

LIVINGSTON COUNTY BOARD
MINUTES OF June 13, 2019 MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD

OPENING

Vice-Chairman Kathy Arbogast (in the absence of Board Chairman Bob Young) called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., in the County Board Room of the Historic Courthouse, 112 W. Madison, Pontiac, Illinois.

Pastor Richard Giovanetti of the Standing in the Word Ministries presented the invocation. Steve Lovell led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The clerk called roll with the following **present:** Kathy Arbogast, Robert F. Weller, Linda Ambrose, James A. Carley, Steven Lovell, John Vitzthum, Gerald Earing, Mark Runyon, James Blackard, Bill Wilkey, Michael L. Kirkton, Patrick D. Killian, Jason Bunting, John Slagel, John L. Vietti, Tim Shafer, Ronald L. Kestner, Paul A. Ritter, Marty Fannin and Vicki Allen **Absent:** William Mays (arrived at 8:05 p.m.), Joseph D. Steichen and Bob Young **Vacancy:** G. Michael Ingles

Also Present: County Clerk-Kristy Masching, Executive Director-Alina Hartley and County Highway Engineer-Clay Metcalf

AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Arbogast asked that Executive Session-Pending Litigation and under F., Democrat Committee Chairman-John Reis be added to the agenda. She then asked for approval of the amended agenda. *Motion by Lovell, second by Carley to approve the agenda as amended.* **MOTION CARRIED ON UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.**

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Former Board Member: Mike Ingles – Mike addressed the county board and explained his reasoning for ending his service as a county board member at this time. He and his wife Dee have been blessed with four grandchildren who they want to spend more time with, as well as travel more while their health allows it. Ingles noted that with the recent resignation of Carolyn Gerwin, two candidates acceptable to the Chairman were considered for the appointment. Ingles realized that after Marty Fannin was appointed, that this would be an ideal time to step down. This would allow for the other candidate, Gina Manker to be appointed. He also noted that after reflecting on his 36 years as an elected official, he realized that a lot of positive things had happened, not because of him but because many good people had come together to make progress in the City of Pontiac and Livingston County. Vice-Chairman Arbogast thanked Mike for his years of service on the Board.

Democratic Committee Chairman: John Reis - Livingston County Democratic Chairman John Reis was present to address the Board considering the District 1 vacancy. Reis thanked the Board for the notification of the District 1 vacancy and for allowing him to speak on the issue of appointing a successor from the same political party. He referenced 10 ILCS 5/25-11 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes as neither preventing or requiring a County Board replacement as being of the same political party as the resigning member. He stated that history had shown us that the lack of county board diversity led to its collective apathy. He provided the following information collected by Joan Lipinski from the 2017 County Board minutes. Board members up for re-election in 2018 missed 20% of their scheduled meetings during their previous three year term and in 2018 noted that there was 90% agreement on county board votes taken. Reis also commented that the summary removal of a committee chair followed by his sudden resignation from the county board and the immediate appointment of a successor with no prior notification didn't indicate a healthy democratic process and bordered on authoritarian conduct. He noted that two District #1 individuals received zero votes in the previous General Election and will become county board members while a candidate (Dan Hobart) receiving over 1,500 votes was excluded, noting his qualifications and the fact that he chose to run for county board. He felt that the system being used by the county board to select candidates is inherently flawed. He ended by thanking the board for their time and consideration and left copies of the statute and audit information he cited earlier.

BOARD APPOINTMENT TO FILL DISTRICT 1 VACANCY

Vice-Chairman Arbogast asked for approval of the appointment of Gina Manker to fill the District 1 County Board vacancy. *Motion by Bunting, second by Fannin to appoint Gina Manker as County Board Member to fill the District 1 vacancy.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Arbogast, Weller, Ambrose, Carley, Lovell, Vitzthum, Mays, Earing, Runyon, Blackard, Wilkey, Kirkton, Killian, Bunting, Slagel, Vietti, Shafer, Kestner, Ritter, Fannin and Allen **Nays:** None **Absent:** Steichen and Young
Vacancy: Ingles

Gina took her seat after being sworn in by County Clerk Kristy Masching.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Arbogast called for approval of the April 11, 2019 and May 16, 2019 board meeting minutes. *Motion by Blackard, second by Ritter to approve the April 11, 2019 and May 16, 2019 board meeting minutes.* **MOTION CARRIED ON VOICE VOTE.**

PRESENTATION

None

APPEARANCES

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Bills
- B. Appointments:
 - a) **Dean Wilhelm (Resolution #2019-06-20)** – Trustee reappointment to the Long Point Fire Protection District, three year term commencing May 6, 2019 and expiring the first Monday in May, 2022.
 - b) **William Bruer** – Trustee reappointment to the Pontiac Rural Fire Protection District, three year term commencing May 6, 2019 and expiring the first Monday in May, 2022.
 - c) **David Roth** – Trustee reappointment to the Gridley Fire Protection District, three year term commencing May 6, 2019 and expiring the first Monday in May, 2022.
 - d) **Sheriff Tony Childress** - appointment to the Vermilion Valley Regional Communications Authority

Motion by Carley, second by Killian for approval of the Consent Agenda. **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Arbogast, Weller, Ambrose, Carley, Lovell, Vitzthum, Mays, Earing, Runyon, Blackard, Wilkey, Kirkton, Killian, Bunting, Slagel, Vietti, Shafer, Manker, Kestner, Ritter, Fannin and Allen **Nays:** None **Absent:** Steichen and Young

HIGHWAY

Vice-Committee Chair Mark Runyon introduced County Highway Engineer-Clay Metcalf who reviewed the **Action Agenda Items** as follows:

- a) **Letting Results:** June 4, 2019 Letting
- b) **Bridge Petition: Newtown/Sunbury Road District** - Replace existing CMP's with 2 - 36" ERS x 40' Precoated CMP's @ 2705N, 1200E Road. Estimated Cost = \$9,000. Section 19-17000-00-AB / 19-28000-01-AB.
- c) **Bridge Petition: Newtown Road District** – Replace existing CMP's with 3 – 96" x 62' Precoated CMP's @ 3128N, 975E Road. Estimated Cost = \$50,000. Section 19-17000-01-AB
- d) **Agreement of Understanding:** For Maintenance and Construction between the Illinois Department of Transportation and Livingston County

Motion by Runyon, second by Lovell to approve all of the action items (a. through d.) with one roll call vote.

MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE. Ayes: Arbogast, Weller, Ambrose, Carley, Lovell, Vitzthum, Mays, Earing, Runyon, Blackard, Wilkey, Kirkton, Killian, Bunting, Slagel, Vietti, Shafer, Manker, Kestner, Ritter, Fannin and Allen **Nays:** None **Absent:** Steichen and Young

Runyon reported that the Highway Department had taken possession of the slightly used snowplow truck and plows acquired from Winnebago County. He reported that the truck being replaced would be sold at auction on June 25th.

AG & ZONING

Committee Chair Jason Bunting publicly thanked Clay Metcalf and the County Highway Department employees for their help in picking up the electronic equipment gathered behind the Pontiac Township High School from the Electronic Recycling Project held on May 11th. So far they have collected 3.5 truckloads of equipment. Paul Ritter also conveyed his appreciation to the many volunteers who contributed their time to the project.

FINANCE

Resolution (#2019-06-21) GLCEDC Incentive Agreement: Alloy Specialists – Committee Chair Tim Shafer stated that the resolution endorsed the GLCEDC Incentive Agreement grant to Alloy Specialists. This firm is located in Blackstone and makes fine metal products. A portion of their business is as a subcontractor for Vactor Manufacturing. *Motion by Shafer, second by Bunting to approve the Economic Development Incentive Agreement with Alloy Specialists.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE. Ayes:** Arbogast, Weller, Ambrose, Carley, Lovell, Vitzthum, Mays, Earing, Blackard, Kirkton, Killian, Bunting, Slagel, Vietti, Shafer, Manker, Kestner, Ritter, Fannin and Allen **Nays:** Runyon and Wilkey **Absent:** Steichen and Young

PUBLIC PROPERTY

Committee Chair Killian reported that his committee was presented with information from Orry Cummings regarding two scenarios for participation in the SmartWatt Energy Savings program. Killian stated that the committee had unanimously recommended that Scenario 1 be forwarded on to the Finance Committee for their consideration.

Killian also reported the following items of interest: heard Facilities Maintenance Director-Don Verdun's monthly report; re-roofing of the Regions Building would commence once favorable weather set in; and the Health & Education Building bids would be ready for pick-up at the end of June with a return deadline scheduled in July and submitted to the Board in August for their approval.

SHERIFF, JAIL & LICENSE

Bob Weller (in the absence of Committee Chairman Kathy Arbogast) reported that they had heard the monthly reports and that there was no other outstanding matters to discuss.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Discussion Regarding Community Healthcare Program - Executive Director-Alina Hartley explained that Chairman Young had received a request from Joan Lipinski asking that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. Ms. Lipinski indicated that there were eight board members in favor of reinstating the program. Vice-Chairman Arbogast opened the floor for Board discussion regarding the Community Healthcare Program. Discussion followed with some of the members comments as follows: voters voted in favor of re-instating the program as well as passing a tax increase to support it; it's a good program but should it be funded by its own levy or as a year to year budget item; not a lot we can do for this program this year; questioned whether voters would approve another tax levy based on the current environment in the state of Illinois (income tax, MFT, property tax increases); and we're spending more money than we bring in every year, if we don't raise taxes to pay for program, then we'll have to cut something else in the budget.

Ms. Hartley explained that this item was placed on the agenda to allow members to have discussion and to give guidance on how they would like to move forward. She noted that if there was no interest in moving forward then there was nothing else to be done. Ms. Hartley asked whether the Board would be in favor of re-presenting the

referendum to place the question on the ballot. She noted that this action would also assist the Finance Committee in the approaching budget season on how to proceed with the program. Ms. Hartley also stated that she wasn't advocating one way or another, just trying to get a response from the Board members. It was noted that the next election would be held on March 17, 2020. She further explained that should the board wish to reevaluate reinstating this program, there were options laid out. Hartley commented that based on what she'd heard from the discussion is that the only option would be tax, even though some people think there was too much taxation already. She noted that since we already had a deficit budget and if the program was implemented, the only guaranteed funding source available for the program would be a tax increase. If the Board wished to reinstate the program, or wish to ask the voters if they want this program, then the Board should pass the resolution to place the item on the ballot for the March 17, 2020 election. Ms. Hartley noted that Chairman Young brought this item to the committee, as he was obliging Ms. Lipinski with her request so that discussion could take place. He did that based on the information he was given, that there were eight members of this Board who were in favor of reinstating the Community Healthcare Program. Discussion commenced with some of the comments as follow: there was no recommendation coming from the Administration Committee for or against any action; feel that we should present it to the voters again and let them decide; some members were against putting it on the ballot, felt that government shouldn't be in this type of business; could form exploratory committee to brainstorm ideas for funding; don't feel that it should be on the ballot because there were too many people who don't pay taxes who would be voting on this issue; one member had used both the services provided by the program for a family member and felt it was an invaluable service; form an ad-hoc committee to come up with alternative methods of funding the program other than taxes; and there is a state-funded healthcare program; create a Go-Fund Me page and donate fund back to county.

PERSONNEL

No report.

ELECTION, RULES & LEGISLATION

Committee Chairman Jim Carley reported that they approved the four appointments in the consent agenda. He stated that one of their concerns was the need for a new polling site in Owego Township since the current site, the Pontiac Christian School would not be in operation next year. Carley noted that discussions were taking place regarding the fate of the building with nothing finalized at this time.

VETERANS ASSISTANCE

Committee Chair Ron Kestner reported that Mike Maffett, Bob Sanders and Steve Worthington were in attendance to inform the committee that they as veterans, had received donations from the Elks national office to be used to: form a county-wide Color Guard; to help out other American Legion Posts during funeral details; and to replace uniforms.

INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY

Committee Chair Vicki Allen reported that Jon Sear reviewed his monthly report with the committee. Vicki highlighted her report as follows: Sear stated that the department completed the inventory update and corrected a lot of errors from the past couple years. Sear also reported that Spillman conducted a training session at the Sheriff's Department which was open to other counties and municipalities, with it being noted that everyone seems to be having the same issues. Sear is also currently enrolled in the NACO Cybersecurity Leadership Program. He also reported that the summer intern was working out very well.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

John Slagel stated that they didn't meet this month.

BOARD OF HEALTH

No report

LIVINGSTON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH

Jack Vietti reported that their next meeting would be held on June 20th at 4:00 p.m.

MID CENTRAL COMMUNITY ACTION

No report

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rod Patterson commented that there were misconceptions regarding the program and noted that it's not just a social program of giveaways. It's for Livingston County residents who have paid taxes all their lives, have fallen through the cracks and need some help. He commented that the poverty level in Livingston County has risen from 8.8% in 2000 to 13%. He asked that the Board think about all the people in need as they work on their upcoming budget.

Ed Lipinski voiced his dismay over the following: the three minute public comment limit; that the Board continually fails to recognize that 9,900 people voted for the Community Healthcare Program; the lack of respect given to them during the last year in trying to get some response from the Board; feels the landfill money should be used for citizen centered endeavors (ie: recreation, broadband access, healthcare and infrastructure) rather than large projects. He feels that the large capital projects should be put before the voters.

Joan Lipinski commented that she didn't say that anything needed to be done immediately with respect to the Community Healthcare Program. They were told the (2020) budget would have to be examined and she feels that no one has examined the budget for areas where funding is available, such as for recreation. After numerous emails, she received eight email responses from board members who felt positive about the program and would reinstate it if they could, five who said absolutely not, three who weren't sure and seven who didn't respond to any means of communication. She feels it's very difficult to try and approach the Board.

Jerry Gordon voiced his concern that the Board members were not representing the wishes of their constituents and noted that over 9,000 votes in favor of the program were cast. He feels that after being elected to the Board, members convert from individual thinking to Board thinking whereby a few people make the decisions for all the Board members. He noted that representatives are supposed to communicate with their constituents.

Dick Haas voiced his concern over the lack of communication between the Board and the citizens of the county noting that communication was one of their solemn responsibilities as elected officials.

John Slagel noted that every Finance meeting has an item on the agenda for the 2020 budget. He noted that it would be nice to have some direction if there was a majority of the Board who didn't want to reinstate the program through increasing the PTELL through a referendum or finding the money somewhere else.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2 (c) (2) Collective Negotiating Matters and 5ILCS 120/2 (c) (11) Pending Litigation was made by Ritter, second by Vietti. **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE. Ayes:** Arbogast, Weller, Ambrose, Carley, Lovell, Vitzthum, Mays, Earing, Runyon, Blackard, Wilkey, Kirkton, Killian, Bunting, Slagel, Vietti, Shafer, Manker, Kestner, Ritter, Fannin, and Allen **Nays:** None **Absent:** Steichen and Young*

There was a break from 7:14 p.m. until 7:17 p.m. Executive session commenced at 7:18 p.m. Open session resumed at 7:20 p.m.

ACTION RESULTING FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action taken.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alina Hartley asked the members to contact her if they were in need of a lapel name tag. She would be placing an order soon.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m., on motion by Manker, second by Blackard. **MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES ON VOICE VOTE.**

Kathy Arbogast, Vice-Chairman
(In the absence of Chairman Bob Young)

Attest:

Kristy A. Masching
County Clerk

August 15, 2019
Approved

Minutes Bd 061319.A