreciates all of those that have been involved. He echoed that it is a win-win for all involved and he would really like to see this go forward.

Ms. Crawford inquired about having a representative from Terrace at DeKalb LLC come to the County Board Meeting to answer any questions they may have. Mr. Gregory replied that he would contact them to have representation at the Board Meeting next week.

**It was moved by Ms. Crawford, seconded by Mr. Bagby and approved unanimously to forward the Intergovernmental Agreement Resolution to the full County Board recommending its approval.**

#### **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPOINT AN INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE DEKALB COUNTY REHAB & NURSING CENTER**

Mr. Gregory reiterated that Ms. Niemi, DCRNC Administrator provided her notice of resignation, effective Sunday, August 21, 2022. In accordance with the Nursing Home Administrators Licensing and Disciplinary Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1987, ch. 111, par. 3651 et seq.), there must be a full-time licensed Administrator at the DCRNC in order for it to be operational.

In the past, the Nursing Home Administrator was selected by the Management Company and approved by the Operating Board. Now that the powers are served solely to the County Board, the Board will be responsible for appointing an Interim Administrator.

Mr. Gregory shared that he has been working diligently to bring forward an appropriate individual to take on this role. One thing he did not want to see happen was so contract an Agency Administrator, which is possible at an alarming cost.

His hope is to have a name available for the Board to vote on next week at the County Board Meeting. Because of that, Mr. Gregory suggested changing the Resolution to read: A Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of an Interim Administrator for the DeKalb County Rehab & Nursing Center.

**It was moved by Mrs. Emmer, seconded by Vice-Chair Willis and was approved unanimously to forward the Resolution to the full County Board recommending its appointment.**

#### **APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS**

Chairman Frieders recommended the approval of the following appointments:

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- a. **County Board Member – District 5:** \_\_\_\_\_ appointed immediately to fill the unexpired term of Kiara Jones until November 30, 2022.
- b. **Malta Fire Protection District:** Daniel Shawn Penn appointed immediately until April 30, 2025.
- c. **Stormwater Management Committee:** Kelsey Musich newly appointed immediately until June 30, 2024; Anita Zurbrugg, Derek Hiland, Dean Johnson, Jan Melton, and Nathan Schwartz all reappointed immediately until June 30, 2024.
- d. **Somonauk Cemetery Association:** Brett Smith appointed immediately to fill the unexpired term of Roy Wahlgren until August 31, 2027.
- e. **Clinton-Shabbona Drainage District:** Wesley Anderson reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- f. **Coon Creek Drainage District:** Carl Dumoulin reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- g. **Normal Drainage District:** Stephen Storey reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- h. **Shabbona, Milan, Union Drainage District:** Steven Simpson reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- i. **Squaw Grove Drainage District:** Ed Cowan reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- j. **Union Drainage District:** Michael Rosenwinkel reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- k. **Victor-Adams Drainage District:** Leeson Gord reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.
- l. **Victor-Clinton Drainage District:** Kent Huff reappointed for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2022 and expiring August 31, 2025.

**It was moved by Mr. Bagby, seconded by Ms. Crawford and was approved unanimously to forward the appointments to the full County Board recommending their approval.**

Chairman Frieders announced that starting tomorrow, the County will be publicly advertising two positions for the Housing Authority of DeKalb County's Board of Commissioners. One of the positions is for a five-year term beginning November 1, 2022 and the other is to fill an unexpired term until October 31, 2024. More information will be posted tomorrow on the County's website and anyone who is interested can contact the County Administration Office.

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

**Mr. Faivre moved to approve the Draft County Board Agenda and to forward it to the full County Board. Vice-Chair Willis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Mr. Plote, seconded by Vice-Chair Willis, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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John Frieders, Chairman

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Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary

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