

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

Dec 18, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the County Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by J. Larry Miller. This meeting was held in the Franklin County Courthouse, County Board Room 133, 100 Public Square, Benton, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

Secretary, Kevin Wilson, called the roll. Members in attendance were J. Larry Miller, Angela Evans, John Gossett, Neil Hargis, Ray Minor, Curtis Overton, Jack Warren, and Kevin Weston. Brad Wilson was absent.

Also in attendance were Gayla Prather, County Board Office Manager; Matt Barnett, County Engineer; Abby Dinn, States Attorney; Marty Leffler, County Coroner; Cindy Miklos, Supervisor of Assessments; Jim Muir, Circuit Clerk; Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer and other interested parties.

PLEDGE

Chairman J. Larry Miller lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman J. Larry Miller asked the public if there were comments at this time.

Tom Carter: Merry Christmas.

Chairman J. Larry Miller: That was a good one. Appreciate that. Thank you.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Kevin Weston made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Regular County Board Meeting and November 27, 2023 Special County Board Meeting. Curtis Overton seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

COUNTY CLAIMS

Ray Minor made a motion to pay the claims on file. Neil Hargis seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

ANIMAL CONTROL - REPLACE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE - APPROVAL

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the first item on the agenda is the approval to replace the full-time employee at the animal control that you have met here.

John Gossett made a motion to replace the last full-time employee with a new one, whose name is Bobby Blaylock. Ray Minor seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

SECURITY GLASS INSTALLATION AT CAMPBELL BUILDING - APPROVAL

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is the approval of Security Glass Installation at the Campbell Building and he informed the County Board that is item needs to be tabled at this time because we do not have enough of the bids that we want for that.

DELINQUENT TAX RESOLUTIONS FOR DECEMBER

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is the Delinquent Tax Program resolutions for December regarding authorizing my signature (J. Larry Miller) to execute deeds on the parcels sold thru the County's Delinquent Tax Program.

Kevin Weston made a motion to accept the resolutions as presented. Curtis Overton seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

Said resolutions are made a part of these minutes as Resolution No. 2023-40 and 2023-89.

**ANNUAL LEVY -
ORDINANCE**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is the Ordinance to approve the Annual Levy that you had before you and we discussed, is there a motion to approve the levy?

Neil Hargis made a motion to approve the Annual Levy Ordinance as presented. Ray Minor seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

Said ordinance is made a part of these minutes as Ordinance No. 2023-03.

**ANNUAL ABATEMENT -
ORDINANCE**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is the Ordinance to approve the passage of the abatement of taxes that we do annually. And is there a motion to do that?

Curtis Overton made a motion that we approve the Annual Abatement Ordinance as presented. Neil Hargis seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that he was going to try to explain it tonight because I feel like I have a little bit better handle on this and I have ever had before because I have always questioned why we needed to abate taxes that we are not going to levy a tax for to begin with. Well, it is basically a routine issue. In the past when we sold the bonds for the juvenile detention center, there was three items listed as possible sources of payment for that. One of them was the meth grant that they did use that money to make that payment every year until that ran out.

And then we went to the real estate tax that we had presently had, which was basically, I think approved by the REFERENDUM that was passed when we built the detention center. So, we picked that up. And then that one has been ongoing, but there is also, if something happened there, there was an alternative revenue source that we had to have and that was put into place. And so, we abate that every year. And I found out today that there are,

an example of that is the schools have a sales tax and they are building, they have bonded some stuff, building some different things, facilities. And that money is that source of money is the tax levy or the sales tax, but that is not enough to please the bond company. And so, they must adopt these alternative bonds also so that if something happened Walmart closed, they would have a way to go to the taxpayers to pay that. So, there are some school districts who have those and they must do this also abate the tax each year. Okay. And so, as Mr. Gossett said, we have five more years on this thing. And so that is where we are. I finally got the question answered for my... to Please me. So, I think I understand. Hopefully if you got any questions I will try to answer. But that is what that is all about. It is a formality.

Said ordinance is made a part of these minutes as Ordinance No. 2023-04.

**CROSSWALK COMMUNITY
ACTION AGENCY - 2
APPOINTMENTS**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda are two appointments to Crosswalk Community Action Agency stating that John D. Aiken and Dalton Woolard terms will expire December 31, 2023.

Curtis Overton made a motion to reappoint John D. Aiken and Dalton Woolard to the Crosswalk Community Action Agency for a two year term ending December 31, 2025. Ray Minor seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

**GREATER EGYPT
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION - 2
APPOINTMENTS**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda are two appointments to Greater Egypt Regional Planning Commission and he read a letter stating that Joshau Qualls and Neil Hargis's terms will expire December 31, 2023. Chairman J. Larry Miller recommends reappointing Neil Hargis and replacing Joshua Qualls with Liz Allen for a three year term ending December 31, 2026.

Angela Evans made a motion to approve the chairman's recommendations. Curtis Overton seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes, except Neil Hargis abstained.

Said letter is made a part of these minutes.

**REND LAKE AREA
TOURISM COUNCIL - 3
APPOINTMENTS**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda are three appointments to the Rend Lake Area Tourism Council stating that Lowanda Johnston, Christie Sweeley & Steve Vercellino terms will expire December 31, 2023.

Curtis Overton made the motion we approve the reappointment of Steve F. Vercellino, Christie Sweeley and Lowanda Johnston to the Rend Lake Area Tourism Council Board for another three year term ending December 31, 2026. Neil Hargis seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

**SHERIFF'S MERIT
BOARD - 1
APPOINTMENT**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is an appointment to the Sheriff's Mart Board and he recommends Michael Sulcer to be reappointed for another six year term ending December 31, 2029.

Curtis Overton made a motion to approve the chairman's recommendation. Angela Evans seconded the motion. On roll call vote and voted yes.

**COUNTY CLERK,
CORONER & SHERIFF
REPORTS**

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated the next item on the agenda are the November, 2023 monthly reports from the Franklin County Clerk, and Sheriff, and October & November Coroner reports.

Kevin Weston made motion to approve the reports as presented. John Gossett seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all voted yes.

Said reports are made a part of these minutes.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that the next item on the agenda is a closed session and this is not needed at this time.

**RETURN TO OPEN
SESSION**

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman J. Larry Miller: That concludes all that we have except for one item that I have been presented tonight that I regretfully must read to you.

This letter dated the 12th of December 18th, 2023 I Jack Warren will resign from the Franklin County Board as of this day, December 31st, 2023. It has been a great pleasure serving with my fellow members for these last eight years. Due to my health issues, I have decided it is time for someone else to take over for me. My greatest accomplishment is the new courthouse and serving Franklin County along with the other new friendships that I have made. Best regards, Jack Warren.

Chairman J. Larry Miller stated that, I am saddened to receive this and it is not on the agenda so we cannot accept it tonight, but I want to express my appreciation to Jack for his eight years of service on the board and hate to see this happen. But Jack, we thank you. Could we give Jack a hand. (Standing ovation) It is my prayer that God will bless you and for you to stay in touch with us. Okay. Do you have anything you want to say?

Jack Warren: Yeah. Alright. Looking for a blessing from God. A little healing will help. I will be back to watch you guys do good.

Chairman J. Larry Miller asked the Board if there were any questions. Jack Warren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Weston seconded the motion. There being no further business Chairman J. Larry Miller declared the meeting adjourned.



J. Larry Miller
Franklin County Board Chairman



Kevin Wilson
County Clerk and Recorder