

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 400, Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sweeney, Members Sorensen, Segobiano, Renner, Hoselton, Nuckolls, Gordon and Bostic

Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: Members Caisley, Moss and Butler

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: Mr. Craig Nelson, Director, Information Services

Others Present: Mr. Marty Vanags, Chief Executive Officer, Bloomington-Normal-McLean County Economic Development Council; Mr. Walter D. Clark; Mr. Andrew Matthews and Ms. Sondra O'Connor, Candidates seeking Appointment to Board District #5

Chairman Sweeney called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Sweeney presented the minutes from the April 10, 2007 Executive Committee Meeting for approval.

Motion by Bostic/Renner to approve and place on file the minutes of the April 10, 2007 Committee Meeting.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney presented the Reappointments, Appointments, and the Resignations to the Committee for approval.

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

Chairman Sweeney introduced the three candidates who are seeking appointment to the vacant seat in Board District #5 and indicated that each candidate will be allowed five minutes to address the Committee. He first introduced Mr. Walter D. Clark.

Mr. Clark thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present himself as a candidate to fill the vacancy in the District #5 County Board seat. He advised the Committee that he has been a McLean County resident for over 36 years, both in Normal and rural McLean County. Mr. Clark stated that he has had many years of experience in management, budgeting, administration and in addressing community issues. He noted that he has had nearly 40 years of public service.

Mr. Clark indicated that he does not seek this appointment for any specific issues or hidden agendas, but rather to provide constructive input on issues facing the County. He stated that he brings with him a vast experience of knowledge and the ability to make sound decisions. Mr. Clark emphasized that he seeks this position so that he might bring something back to the community and to be part of the future of McLean County and, thereby, provide a better place to live. He indicated that he has the background, knowledge and commitment to be of service to the Board, the citizens of District #5 and McLean County. Mr. Clark announced that he would look forward to working with the Board to make McLean County a better place to live, work and worship.

Mr. Clark thanked the Committee for allowing him to present himself and offered to answer any questions.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he introduced Mr. Andrew Matthews.

Mr. Matthews thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present the reasons he believes he is the right candidate for this position. He acknowledged that the other two candidates are abundantly qualified, completely capable, involved in the community and he respects them. Mr. Matthews stated that, while he is not more qualified than the other candidates, his qualifications are different. He indicated that the County needs to go forward into the future. Mr. Matthews advised that, when he looks at the current make-up of the County and the changes that are taking place, he has concerns for the future. He indicated that he intends to stay in this community for the rest of his life.

Mr. Matthews noted that he grew up in this community and comes from a family of service. He stated that his family believes that you have a responsibility, as a citizen, to give back to the community. Mr. Matthews advised that he has served in the ministry, in the military and, currently, teaches at Illinois State University. He indicated that he does not have the experience of the other two candidates, as he is young and has not seen the things they have seen. However, Mr. Matthews announced that he is a hard-charger, a fast learner and he is dedicated and loyal in getting the job done.

Mr. Matthews promised that, if he is selected to this position, he will be here every spare moment that he is needed.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he introduced Ms. Sonny Rodgers O'Connor.

Ms. O'Connor advised that, while she has lived in McLean County most of her life, she did not get into McLean County politics until the last five years. At that time, she was facing retirement and, with the support and assistance of citizens in District #5, she was elected to the County Board for District #5. Ms. O'Connor indicated that she now stands before the Committee with four years of experience and knowledge of the County Board. She noted that these are the greatest two assets she would bring into this position. Ms. O'Connor pointed out that she has been with the County Board through MetCom, the first East Side Highway Corridor Study and the Wind Farm issues. She stated that she is up to speed on all of the issues that are facing the County Board.

Ms. O'Connor reminded the Committee that, over the last four years, she has served on the Transportation and Justice Committees. She noted that, in District #5, she has tried to keep an open line of communication and to bring the concerns of her constituents to the County Board. Ms. O'Connor announced that she takes a great deal of pride in McLean County and, in her votes, she tried to reflect that pride.

Ms. O'Connor stated that she particularly enjoyed her experience on the Transportation Committee with Mr. Bass and Mr. Hoselton. She noted that she learned a lot from these two gentlemen. Ms. O'Connor indicated that Mr. Bass did not intend to run again in 2008 and knew that she was going to run. She stated that she would like to think that Mr. Bass is pleased to know that she is seeking the position.

Ms. O'Connor thanked the Committee for having the candidates here today. She reiterated that knowledge and experience are her greatest assets.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. O'Connor.

Chairman Sweeney acknowledged that there are three strong candidates for the District #5 County Board seat. He advised that the applications will be reviewed over the next few days, after which he will make the appointment and present his decision to the Board for their approval. Chairman Sweeney stated that he will contact the candidates prior to the distribution of the County Board packet. He thanked the candidates for their presentations.

Chairman Sweeney presented a request for approval of a Resolution Rescinding the Appointment of Everett H. Laesch as a member of the Carlock Fire Protection District. Mr. Sorensen explained that this appointment was made in error, as the Carlock Fire Protection District is required to have a representative from Kansas Township in Woodford County. Since Mr. Laesch was the most recent appointment to the Carlock Fire Protection District, it became necessary to rescind his appointment.

Motion by Renner/Gordon to Recommend Approval of a Resolution Rescinding the Appointment of Everett H. Laesch as a member of the Carlock Fire Protection District.

Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney presented a request for approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board in connection with the Village of Downs Tax Increment Finance District and an Extension of Downtown Redevelopment Project Area (TIF #1).

Motion by Sorensen/Nuckolls to Recommend Approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board in connection with the Village of Downs Tax Increment Finance District and an Extension of Downtown Redevelopment Project Area (TIF #1).

Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney presented a request for approval of an Ordinance Amending "An Ordinance Describing and Designating an area located partially within the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal and Unincorporated McLean County as an Enterprise Zone."

Motion by Renner/Nuckolls to Recommend Approval of an Ordinance Amending "An Ordinance Describing and Designating an area located partially within the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal and Unincorporated McLean County as an Enterprise Zone."

Mr. Segobiano expressed his continuing concern that the constant stretching of the Enterprise Zone will shift the tax burden around so that school districts and other taxing bodies are denied the right to collect taxes. Mr. Gordon added his concern that the potential \$828,000.00 in sales tax exemption on building materials allowed for the Wildwood Project would mean that there would be an equal amount of loss in revenues due to the State and local government. Mr. Marty Vanags, Chief Executive Officer, Bloomington-Normal-McLean County Economic Development Council, responded that it is difficult to question Mr. Gordon's assumption because, as long as the company is buying building materials in the State of Illinois, it is exempt from sales taxes. Mr. Gordon commented that the sales tax revenue that the State does not realize contributes to the State's continuing fiscal problems. He added that he is concerned with the expansion of the Enterprise Zone concept, in general, because the State is in a fiscal bind.

Mr. Hoselton asked what is the life span of the Enterprise Zone. Mr. Vanags replied that it was extended for ten years. Chairman Sweeney asked when the ten year period began. Mr. Vanags replied that the Enterprise Zone was extended in 2005, so there are 8½ years left on the Enterprise Zone.

Mr. Hoselton asked if this affects all taxing bodies. Mr. Vanags responded that the only tax incentive in our current Enterprise Zone that the County, the City and the Town provide is a sales tax exemption on building materials. He stated that it does not provide a property tax abatement or anything else. Mr. Vanags pointed out that this exemption induces the Company to buy from local businesses.

After additional discussion, the Committee members concurred that they would support the request, but agreed that the Enterprise Zone should be closely monitored.

Chairman Sweeney called for a vote on the Motion.

Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney presented a request for approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Saybrook to make available certain facilities and computer networking resources for use by the Sheriff's Department – Information Services.

Mr. Craig Nelson, Director, Information Services explained that the Sheriff and the Village of Saybrook have been talking about establishing a sub-station in Saybrook. He noted that this Agreement is to set forth the terms and conditions by which the Village may make available to the County use of certain facilities and computer networking resources, in order that the County may establish a sub-station for the office of the McLean County Sheriff in the Village.

Motion by Gordon/Renner to Recommend Approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Saybrook to make available certain Facilities and Computer Networking Resources for use by the Sheriff's Department – Information Services.
Motion carried.

Ms. Diane Bostic, Chairman, Property Committee, reported that the Property Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee. She noted that there are five items to be presented to the Board next Tuesday.

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

Mr. Stan Hoselton, Vice Chairman, Transportation Committee, reported that the Transportation Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Matt Sorensen, Chairman, Finance Committee, reported that the Finance Committee brings three items for action to the Executive Committee. He stated that the first two items deal with SHOW BUS and can be acted upon together. The first is a request for approval of State Fiscal Year 2008 Section 5311 Non-Metro Public Transportation Operating Assistance Grant Application – Building and Zoning. The second item is a request for approval of a Purchase of Service Agreement between McLean County and Meadows Mennonite Retirement Community d/b/a SHOW BUS – Building and Zoning. Mr. Sorensen noted that these are annual "housekeeping" items for SHOW BUS.

Motion by Sorensen/Hoselton to Recommend Approval of State Fiscal Year 2008 Section 5311 Non-Metro Public Transportation Operating Assistance Grant Application – Building and Zoning, and Recommend Approval of Purchase of Service Agreement between McLean County and Meadows Mennonite Retirement Community d/b/a SHOW BUS – Building and Zoning
Motion carried.

Mr. Sorensen presented a request for approval of the Resolution Establishing the Budget Policy for Fiscal Year 2008 – County Administrator's Office.

Mr. Gordon asked for clarification on the Budget Policy on Page 72, 12.22-3, (B) of the Packet, which states "Each categorical grant which decreases in Fiscal Year 2008, thereby possibly increasing County funding obligations, shall be clearly identified so that the Oversight Committee and the Executive Committee may evaluate whether the present expenditure level should be maintained and/or increased." Mr. Sorensen responded that this is consistent with the County's long-term policy that when grant funding goes away, it is not automatically placed into the budget as a new, unfunded expense line. Rather, it requires that the Oversight Committee be made aware of it and then reviewed by the Executive Committee. Mr. Sorensen stated that the Oversight Committee can make a decision whether or not to replace that grant funding with other revenue sources thereby increasing or decreasing the expenditure line item with non-grant revenue.

Motion by Sorensen/Renner to Recommend Approval of the Resolution Establishing the Budget Policy for Fiscal Year 2008 – County Administrator's Office.
Motion carried.

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

Mr. Tari Renner, Chairman, Justice Committee, reported that the Justice Committee brings several items for action to the Executive Committee. The first item is a request for approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2007 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance (grant of \$1,171.40 from the McLean County Crime Detection Network), General Fund 0001, Coroner's Office 0031 – County Coroner's Officer.

Motion by Renner/Nuckolls to recommend approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance Amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2007 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance (grant of \$1,171.40 from the McLean County Crime Detection Network), General Fund 0001, Coroner's Office 0031 – County Coroner's Office.
Motion carried.

Mr. Renner presented a request for approval of a Sub-Grant Agreement between Prairie State Legal Services, Inc. and the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Illinois to Establish a Legal Self-help Center for the McLean County Law Library – Circuit Court.

Motion by Renner/Bostic to Recommend Approval of a Sub-Grant Agreement between Prairie State Legal Services, Inc. and the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Illinois to Establish a Legal Self-help Center for the McLean County Law Library – Circuit Court.
Motion carried.

Mr. Renner presented a request for approval of the 2007-2008 Annual Intergovernmental Grant Agreement with IEMA Nuclear Safety Grant in the Amount of \$10,725.00 – EMA

Motion by Renner/Gordon to Recommend Approval of the 2007-2008 Intergovernmental Grant Agreement with IEMA Nuclear Safety Grant in the Amount of \$10,725.00 - EMA
Motion carried.

Mr. Zeunik pointed out that the next item on the agenda regarding providing phone cards for inmates in the County Detention Facility does not need to be acted upon by the Executive Committee. Mr. Renner noted that, if approved by the County Board, this is a service provided to adult detainees to purchase phone cards in the Commissary. Mr. Zeunik added that currently inmates who want to make calls must make collect calls. Fewer and fewer people have wired phones and cell phones do not have the capability to accept collect calls from inmates in jail. If the inmates can purchase phone cards, they can make calls to their family who have cell phones. Mr. Renner noted that the County will derive some profit from the sale of the phone cards in the Commissary.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any 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. He noted that item (b) is a request for approval of the application of a Preliminary Plan for the Kings Mill Acres Subdivision, which was previously known as Prairieland Subdivison. Mr. Gordon urged the Committee to read the minutes of the Land Use and Development Committee. He advised that the vote was unanimous to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plan.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator updated the Committee on several items. First, he advised that the Real Estate Tax bills have been sent to the printer and he expects that the tax bills will be due the second week in June. Mr. Zeunik stated that the final County overall tax rate came in at \$0.91927 cents per \$100.00 of equalized assessed value, which is a decrease from last year and a slight decrease from the \$0.92073 cents per \$100.00 of equalized assessed value that was projected in the FY'2007 Recommended Budget as presented in September. The County's final EAV for purposes of computing tax rates was \$3,071,283,531.00, which was a slight increase over the \$3,066,478,249.00 that was projected in the budget.

Mr. Zeunik pointed out that this Committee previously discussed concerns regarding Probation Officers' salary reimbursement. He stated that the Fiscal Year 2008 budget for the State of Illinois, as recommended by the Governor, does not recommend any increase in the appropriation for the Judiciary. The Administrative Office of Illinois Courts, the Supreme Court, Appellate Court and Circuit Court received zero increase in real dollars. The dollar amount in the Governor's budget is the same amount approved in this year's budget, which means, if approved by the Legislature, the County will see another decrease in funding.

Mr. Zeunik stated that there are two bills which have passed the Senate, Senate Bill 488 and Senate Bill 644. He advised that Senate Bill 488 will make full-time County Probation Officers eligible to participate in the Sheriff's Law Enforcement IMRF Pension Plan. This bill currently sits in the House Executive Committee. Mr. Zeunik informed the Committee that Mr. Lindberg did some cost projections and, if this bill is passed and signed into law, the County's cost for IMRF will increase by \$394,507.00, which is the equivalent of 1.3 cents on the property tax bill.

Mr. Zeunik stated that the Coroner's Bill provides that the elected Coroner may participate in the Sheriff's Law Enforcement Program. He noted that this bill passed in the Senate unanimously and currently sits in the House Executive Committee. Mr. Zeunik advised that Chairman Sweeney has sent letters to all of our State Representatives in the House encouraging them not to support either one of these bills. He indicated that the other impact on McLean County, besides the fiscal impact, is that, under the Sheriff's Law Enforcement Program, if you have 20 years of service and are age 50, you can retire. With that, the County could experience a significant loss of senior management in Adult and Juvenile Court Services and at the JDC. Mr. Zeunik stated that every year the Legislature states that it will not touch the pension system, but every year they add more benefits and costs.

Mr. Zeunik advised that the Smoke-Free Illinois Bill passed and the Governor indicated that he would sign the bill. This accomplishes uniformity across the State.

Mr. Zeunik pointed out that the Children's Advocacy Center Fee Bill, which was included in our Legislative Program that we supported along with Metro-Counties, was passed in the House by 112-4 and it was being considered in the Senate for third reading today.

Chairman Sweeney asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Segobiano suggested that perhaps the Probation Officers should be outsourced to avoid the tax burden on McLean County citizens with the IMRF increase.

Mr. Nuckolls asked if the Correctional Officers are under the Sheriff's Law Enforcement Program. Mr. Zeunik replied that they are currently not under the Program, but that may be a consideration in the future.

Mr. Gordon asked how much of a pension will those employees earn after only 20 years. Mr. Zeunik replied that they would earn 2.5% a year on the average of their highest four years salary, which is 50%. He added that, under SLEP, the maximum a person can earn is 80% with 32 years of service. Mr. Gordon asked what kind of compound interest is there year-to-year after retirement. Mr. Zeunik replied that it would compound at the rate of a 3% increase per year.

Chairman Sweeney advised that it is very interesting working with Metro-Counties. He noted that it is reassuring to see what Metro-Counties is doing for McLean County and for the other Counties. Chairman Sweeney pointed out that Metro-Counties is much more effective than NACo.

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Chairman Sweeney presented the April 30, 2007 bills as recommended and transmitted by the County Auditor for payment. The Prepaid Total is \$310,866.60 and the fund total is the same.

Motion by Bostic/Gordon to recommend approval of the Executive Committee bills for April 30, 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 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary