

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING AT

5:00 PM

MINUTES OF MEETING

Dec 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the County Board, was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman 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, Dave Bartoni, Angela Evans, John Gossett, Neil Hargis, Ray Minor, Curtis Overton, Kevin Weston and Brad Wilson.

Also in attendance were Gayla Prather, County Board Office Manager; Kyle Bacon, Sheriff; Matt Barnett, County Engineer; Ryan Buckingham, Director of Emergency Management Agency - by phone; Abby Dinn, States Attorney; Marty Leffler, County Coroner; Cindy Miklos, Supervisor of Assessments; Jim Muir, Circuit Clerk; Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer, Bobbie Williams, Animal Control Supervisor and other interested parties.

PLEDGE

Ray Minor lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING:

Chairman J. Larry Miller informed the County Board that the purpose of this meeting is to Elect a Chairman and Vice- Chairman. At this time Kevin Wilson, County Clerk will inform everyone how this process will work.

Kevin Wilson, County Clerk read the ground rules for this evening in Illinois, the process for electing a chairman of a county board is outlined in the Illinois compiled statutes according to 55 ILCS five slash two dash 1 0 0 3. The county board must choose one of its members as chairman at its first meeting in the month following the election of county board members. The chairman serves a

term of two years, if the chairman is not elected by the voters of the county. The board also elects the vice chairman for a two-year term, at the same meeting, the vice chairman steps in if the chairman is absent. The voting process, a simple majority of the county board members present at the meeting is required to elect the chairman. This means that more than half of the members present must vote in favor of a candidate for them to be elected. Vacancies. If the chairman's position becomes vacant due to resignation, death, or removal, the vice chairman assumes the role until a new chairman is elected at the next regularly scheduled meeting. This process ensures the leadership of the county board is regularly refreshed and that the board members have a say in who leads them. What happens if there is a tie in voting? Franklin County will use the random method of drawing lots to determine the winner. This will be the method that Franklin County uses this evening.

Chairman J. Larry Miller thanked Kevin Wilson, County Clerk for the information on the ground rules.

**NOMINATIONS &
ELECTION FOR
CHAIRMAN**

Chairman J. Larry Chairman asked if there were any nominations for Chairman.

Curtis Overton nominated Neil Hargis for Chairman of the Franklin County Board. Kevin Weston seconded the nomination.

David Bartoni nominated Larry Miller for Chairman of the Franklin County Board. Ray Minor seconded the nomination.

Angela Evans nominated John Gossett for Chairman of the Franklin County Board. Ray Minor seconded the nomination.

Chairman J. Larry Miller asked if there were any other nominations? Alright, if not you give me a minute just to write this down a little bit. So, I have I can keep score too. So, Mr. Clerk, I guess you do the roll call.

David Bartoni voted for Larry Miller
Angela Evans voted for John Gossett
John Gossett voted for John Gossett
Neil Hargis voted for Neil Hargis
Larry Miller voted for Larry Miller
Ray Minor voted for Larry Miller
Curtis Overton voted for Neil Hargis
Kevin Weston voted for Neil Hargis
Brad Wilson voted for Neil Hargis

Kevin Wilson, County Clerk stated: If I added it correctly, Mr. Gossett has two. Mr. Hargis has four. Mr. Miller has three.

**NOMINATIONS &
ELECTION FOR
VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Chairman Neil Hargis asked if there were any nominations for Vice-Chairman.

Angela Evans nominated Kevin Weston for Vice-Chairman of the Franklin County Board. Chairman Neil Hargis seconded the nomination.

Dave Bartoni nominated Larry Miller for Vice-Chairman of the Franklin County Board. Ray Minor seconded the nomination.

Chairman Neil Hargis asked if there were any other nominations? I think we are ready to call a vote.

Dave Bartoni voted for Larry Miller
Angela Evans voted for Kevin Weston
John Gossett voted for Kevin Weston
Neil Hargis voted for Kevin Weston
Ray Minor voted for Larry Miller
Curtis Overton voted for Kevin Weston
Kevin Weston voted for Kevin Weston
Brad Wilson voted for Larry Miller
Larry Miller voted for Kevin Weston

Kevin Wilson, County Clerk stated: That is six for Kevin Weston and three for Larry Miller.

Chairman Neil Hargis: I did want to thank Larry for his service as the Chairman. I think he done a good job and deserves a credit, steer us through the rest of the courthouse and everything else we have had to deal with the last four years. So, I did want to make that comment. I think he has done a good job. He is a good man and hopefully we can still work together, but I did want to acknowledge the service Larry did as chairman. With that said, we just move into finance right now, correct?

Kevin Wilson, County Clerk: Yes sir.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Chairman Neil Hargis stated we will move into the Finance Committee meeting and Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer to come up.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: I will try not to get too far winded on this because I know I am the only thing between you guys going home. So as far as the claims, not a whole lot of 'me, the amount further high, but mostly because of the insurance banks are hitting for this first claim cycle. So, there's SCD insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Workers' Comp, Shawnee, there's claim loan contracts, attorneys, postage. We are getting kind of low on postage, but once that new budget year started hitting before we send out the next claim for that. So, there is 10,000 book postage be sending out for that. And then Delta Dental on this for another claim that we have got. Beginning balance I use. But what we have is 1130 since when we are just getting to the beginning of December and for the most part it is done.

There are a couple adjustments that need to be made and there's a couple of things that still need get entered, but for the most part it is consistent of where we are at. 10 million, 2 71 6 4 7 with these claims going through estimated for clerk

against Circuit Clerk, 35,000, 70,000 and then payroll coming through of three 50,000, three 50,000, 8 0 7, 3 98 ARPA. It is just a slight reduction. Just another claim came through for the scanning project. So that would be the last one for that piece. After that, this new budget here will be, we have got on a separate item for that piece of it. So, it is 4 million 2 88, 8 83 and 7 cents. That has made dispatch left at the same as last time. We will probably need to get together and start looking a little bit more in detail of what we spent so far and what is left now that we are getting really in depth into this project.

But right now, it shows estimating balance of \$623,883 7 cents, estimated county operation funds roughly 4 million. Social Security 3 75 9 13 insurance. This is the building insurance type of piece of insurance. 177,000 fringe benefit, think 95, but again, that is one that will be adjusted once we finish November. That will be adjusted. So, it would just be, it will come out of the general fund so that they will just offset each other. So total 4 million, 4 68, 300,000, 74 cents. As far as the numbers here, the second distribution, all those numbers are reflected. So additional pickups you see in Social Security insurance where that was negative. You see that pickup, big pickup, that is because that second distribution is entered in, put in there in the packet. I have got the docket, the cover sheet, the Covid money, money that we spent so far, kind of up to date total. I ran a revenue and expense report that basically has all 12 months and now as the revenue, there's still a couple changes that need to be added to some adjustments that will need to be made to it.

But as far as the expense side of it, as far as every time we have a claim cycle supposed get entered at that point. So that should be close at that point. The only other thing I have got on the back end though is the manual claims. Usually, I do not say much about it, but there is a big, big number on there is just want to make sure that you are aware the collection transfer from General

County. So, there's penalty and cost that is in the collection account and we have got a couple years of those transfer need to be made. You had not made those yet. So, it is a reduction in the collection account. But the good news is these goes into general county funds. So, you will see in November end you will see why cost penalty way above what we budget is. There are a couple other years that have been built into it that we transferred before the end of the year was done.

So, when you see 464,000 5 57 now you want, what is that? That is what that piece is for. So just a couple years of that. So, you will not see next year. You will not see that big adjustment. Everything else is similar as far as claims that we went ahead and paid. There was a couple of claims that were, I saw 'me in the stack and they were October claims, early November claims. I want to go ahead and pay those. They would reflect in that budget not starting now. But overall, that is all I have as far as that is concerned. The reflection cycle is concerned that the publication will be in Franklin County Gazette where all the people have not paid their taxes yet. That is part of the process that we must take care of. We send out the certifies and we have got to put it in the paper and then the next thing will be putting it to the court to put in for judgment. And then 12:30 we will have our tax sale and that will kind of complete the year as far as the tax collection process is concerned and then we will have a distribution after that.

Any questions?

Brad Wilson: I have one question, the audit, and I know we had talked about this before. One of our findings was the negative cash balance of the juvenile detention fund, the \$749,243.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: Sure.

Chairman Neil Hargis: Did we zero that out coming now into this new fiscal year? Was we able to,

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: As far as the budget was concerned, we were not able to find the funds to do that. So, we do have a contingency in there, but that is not what it was built in for. So, it is still going to hang out there until hopefully we can have a solid year. We will not need contingency or we decide to adjust the budget. See if we see that our revenues are way above what we expected.

Brad Wilson: This is above my knowledge. My question is that will continue to be a negative fund balance. It is not going to be a negative on this fiscal year. You know what I mean? So how come that continues to carry over from year to year? We are not going to lose another 749 this year. That money's already gone. That would be one thing we could take care of. But you are saying we cannot do that. We cannot just wipe that off.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: No, I mean there is the thought of, well you can take it out of your fund and then what your, you put it back, but you're not really, you're on paper, you're doing that, but you're not really accomplishing the essence of what you're doing isn't changing the fact of at some point that needs to come out permanently, come out of general fund balance.

Kevin Weston: Why would we need to come out of general fund? I understood the 700,000 was money that was not paid by the state for several years when we were, the state was somewhat broken. They were not making payroll until they would say, oh, as of October for this year, we are not going to make the last two-month payroll for the year. And that we kind of saved as a place holder for the money the state owes us, but we are not going to get it. And it is not money we do not have. Is that how I understand it?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: It is a combination. It is a combination of low usage of the facility over a long period of time. But then also what you are mentioning where we would.

Kevin Weston: The county owes itself the money, right? Is that what I understand?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: The county did not get the money right. We billed the money, we did not get paid back, but we never got the money to be pragmatic about it. They are not going to give us the money.

Kevin Weston: Why cannot, we zero it off the books. It does not exist. It was never received. And I would think at home I had somebody owe me \$500 and they did not pay. I am not going to say, well next year you still, I am \$500 short and on my balance. I mean you zeroed out at one point. Why can't we just do that?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: Well, you are talking about the revenue side. Your revenue, okay, this is revenue we are not going to get. So, you just wipe it off. But that is not what I am talking about. I am talking about the expenses that we still had to incur during that whole time, whether they paid us or not, and we are stuck with that piece.

Angela Evans: Doesn't that include electric & the water?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: Yeah, electric, water, all kind of stuff.

Angela Evans: We still pay it because it is owed.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: We paid it cash-flow wise, if you went to the bank, we paid it through the general fund, but on the notation on paper, we still coded it to Juvenile Center because that is what it was used for. Even though it was very, very negative and continue to be

Kevin Weston: Do not, I am just wanting to somehow get part of our accounting system straightened out a little bit. It seems like an easy move, but I am not an accountant.

John Gossett: Could we pay ourselves and then pay ourselves back same money?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: Well, if you do it from one year to the other, it makes it zero. Yes. But then you must put it back. But that's not different funds. You must expense it out. Even though it sounds like a crazy maneuver. It would make the books run correct from that day forward. It would make it run till the next year. Till the next year to start. For the next day.

Brad Wilson: So, in short, we are going to carry that for, that will be just a finding we have every year for until Jesus comes home. Okay. That was the question I had.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: There is some other one that we have tried to improve on some of the negative balances on the other ones we see. But yeah, one is a very large one. There is the court service, court security. I tried to adjust that one down a little bit and some other ones that we have been able to fix. But that is a toughie to fix without the funding to do so.

Brad Wilson: So, when we are looking at that overall number, and I do not have of our funds right now, that 4 million, you would have to take the 749,000 out of that. So, we are at three and half. Just under three and a half, right.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: If front page where you say estimated current county operation funds, you would take 700 K out of that.

Brad Wilson: Okay.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: If you are going to take it out of the general fund, which I think that is a good assumption to make.

Kevin Weston: The 464,000 you were talking about earlier for the transfer to the general fund from 21. From 2021 to 2023, that money collected there. And then next year we are not going to be having that much money. It is just a year transfer. Why are we having two?

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: So, there was a couple years where we accrued for it, but the actual check written and going out did not occur. And so, we caught that. When I was looking through trying to make it work for this year, I realized that those pieces had not happened. We make sure that it does happen. So, we will still have penalty and costs that comes out next year. But it will be for the cost. It might be 20,000. For the penalty, it might be a hundred thousand. So, you might see \$120,000 transferred every year roughly, but you will not see the 464 because it is 3 years' worth of it.

Kevin Weston: Okay. Why we just caught it after 3 years.

Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer: Basically. Yeah.

Chairman Neil Hargis asked if any other questions for Steve Vercellino, County Treasurer?

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Neil Hargis asked the Board if there were any questions. Angela Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ray Minor seconded the motion. There being no further business Chairman Neil Hargis declared the meeting adjourned.



Neil Hargis
Franklin County Board Chairman



Kevin Wilson
County Clerk and Recorder