

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, January 8, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 400, Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sorensen, Members Renner, Nuckolls, Owens (left at 4:55 p.m.), Gordon, Bostic, Selzer and Segobiano

Members Absent: Member Hoselton

Other Members Present: None

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Jude LaCasse, Assistant to the County Administrator

Department Heads/
Elected Officials Present: None

Others Present: Ms. Michelle Anderson, Financial Reporting Specialist, County Auditor's Office; Ms. Erin Aubry, Intern, County Administrator's Office

Chairman Sorensen called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Chairman Sorensen presented the minutes from the December 11, 2007 Executive Committee Meeting and the November 20, 2007 Stand-Up Meeting for approval. Hearing no corrections to those minutes, Chairman Sorensen advised that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Chairman Sorensen presented the Appointments and Resignations to the Committee for approval. Chairman Sorensen advised that it was necessary for Mr. John Kline to go off of the Public Aid Committee as he is no longer a Township Supervisor, which is required under Illinois law.

Motion by Owens/Renner to Recommend Approval of the Appointments and Resignations as recommended by the Chairman.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen presented a request for approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board to allow Service Credit in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund for Military Service.

Motion by Renner/Bostic to Recommend Approval of
a Resolution of the McLean County Board to allow
Service Credit in the Illinois Municipal Retirement
Fund for Military Service

Mr. Gordon asked what is the fiscal impact on this Resolution. Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator, replied that there will be minimal impact fiscally. He indicated it changes the maximum service credit from 24 months to as much as 48 months. Mr. Lindberg noted that there are probably five or six employees to which it will apply.

Mr. Segobiano asked what "minimal" means dollar-wise. Mr. Lindberg replied that it would depend on who applied, what their salary is and how many years they have been with the County. He stated that there is no way to give an accurate dollar figure. Mr. Segobiano asked if it would be from \$1.00 to \$50,000.00. Mr. Lindberg replied that it would be far less than \$50,000.00 at this time.

Motion carried.

Mr. Tari Renner, Chairman, Justice Committee, presented a request for approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance Amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2007 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance, General Fund 0001 – Coroner's Office 0031. Mr. Renner explained that the main reason for this need is that there were more deaths in McLean County and out-of-County autopsies. He noted that the County is reimbursed for the out-of-County autopsies, but the funds go into the General Fund as revenue and are not returned to the specific line items.

Mr. Selzer asked if this is correcting the line items. Mr. Zeunik replied that it is correcting the overages in the line items. For comparative purposes, through November 2006, the Coroner's Office had conducted 159 out-of-County autopsies and, through November of this year, there were 216 out-of-County autopsies. Through November of 2006, there were 77 McLean County Autopsies and, through November of 2007, 119 in-County autopsies were performed. Mr. Zeunik indicated that the Coroner's budgeted revenue for out-of-County autopsies was \$40,125.00 and that figure will be exceeded significantly due to the number of out-of-County cases.

Mr. Segobiano pointed out two typographical errors on the Resolution, namely the incorrect figure of \$49,000.00 that needs to be changed to \$53,800.00 (which was noted during the Justice Committee meeting) and an incorrect date of Monday, January 8, 2008, which should be Monday, January 7, 2008.

Mr. Zeunik assured the Committee that these corrections will be made in the Resolution that will be placed in the Board Packet.

Mr. Segobiano expressed confusion with the Resolution. Mr. Zeunik explained that the purpose of the Resolution is to correct expense lines that have exceeded their budgeted authority. He clarified that this is a change in policy from the County Auditor's Office. The County Auditor's Office, this year, began advising all departments, in November and December, that if they exceeded their budgeted authority as per the County Board's approved and adopted budget, the departments must, prior to year end, either submit transfers to the appropriate oversight committee to correct the lines that had exceeded the authority or, as in the case of the Coroner's Office where monies cannot be transferred among line items, they must seek approval of an Emergency Appropriation.

Mr. Zeunik advised that there were a number of departments that have made transfers or asked for an Emergency Appropriation in December or January for Fiscal Year 2007. He stated that the additional revenue received by the Coroner's Office goes into the Revenue line item as a reimbursement from other Counties. That additional revenue that is above the amount budgeted will ultimately go into the Fund Balance of the General Fund as the projections are that total revenues will exceed total expenses in the General Fund at year end. The money will end up in Fund Balance, but cannot go back against individual expense lines. The line items listed in the Emergency Appropriation are the lines items that were over the budgeted authority. Mr. Zeunik indicated that the \$53,800.00 is sufficient to cover any expenses that will be incurred through December 31, 2007.

Mr. Segobiano asked what happens if a Department does that and does not meet the overage. Mr. Zeunik reiterated that this is the result of a change in policy the Auditor's Office put in place this year. He stated that this policy was in place 20 years ago. However, the outside auditors indicated that it did not need to be done because governments adopt budget authority at the fund level – governmental accounting is based on fund accounting. The outside auditor said that if you do not exceed the total amount budgeted for the fund, there is no need to make individual corrections. The County Auditor has taken the position that it does not matter what the amount is at the fund level, the Board gives to every office and department a budget they are authorized to spend. If the authority is exceeded, it is necessary to go back to the oversight Committee and ask for additional authority to cover the expenses.

Mr. Segobiano recommended that Mr. Zeunik explain this policy in his next budget presentation.

Mr. Selzer asked what was Ms. Kimmerling's original revenue budget for out-of-County autopsies. Mr. Zeunik replied that the Coroner had budgeted \$40,125.00 and she had \$46,066.00 through the end of November and anticipates it will be close to \$60,000.00 when the November and December payments are received. Mr. Selzer asked if she has \$20,000.00 more in revenue than anticipated, but \$53,000.00 more in expenses than anticipated, what accounts for the \$33,000.00 difference. Mr. Zeunik replied that this figure accounts for the significant increase in the in-County autopsies.

Mr. Segobiano asked what impact, if any, will there be now that Peoria County has established their own morgue. Mr. Zeunik replied that he expected to see an impact in 2007, but there was no impact. He stated that, in 2008, the number of in-County autopsies has been budgeted at 100 and the number of out-of-County autopsies has been decreased.

Mr. Owens asked if the new pathologist is under contract with the County and would that impact the number of autopsies performed. Mr. Zeunik replied that the pathologist is not under contract with the County. The pathologist, Dr. Scott Denton, was formerly the Chief Deputy Medical Examiner for Cook County. Mr. Zeunik advised that Dr. Denton relocated to McLean County in September of this year. Dr. Denton and the previous pathologist worked out an arrangement wherein the former pathologist will handle Counties north of Interstate 80 and Dr. Denton will handle Counties south of Interstate 80. Mr. Zeunik stated that Dr. Denton lives in McLean County, performs McLean County autopsies and autopsies for other Counties, using our facility as his base of operation, but does not have a contract with the County. Dr. Denton also has the ability to go to other Counties in Central Illinois. Mr. Zeunik explained that when Dr. Denton performs an autopsy for us, he charges a fee and when he does a case for a County that uses our morgue, he charges that County a fee and we charge that County for the use of the facility and other expenses.

Ms. Bostic asked if we have a fee schedule with Dr. Denton. Mr. Zeunik replied that we have a guaranteed fee schedule that is part of the budget. He indicated that Dr. Denton sets a fee per case, which is a fixed fee that is built into the budget. Ms. Bostic asked what happens if Dr. Denton is not available. Mr. Zeunik replied that the former pathologist would cover for Dr. Denton. He pointed out that there are very few forensic pathologists nationally or in Illinois.

There was a lengthy discussion on why Dr. Denton is not under contract to the County. Mr. Zeunik provided a brief explanation on the County's history with pathologists. He also advised that Illinois law grants the Coroner's Office additional power that supersedes the authority in Illinois Law which says that the County Board is the contracting agent.

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Mr. Selzer pointed out that McLean County is very lucky to have an accessible forensic pathologist.

Chairman Sorensen reviewed the status of the Emergency Appropriation Ordinance, noting that two correction needs to be made to the document. First, the amount needs to be corrected from \$49,000.00 to \$53,800.00, and, second, the date needs to be changed from Monday, January 8, 2008 to Monday, January 7, 2008.

Chairman Sorensen commented that he appreciates the Auditor's Office becoming more diligent on this topic. However, he believes the County Board should have been kept apprised on the status of these over-expenditures.

Motion by Renner/Selzer to Recommend Approval of
an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance Amending
the McLean County Fiscal Year 2007 Combined
Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance, General
Fund 0001 – Coroner's Office 0031 as amended.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Renner.

Mr. George Gordon, Chairman, Land Use and Development Committee, reported that the Land Use and Development Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Gordon.

Ms. Diane Bostic, Chairman, Property Committee, reported that the Property Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Bostic.

Mr. Stan Hoselton, Chairman, Transportation Committee, was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Sorensen reported that the Transportation Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Dave Selzer, Chairman, Finance Committee, reported that the Finance Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, indicated that he had nothing to report to the Committee, but would answer any questions.

In "Other Business," Mr. Selzer indicated that he recently spoke with a Bloomington City Alderman on a variety of topics, including the City's financial difficulties. He noted that their conversation turned to Unit 5 and its referendum. Mr. Selzer expressed his frustration that the County is not being informed in the same manner as the City and Town by Unit 5. He indicated that there was also a conversation regarding the City's Public Works Department, which is landlocked downtown. He referred to the County's Highway facility on Towanda-Barnes Road, where the City's growth is going, as well as the County's MetCom Center versus the City's center.

Mr. Selzer recommended that a joint meeting be scheduled between McLean County, the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal, with Board Chairman Sorensen as facilitator, to discuss several issues, including:

- Updating the County Highway site versus moving to a new site and selling the current site to the City of Bloomington for their Public Works Department;
- The possibility of having one Emergency Dispatch Center again, even if the City runs the Center (and selling the MetCom Center facility to Bloomington for a Bloomington Police Station on the east side);
- Rural Ambulance Service and the availability of Advanced Life Support services.

Mr. Selzer advised that he spoke with Dr. Gary Niehaus, Superintendent, Unit 5 School District, who indicated he would be glad to come before the County Board to give an overview of the \$97 million funding increase. He asked Mr. Zeunik to set up a time for Dr. Niehaus to give a presentation to the Board.

Mr. Zeunik indicated that Dr. Niehaus is scheduled to give a presentation Tuesday, January 15th at 7:00 a.m. to the Chamber. He noted that County Board members were invited to attend. Mr. Zeunik stated that Dr. Niehaus may be able to speak to the County Board at its 9:00 a.m. meeting.

There was a brief discussion on the Unit 5 Referendum. Mr. Segobiano recommended that District 87 be dissolved and absorbed into Unit 5. He pointed out that many of the citizens that live in Bloomington, pay Bloomington taxes, but send their children to Unit 5 Schools. Mr. Segobiano stated that he would be in favor of our Representatives going to Springfield to recommend that District 87 be disbanded.

Mr. Selzer expressed his displeasure with “our” performance on the Lifeline issue. He stated that it is a shame the service was lost and that there are pockets of citizens in the County without adequate emergency assistance.

Mr. Segobiano stated that the foundation of the County is education. He also noted that we must think of what is best for the taxpayers. He expressed his frustration with the leaders in Normal and Bloomington who ask for two different things, yet come together to build a Main Street Corridor.

Ms. Bostic indicated that the people she has talked with believe that the Unit 5 Referendum is a “done deal” and they will vote for it.

Mr. Selzer indicated that he has been to many functions where people are introduced who are on the City Council or Representatives but, at the same functions, Mr. Selzer is not recognized as a member of the County Board. He points this out as an example that the County Board is not respected.

Mr. Zeunik referred to the EMS question that was mentioned previously. He advised that Mr. Mike Sweeney tried, to no avail, to provide some kind of County-wide EMS when it was learned that Lifeline was having problems. He noted that Mr. Sweeney coordinated three meetings with the rural EMS agencies, along with the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, both hospitals, Senator Brady and Representative Brady. Mr. Zeunik indicated that the meetings were unsuccessful in coming to a solution. He stated that he spoke with Mr. Greg Scott, the EMS Director, to get an update since Lifeline has been out of business. Mr. Zeunik noted that the ambulance districts in the County are sacrosanct to the people they serve. He stated that the citizens like knowing the firefighters and the people on the ambulance. Mr. Zeunik advised that the local ambulance districts would prefer to go to referenda and ask the voters in the district to increase taxes, than to look at providing a County-wide service. Mr. Zeunik stated that Mr. Sweeney was trying to find a way to provide a service that would be uniform throughout the County and include the Twin Cities as well as all of the unincorporated areas. He advised that this effort was met with resistance from the unincorporated areas as well as Bloomington. Mr. Zeunik advised that Bloomington indicated that, if Lifeline went away, they had the resources to train paramedics and provide emergency facilities. He noted that the rural ambulance districts have difficulty staffing the day shift, because many of the volunteers work in Bloomington-Normal. Their issue is finding people to train and certify to cover Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Bostic stated that her district is lucky to get a firefights and an EMT.

Mr. Zeunik stated that the only way to get to a point where the entire County has emergency coverage is to have massive changes in direction in Springfield. He indicated that Mr. Scott told him that there are new national standards that are expected to be released within the next year as it relates to EMS services. Mr. Scott believes that Illinois will adopt those standards and that will produce another demand on the rural agencies.

Mr. Selzer and Mr. Segobiano expressed concern that the members of the Board were not included in the discussions regarding Lifeline. Mr. Selzer stated that the County Board has the power to bring those issues to the forefront in the paper and in the Board meetings. He advised that Glencoe, Illinois has Public Safety Officers. The police drive the cars around and when the fire alarm goes off, they drive to the scene with their turn-out gears in the car, and someone drives the engine to the site. Mr. Selzer stated that there are other ways the County could have provided paramedics in a fly-car and still not encroach on rural ambulances. Ms. Bostic responded that Lifeline did finally put a paramedic in a chase vehicle to meet incoming ambulances.

Mr. Selzer pointed out that, while the County does not have "home rule" authority, it is a power of 20 people who can get behind some of these issues. He suggested that we should start taking the lead as a group. Mr. Segobiano agreed. He noted that he was unaware of any of the meetings that Mr. Sweeney held with Lifeline.

Mr. Selzer reiterated his hope that we can hold a planning meeting with the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal, particularly with the City related to the various properties.

Chairman Sorensen asked if the Committee members want to invite Dr. Niehaus to speak at the Board meeting. The Committee concurred that they would like to invite him to the Board meeting.

Mr. Nuckolls asked how a meeting can be facilitated with the City and the Town. Chairman Sorensen replied that we could ask for a meeting. He reminded the Committee that, in the past, such meetings were held on a regular basis. Mr. Segobiano recommended that the Executive Committee meet to determine what issues need to be discussed with the City and to what degree they need to be discussed. Ms. Bostic recommended that Chairman Sorensen chair the meeting.

Chairman Sorensen recapped the recommendations, as follows:

- Members of the Executive Committee should spend the next few weeks thinking of agenda items they would like to address at a joint meeting;
- Discussion on the agenda will be conducted at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Chairman Sorensen cautioned the Committee members that not everything can be fixed at one joint meeting.

Mr. Selzer suggested that the senator and legislators be invited as guests.

Chairman Sorensen informed the Committee that, consistent with the direction of the Board last month and with the assistance of Mr. Eric Ruud, Mr. Zeunik and the consultants on the East Side Highway Study, he presented written testimony to the Illinois Commerce Commission ("ICC"), on the Enbridge Pipeline case. Chairman Sorensen stated that the ICC staff responded very quickly and has fired off a series of questions to Enbridge requesting their engineers to respond to his testimony.

Mr. Gordon asked if that was in regard to the location of the pipeline. Chairman Sorensen replied that is correct.

Chairman Sorensen presented the December 31, 2007 bills as recommended and transmitted by the County Auditor for payment. The Prepaid Total is \$298,153.67 and the fund total is the same.

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Motion by Gordon/Renner to recommend approval of the Executive Committee bills for December 31, 2007 as presented to the Committee by the County Auditor.
Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary