

LIVINGSTON COUNTY BOARD
MINUTES OF January 14, 2021 MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD

OPENING

County Board Chair Kathy Arbogast called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 2020-07, this meeting was held remotely with most individuals participating through Zoom or Teleconference.

Ginger Harris presented the invocation. Mike Kirkton led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The clerk called roll with the following **present:** John L. Vietti, Jason Bunting, Michael L. Kirkton, Gina Manker, Joel J. Barickman, Marty Fannin, Tim Shafer, Scott Mennenga, Seth Welch, Kathy Arbogast, Robert F. Weller, Paul A. Ritter, James A. Carley, Steven Lovell, Linda Ambrose, James Blackard, William Mays, Gerald Earing, John Vitzthum, Bill Wilkey, and Mark Runyon **Absent:** John Slagel, Joseph D. Steichen and Ronald L. Kestner

Also Present: County Clerk-Kristy Masching, Executive Director-Alina Hartley, States Attorney Randy Yedinak, Human Resources Director Ginger Harris, GLCEDC CEO-Adam Dontz (Zoom), Finance Director-Diane Schwahn, IT Director-Jon Sear, Sheriff Tony Childress (Zoom), Chief Deputy Jeff G. Hamilton (Zoom), Captain Gragert (Zoom)

AGENDA

Chair Arbogast called for approval of the agenda as presented. *Motion by Fannin, second by Carley to approve the agenda as presented.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Bunting, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes at this time.

PRESENTATION

N/A

APPEARANCES

N/A

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Bills

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

FINANCE

Resolution (#2021-01-01): Authorizing COVID Relief Stimulus Grant – Committee Chair Tim Shafer stated that this proposal was for a county sponsored COVID Stimulus Grant program for businesses within the county. This grant program was developed by county staff in conjunction with Adam Dontz (GLCEDC). Alina Hartley stated that the program would offer grants to businesses who had been impacted by Covid and who had otherwise not received any other type of aid related to Covid-19. The Finance Committee is recommending that the grant provide \$2,000 per each full-time employee and \$1,000 per each part-time employee. Hartley noted that she had provided the board members with copies of the resolution and the grant guidelines earlier in the day for their review. The grand total to be used for the proposed grant funding program is \$213,000 with a per applicant limit

of \$10,000. Hartley stated that contingent upon the board's approval, this program would be advertised in the newspapers and on the county and GLCEDC respective websites. She also stated that immediately after the board meeting, she and Adam Dontz were ready to push out email blasts. *Motion by Bunting, second by Blackard to approve the COVID Relief Stimulus Grant for Livingston County businesses.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Bunting, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

County Clerk Semi-Annual Report – County Clerk Kristy Masching reviewed her report for the time period of July 1, 2020 through November 30, 2020. Masching noted that she no longer has to make trips to Springfield for revenue stamps since going live with the MyDec transfer tax program last year. She also highlighted on-line programs her office is utilizing such as Laredo (monthly subscription for on-line land record searches), Tapestry (on-line per document search fee) and Official Records On-Line (request vital records on-line). Her office recorded 841 more documents in 2020 than in 2019 due in part to the low interest rates which people took advantage of by refinancing their loans. *Motion by Wilkey, second by Ambrose to approve the County Clerk's Semi-Annual Report for the time period of July 1, 2020 through November 30, 2020.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Bunting, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

Intergovernmental Agreement: Regional Office of Education – Committee Chair Shafer reported that this was a four-year renewal of the county's proportional agreement with the Regional Office of Education. The funding breakdown for the four counties is: Livingston County, 12%; DeWitt County, 9%; Logan County 12% and McLean County, 67%. The ROE oversees the GED program, provides continuing education programs for educators and some education programs for adults. *Motion by Fannin, second by Earing to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Office of Education.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Bunting, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

SHERIFF, JAIL & LICENSE

Liquor License Application: Wolf Creek, LLC - Committee Chair Jim Carley reported that there was a change in ownership at Wolf Creek. Clerk Masching noted that since the background check results hadn't come back from ISP, the approval would be contingent upon final attorney review. *Motion by Carley, second by Weller to approve the liquor license application for Wolf Creek, LLC, pending State's Attorney review and approval.* **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Bunting, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

Sheriff Childress spoke at length on HB3653 (Criminal Justice Reform Act) which passed the day before in Springfield and would drastically affect law enforcement. Discussion took place with some of the items Sheriff Childress commented on following: officers still have qualified immunity; included amended guidelines on use of deadly force; mandatory imposition of the duty to intervene or to render aid; created Class 3 felony for certain law enforcement misconduct; body cameras will eventually become mandatory by 2025 with guidelines based on size of municipality; provides for mental health screening of officers; cash bail ends within two years; and there are additional steps to take before execution of a search warrant; whether the School Resource Officer Program is in peril; and the Sheriff feels they are doing whatever they can to defund the police. Sheriff Childress was grateful they didn't remove collective bargaining and qualified immunity.

State's Attorney Randy Yedinak answered questions from his standpoint on the recently passed bill. He stated that he served on the Executive Committee for the Illinois State's Attorney's Association. Their association spent countless hours on zoom meetings and phone calls with various members of the legislature and senate regarding this legislation, trying to negotiate the language on this bill from the State's Attorney's standpoint. Yedinak

provided background on the origin of this bill noting that it started in 2019 and was seven pages long. It amended two sentences within the Illinois Sentencing Code. At the close of business on January 10, 2021 it had grown to 611 pages. The State's Attorney's Association received the revised copy a couple of hours before the vote was to be taken. The State's Attorney's group spent 3 hours negotiating with the Black Caucus, amended some of the language and made agreements to change the language. The SA's were then given another document (640 pages) forty-five minutes before it was to be voted on. It didn't include any of the language changes which had been agreed upon earlier. The SA's then approached the Senate with hopes of defeating it there, but that didn't happen. Senator Barickman and other down state senators were very much opposed to this legislation. A revised version of the bill with an additional 50+ pages was presented to the State's Attorneys' again with none of their changes included. Yedinak stated that this legislation will drastically affect how his office will prosecute cases in Livingston County and drastically affect how law enforcement will investigate cases. Yedinak then went on to explain some of the new laws the Sheriff had mentioned and how they would affect his office in prosecuting criminal cases. Yedinak stated that all of our local legislators, Senator Barickman, Representative Tom Bennett and Representative Dan Brady were all opposed to this legislation. Yedinak also noted that 100 out of 102 State's Attorney's in the State of Illinois opposed this legislation with Cook and Lake Counties approving it. Yedinak stated that there will be significant monetary implications for the county. He noted that everyone agrees we need to reform the criminal justice system but the way it was done was not good. Discussion followed.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Staffing Request – FT Information Technology Specialist - Committee Chair Marty Fannin stated they were requesting a full-time Information Technology Specialist. Jon Sear, IT Director noted that he had two part-time positions with one position filled. Sear was requesting that when the current part-time employee leaves he be able to have one full-time position rather than two part-time positions. *Motion by Wilkey, second by Barickman to approve the IT Department to hire one full-time Information Technology Specialist rather than two part-time employees.* Sear will post the job as a part-time and as a full-time position in order to broaden the scope of potential applicants. Sear's plan is to cross-train the employee as his back-up. Discussion took place with some of the member's concerns and comments following: the financial impact on the budget; additional benefit costs (IMRF, insurance) associated with this move; savings benefit by hiring two part-time employees; could contract some work out at less cost to county; will eliminate the hiring of high school and college interns; critical to find a back-up to Sear as he's a one-man show at this point; interns and or part-time employees may not have the expertise needed for our county's cyber technology infrastructure; we could plan and budget for this position rather than hoping we have enough in line items to cover the cost of a full-time position; and Sear's last part-time person had been a high school intern and left for a full-time position. **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE.** **Ayes:** Vietti, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** Kirkton, Mennenga and Carley **Absent:** Bunting (left at 6:40 p.m.), Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Property – Committee Chair John Vitzthum reported that they have had good progress on the new Public Health building and are moving right along.

Elections, Rules & Legislation – Committee Chair Mike Kirkton requested that the members fill out the quick survey which was placed at their seats regarding their thoughts and suggestions on the re-districting process. This would give their committee an idea of what the Board was thinking and what areas they should focus on rather than guessing. Kirkton asked that board members to attend their committee meetings or reach out to him with their concerns or questions they may have.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Runyon pointed out that board member Paul Ritter and his students were mentioned in the Heartland Community Jr. College Update pamphlet. He congratulated them on their nomination for a prize from Indianapolis.

Gerald Earing commended the Public Health Department on the great job they were doing with the COVID vaccinations. Their department was highlighted on the Channel 25 news recently for being further ahead than any other surrounding county.

Jim Carley commented that he and other board members had heard back from many employees expressing their gratitude to the board for approving the hazardous pay during the pandemic. He commended his fellow board members who favored this action.

Alina Hartley stated that they would announce at a future meeting the businesses who received grants from the Stimulus Grant program the county sponsored.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

N/A

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m., on motion by Vietti, second by Ritter. **MOTION CARRIED ON ROLL CALL VOTE. Ayes:** Vietti, Kirkton, Manker, Barickman, Fannin, Shafer, Mennenga, Welch, Arbogast, Weller, Ritter Carley, Lovell, Ambrose, Mays, Earing, Vitzthum, Blackard, Wilkey and Runyon **Nays:** None **Absent:** Bunting, Slagel, Steichen and Kestner

Kathy Arbogast, Chair

Attest:

Kristy A. Masching
County Clerk

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