

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF MONROE COUNTY, ILLINOIS SEPTEMBER 20, 2018  
BUDGET HEARINGS – DAY #2

The meeting of the County Commissioners of Monroe County, Illinois (Budget Hearings – Day #2) was called to order at 8:00 a.m. Chairman Robert Elmore, Commissioner Delbert Wittenauer, and Commissioner Vicki Koerber were present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Elmore declared there was a quorum present and the meeting was ready for business.

Others present were County Clerk Dennis Knobloch, Treasurer Kevin Koenigstein, and Annmarie Marcuson. Also present was Jason Jones.

Kevin Koenigstein began discussion of the Extension Service budget. He said since the tax money won't be collected until after the end of this fiscal year, he wasn't sure if the County could hold off on making the 2018 fiscal year payment to the Extension Service.

Lisa Fallon came to the meeting to discuss the budget for the Circuit Clerk's office. She said she would like to bump Brenda Hempen to permanent full-time. Ms. Fallon said she will still have the need for some extra labor expense for scanning documents year-round because of an increase in filing activity in the office. She said another one of her concerns is that at a recent conference there was discussion of doing away with all of the Court Security fee income, and that will cause some budget problems here at the County. Ms. Fallon said the office Document Storage fees are also being discussed at the State level to determine what the fees can and cannot be used for.

Ms. Fallon left the meeting.

John Wagner presented the budget request for the Health Department. He said there was no change in the total Recycling Center budget. He said because of some of the changes being made in China with the recyclable items, there may have to be some adjustments down the road in the Health Department budget, but there is no way to predict that right now.

The Health Department budget was also discussed. Mr. Wagner said he had included some budget dollars to send a nurse to the Jail to help out with the required medical examinations of jail inmates. He said his budget request also includes some dollars to finish up the remodeling of the new Health Department office on Jamie Lane. Mr. Wagner said he was shooting for December 1 to be in the new building. He said he was also working with the employees on updating the union contract. He said once that building is complete, there will also be a meeting room available for County and organization use. Mr. Wagner said he would also be including some audio-video equipment, and the room will be set up to accommodate a Board setting for meetings. Commissioner Koerber said Carla Heise would be contacting Mr. Wagner about helping with one or more ambulance budget items.

Kelton Davis came to the meeting to present the Regional Superintendent's budget. He presented his quarterly report of activities. Mr. Davis said he cannot provide a definitive budget projection without the Monroe County EAV information, and this is also causing problems for the County School systems. He said by the end of this calendar year, the Schools will be out of money for their operations, and after that the Schools will have to borrow money to pay their expenses. Mr.

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Davis said it's one thing when the State delays payments to the Schools, but it is more of a concern when that problem is created at the County level.

There was discussion of the building and office needs of the Regional Superintendent's office when they move to the Annex Building. Chairman Elmore said the plan is to move the Extension Service into the Health Department office after the Health Department has moved into their new building. Then the Extension office will be painted, updated, etc. and then moved back to their own space. After that the Regional Superintendent's office can be renovated. Commissioner Wittenauer said he thought Mr. Davis should get together with Pam Jacobs and discuss any changes either would like to see in the renovated building space. Commissioner Koerber said Carla Heise needs to be involved in those discussions also. Chairman Elmore said the roof also needs to be replaced before that work is done. Commissioner Wittenauer said it's also possible that the former Regional Superintendent's office can be a source of income for the county, and that will help the overall expense of these offices. Mr. Wagner said he would assist with this process, and if necessary he would be willing to handle the contracting for any work that needs to be done at the Annex. Commissioner Koerber said Chris Voelker can assist with that as well.

Kelton Davis and John Wagner left the meeting.

Pam Jacobs came to the meeting to discuss the University of Illinois Extension Service budget. There was discussion regarding a meeting to discuss improvements and renovations to the Annex Building.

Ross Mueller and Allen Mueller came to the meeting to join the discussion about the Extension Service budget. The budget request for the Extension Service was in the amount of \$163,000. Discussion followed regarding how best to handle the budget for that Department, and if there is any way to do this to help budget St. Clair and Madison Counties into paying their fair share of the office expenses. Ms. Jacobs said the Extension Director has been in contact with the other two Counties, and she has not gotten an answer from that person. Ms. Jacobs said she has also been personally frustrated, because the other two Counties have not returned her phone calls or given her any satisfaction regarding financial assistance. Commissioner Wittenauer said he would like to see a levy included for the upcoming fiscal year, but then hold those funds in a separate account for the time being. Allen Mueller said there may be a cost to the Extension Service of handling the funds that way, because if they are not immediately transferred from the County to the Extension Service, they will probably not get the State match that is normally provided to the local County.

Ross Mueller said what will happen to these programs and the local children and participants if there is no response from the other two Counties – are you just going to let the programs disappear? Commissioner Koerber said the issue can always be taken to the ballot for taxpayer input. Ms. Jacobs said you have to be careful about taking this issue to the ballot. There was discussion about breaking away from the other two Counties. Ross Mueller said we don't have a voice about separating from the other two Counties and functioning independently – that decision has been made by the University of Illinois, and they have not been responsive about making any changes to that setup. Allen Mueller said there is not an easy solution to this problem. Commissioner Wittenauer said something needs to be done now to make sure the

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Monroe County reserve account is not totally used up. Ms. Jacobs said you also have to remember that SNAP fund dollars are also helping to fund the offices of the other two Counties.

There was discussion about the dollars being invested in the program by the Extension Foundation. Allen Mueller said for every dollar invested by the Foundation, there is a fifty-cent match, so that situation has been beneficial for the Monroe County unit. He also asked if the rent paid by the Extension Service to Monroe County is negotiable. Commissioner Wittenauer said maybe the best way to handle that is to raise the rent and then provide a donation back to the Extension Service for part of that. Ms. Jacobs said two of the last three years there has not been a match of State dollars to the Extension Service budget. Once again there was discussion about taking the issue to the voters. Ms. Jacobs said if you take the question to the voters of whether or not they want to keep the program, you will kill the entire program, including 4-H, Master Gardener, Horticulture program, etc. Commissioner Wittenauer said he thinks a ballot question should be placed to the voters asking for increased funding for the Extension Service. Commissioner Koerber said she thinks the issue taken to the voters should be whether or not the Extension Service should continue to be funded at any level by the County. Allen Mueller said he thinks any issue like this put on the ballot will be a problem for the continuation of the program, and could easily mean an end to the entire program. Chairman Elmore said the other option is to keep funding the Extension Service at the current level until the local service runs out of money, and then it will have to shut down anyway.

Ross Mueller said if somebody could get to the University of Illinois, that may help, but so far they have been unresponsive. There was discussion of the various County combinations, and Ms. Jacobs said prior to consolidating, Monroe County was given various options regarding what County grouping structure best suited each County. Commissioner Koerber said her choice is still to provide Monroe County funding for Monroe County, and not for St. Clair and Madison Counties when they are not willing to provide the appropriate level of funding. Ms. Jacobs said if the situation continues this direction, it may get to the point where the 4-H program is the only program left, and there would be no office support as there is now.

The Extension Service group left the meeting.

Bob Hill came to the meeting to discuss the budget for the Coroner's office. He said he was asking for the same amount as last year. He said he reduced the radio maintenance budget, since last year he had used some of those funds for new equipment and digitizing records. Commissioner Koerber asked if he had included funding for new radios. Mr. Hill said he had not. Commissioner Koerber said that would have to be included – 5 radios @ \$2,000 for a total of \$10,000. Mr. Hill said he is currently 2 deputies short at this point. He said he would be looking for deputy candidates, because the call volume is increasing for the office. Last year the call volume was 196 calls, and so far this year there have been 148 calls. Mr. Hill said the cost of autopsies has increased, so he had to increase that line item.

Mr. Hill said the Coroner's office has been fortunate, because some of the other offices have worked with him to provide office space, etc. He said his deputies have not had a raise in four years, and he would like to see some type of increase for them. Mr. Hill said they get paid incentive hours for being on call, and then they get paid per call when they do actually have to go out. He said they use their own vehicles, but they can turn in mileage. Commissioner Koerber

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said she would sit down with Mr. Hill to discuss some possibilities for wage increase for the deputies.

Mr. Hill left the meeting.

Dennis Knobloch presented the budget for the County Clerk and Recorder. He said the majority of his budget was the same except for 2019 being a one-election year, and that cuts the Election Judge and Polling Place expense in half. Mr. Knobloch said for the Document Storage fund there is a fee collected for every document recorded, and those funds are used for Document Storage-related expenses. Commissioner Koerber asked about the current fee structure. Mr. Knobloch said that by January 1, 2019, the Recorders have to adopt a Flat Fee Schedule, and anticipating that, the fee schedule that was adopted earlier this year should fit into that routine.

Kevin Koenigstein reviewed the details of the County Commissioner budget. Most of the line items will remain the same. The IT support to Americom was discussed and it was decided to set that at \$78,000 annually - \$72K for annual IT support, and \$6K for annual Barracuda email backup. The postage is now \$40,000, and Kevin said that number could probably be reduced slightly. Mr. Koenigstein said he suggested increasing the Budget Preparation line item to \$7,200. He said he would probably be using Schmersahl's firm for more financial advice since the delay in tax bills will create some negative budget accounts.

General County budget items were discussed. It was decided to leave \$30,000 in the Project Fund. Mr. Koenigstein explained that the Contingency Fund can be up to 5% of your total budget. There was discussion of the RSVP program contribution. Commissioner Koerber said she would like to recognize those volunteers. Mr. Koenigstein proposed that the funds previously allocated to purchasing meat at Schneider's for the senior meal program now be moved over to the General Assistance budget line item rather than in the General County budget.

Joann Hartman and Cindy Zipfel came to the meeting to discuss the Soil and Water Conservation budget request. Ms. Hartman said the State still has not approved the budget for their program, so they have no idea what funding will be provided to them. She said the amount they are requesting from the County is \$15,000 – the same amount that has been requested each year in the past. Ms. Zipfel discussed the details of all of their programs and projects. She said she currently does a lot of work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service as well.

Ms. Hartman and Ms. Zipfel left the meeting.

The Beneflex fees were discussed. Commissioner Koerber said she would like to see that eliminated and paid to the benefit of the employees, and if we stay with that program, she would like to see the employee pay for the use of that card. Mr. Koenigstein said we are trying to encourage participation in the program, and hopefully that keeps the employees healthier. Commissioner Koerber asked about the details of the card. Ms. Marcuson said this allows the employee to use pre-tax dollars for prescriptions, copays, etc. Commissioner Koerber said these are the types of things that need to be detailed on a sheet given to each employee to show them what their total compensation package includes. Mr. Koenigstein said we need to increase the total Beneflex fees from \$12,000 to \$15,000. He suggested a change in the Hospitalization Insurance from \$600,000 to \$620,000.

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The details of the HRA program were discussed. The negotiator line item was discussed. It was decided to leave it at \$25,000, since the lawyers will not be allowed to be involved in as much of the union contract negotiations.

The ADP payroll system was discussed. Mr. Knobloch said the \$40,000 annual amount will be sufficient for the upcoming budget.

There was discussion of having some computer/IT training for all County employees to instruct them on best practices of computer use – the things employees should and shouldn't do when working on their computers. Mr. Knobloch said he felt this training should be mandated. Commissioner Wittenauer said he felt there should be some type of handbook distributed to employees that tell them what to do in case of a major computer problem.

Economic Development – Mr. Koenigstein said the County is in year three of a three-year commitment in the amount of \$30,000.

General Assistance – Mr. Koenigstein said he would like to include the Schneider's meat purchase in this line item and increase it from \$5,000 to \$6,000. Commissioner Koerber said she would like to see that amount stay at \$5,000, because she has heard that some of the meals being prepared here are being delivered to Randolph County. The other General Assistance line items can remain the same.

708 Mental Health Funding Board – Commissioner Wittenauer said he would like to see a 5% increase for this line item, but he said the group would settle for 3%. A 3% increase would increase the current levy of \$425,000 to \$437,000. Commissioner Koerber said she just wanted to make sure the funding went to programs and not to salaries. Mr. Koenigstein said Human Support Services receives about 85% of the funding from this group. There was discussion of some of the other beneficiary groups for these funds.

Kevin Koenigstein presented the budget request for the Treasurer and Collector. He said most of the line items are the same, with the equipment line item being reduced. Mr. Koenigstein said Annmarie Marcuson had been working about 50% of her time in the Treasurer's office, but that has now been reduced to about 10%. To make up for this difference he would like to add some staff to his office, especially with the problem of late tax bills. He said Connie Seboldt is also wanting to reduce her work time, and he would like to hire someone to share that position. Mr. Koenigstein said he can get better candidates if he can hire someone full-time. Commissioner Wittenauer asked if it would work to share an employee with another office. Mr. Koenigstein said that works as long as the schedule of the two offices fit with the busy periods for those offices. He said he would like to get someone that would work about 60% of the time, and that would equate to a salary of about \$22,000.

Commissioner Wittenauer said with all of the offices that are requesting extra help, it would help if Mr. Koenigstein could compile a list of those amounts, along with a second list showing the county's revenue stream, so the Commissioners can decide what changes can be made, if any. Commissioner Wittenauer said the only way he can see this working is if some offices share employees.

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Social Security expense - increase from \$450,000 to \$475,000.

Tort and Immunity – Unemployment insurance to remain the same at \$30,000. Mr. Koenigstein said there has been no ICIT assessment this year, and he doesn't expect one. The payment to CIRMA for insurance coverage for the coming year will be about \$970,000. Mr. Koenigstein said the Nursing Home will pay nearly half of this insurance expense for their various lines of coverage.

The IMRF budget was discussed. Mr. Koenigstein said we are over 100% funded with the IMRF program at this time.

The Nursing Home Salary line item was discussed. The Commissioners decided this line item would stay the same.

Mr. Koenigstein said there is no money in the Major Capital Improvement line item at this time, as all of that funding was spent on the energy upgrades/the CTS program.

Mr. Koenigstein discussed the County's overall tax levy to be approved with the upcoming budget. It is hard to come up with a bottom line until we have a number for the current year EAV. He said we will adjust the levy line items to make sure we cap out the PTELL extension limits. Mr. Knobloch explained the extension process, capped, unlimited accounts and limited funds, etc.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Koerber, with a second by Chairman Wittenauer. All voting Aye, none Nay and none Absent. Motion carried.