

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 400, Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sorensen, Members Owens, Gordon, Segobiano, Hoselton, Rackauskas, O'Connor and Butler

Members Absent: Member Bostic

Other Board Members Present: Members Black and Schafer

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

Department Heads/
Elected Officials Present: Ms. Kathy Michael, County Clerk; Mr. Paul Shannon, Bloomington Election Commission

Others Present: Representatives of the League of Women Voters of McLean County (LWV), including Ms. Julie Prandi, and Ms. Sally Rudolph; Mr. Jesse Smart, Former Bloomington Mayor; Bloomington Resident Mr. Bruce Meeks; Mr. Bob Day, Representative for City Election Commissions in the State of Illinois

Chairman Sorensen called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Chairman Sorensen presented the minutes from the March 8, 2011 and February 15, 2011 Stand-up Executive Committee meetings for approval. Hearing no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Sorensen advised that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Chairman Sorensen presented the reappointments, appointments and resignations. He pulled from the agenda the new appointment of Jarrod Boyle to the Saybrook-Arrowsmith Fire Protection District. He noted that it may be on the May Agenda.

Motion by Segobiano/Rackauskas to Recommend Approval of the Reappointments, Appointments and Resignations as recommended by the Chairman.
Motion carried as amended.

Chairman Sorensen noted that April is the month for Fire Protection District reappointments. He thanked Ms. LaCasse for her efforts.

Chairman Sorensen presented a request for approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board setting the number of County Board Districts and the number of County Board Representatives to be elected from each District as a result of the 2010 Census – County Administrator's Office. He stated that this is a resolution that declares that the County intends to stay structured the way it has been structured in the past, namely ten districts with two members per district. Chairman Sorensen added that this is not the map resolution.

Motion by Owens/Hoselton to Recommend Approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board setting the number of County Board Districts and the number of County Board Representatives to be Elected from each Division as a result of the 2010 Census – County Administrator's Office.

Motion carried.

Mr. Ben Owens, Chairman, Chairman, Finance Committee, presented several requests for SHOW BUS, which can all be acted upon together. The three requests are:

- Request Approval of an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) State Fiscal Year 2012 Combined Application for Section 5311 Non-Metro Public Transportation Capital/Operating Assistance and Intercity Bus Grant;
- Request Approval of an IDOT Downstate Urban Area Operating Assistance Grant Application;
- Request Approval of Purchase of Service Agreement between McLean County and SHOW BUS for Rural Public Transportation.

Motion by Owens/Gordon to Recommend Approval of an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) State Fiscal Year 2012 Combined Application for Section 5311 Non-Metro Public Transportation Capital/Operating Assistance and Intercity Bus Grant; Recommend Approval of an IDOT Downstate Urban Area Operating Assistance Grant Application; and Recommend Approval of Purchase of Service Agreement between McLean County and SHOW BUS for Rural Public Transportation.

Motion carried.

Mr. Owens presented a request for approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0105 (Hearth Smart and Tobacco Grants) – Health Department.

Motion by Owens/Segobiano to Recommend Approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0105 (Health Smart and Tobacco Grants) – Health Department.
Motion carried.

Mr. Owens presented a request for approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0107 (PHER Grant and Influenza Outreach Program Grant) – Health Department.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to Recommend Approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0107 (PHER Grant and Influenza Outreach Program Grant) – Health Department.
Motion carried.

Mr. Owens presented two requests that can be acted upon together, namely a request for approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0112 (Immunization Service) and request for approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0112 (Immunization Service) – Health Department.

Motion by Owens/Hoselton to recommend Approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0112 (Immunization Services), and to recommend Approval of an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2011 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0112 (Immunization Services) – Health Department.
Motion carried.

Mr. Owens presented a request for approval of Critical Personnel Hiring Requests – County Administrator's Office.

Motion by Owens/Segobiano to Recommend
Approval of Critical Personnel Hiring Requests –
County Administrator's Office.

Bloomington resident Bruce Meeks raised an objection to the Circuit Clerk's Office receiving a 1.0 FTE Office Support Specialist position. He alleged that the Circuit Clerk has not met the guidelines of reducing the office 2.4 FTE. Mr. Meeks alleged that the Circuit Clerk does not show up every day for work. He also stated that he does not believe the number of traffic citations is 35,000 to 40,000 annually. He recommended that this request be referred back to committee.

Mr. Owens responded that Mr. Don Everhart was present at the Finance Committee meeting when this item was approved. He indicated that no objections were raised at that time. Mr. Owens advised that the request was approved based upon the recommendation from the County Administrator's Office. He stated that this is the first time any concern was expressed.

Mr. Gordon indicated that he would like this issue to be discussed further.

Mr. Segobiano expressed his concern with Mr. Meeks' issues with the Circuit Clerk. Mr. Segobiano felt that these issues needed to be addressed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee or the County Administrator's Office rather than in the Executive Committee meeting. He added that he believes the action item was appropriately reviewed during the Finance Committee and should be carried forward.

After additional discussion, Mr. Gordon made a motion to amend the previous motion by separating out the Circuit Clerk's request for a 1.0 FTE Office Support Specialist.

Motion by Gordon/O'Connor to Amend the Critical
Personnel Hiring Requests by deleting the Circuit
Clerk's office request for a 1.0 FTE Office Support
Specialist and to consider the remainder of the motion
as presented – County Administrator's Office.

Mr. Segobiano advised that he will vote "no" on the motion as he believes there are two separate issues in play here. He believes that Mr. Meeks' concerns should be addressed by the County Administrator's Office. Mr. Segobiano stated that this committee should not act on rumors or hearsay.

Chairman Sorensen called for a vote on the motion to amend the request.

Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen called for a vote on the previous motion as amended. Mr. Segobiano asked that Chairman Sorensen explain the amendment. Chairman Sorensen responded that it is a request for approval of the Critical Personnel hiring Requests submitted by the County Administrator's Office for all of the hiring requests except the Circuit Clerk's Office which requires further clarification.

Motion carried with Mr. Segobiano voting "no."

Mr. Owens presented a request for approval of an Amendment to Chapter 17 of the McLean County Code – County Procurement Policy – County Administrator's Office. He indicated that the Amendment clarifies procedures to follow, and takes Purchases out of the Travel Policy and places them into the County Procurement Policy.

Motion by Owens/Butler to Recommend Approval of
an Amendment to Chapter 17 of the McLean County
Code – County Procurement Policy – County
Administrator's Office.
Motion carried.

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

Ms. Bette Rackauskas, Chairman, Justice Committee, presented a request for approval to apply for an Adult Redeploy Grant through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (funding to be received through the U.S. Department of Justice/American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) – Court Services.

Motion by Rackauskas/Segobiano to Recommend
Approval to Apply for an Adult Redeploy Grant
through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information
Authority (funding to be received through the U.S.
Department of Justice/American Recovery and
Reinvestment Act) – Court Services.
Motion carried.

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Ms. Rackauskas presented two requests for approval, namely a request for approval of Renewal of Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County Office of the Chief Judge, Agreement 2011-55-008-K2, Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Grant – Circuit Court; and a request for approval of a renewal and amendment of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County State's Attorney – Agreement No. 2011-55-013-K2, Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Grant – State's Attorney.

Mr. Lindberg explained that this is the second year of a three-year contract that includes the Circuit Court, the State's Attorney's Office, and the Circuit Clerk's Office. He added that the Agreement for the Circuit Clerk's Office was not received in time for the Justice Committee meeting and will be considered at a Stand-up meeting prior to the Board Meeting on April 19th.

Motion by Rackauskas/O'Connor to Recommend Approval of Renewal of Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County Office of the Chief Judge, Agreement 2011-55-008-K2, Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Grant – Circuit Court and to Recommend Approval of Renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County State's Attorney – Agreement 2011-55-013-K2, Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Grant – State's Attorney.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Rackauskas.

Mr. George Gordon, Chairman, Land Use and Development Committee, advised that the Land Use and Development Committee brings no action to the Executive Committee as they did not meet this month.

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

Mr. Scott Black, Acting Chairman, Property Committee, advised that the Property Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

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

Mr. Stan Hoselton, Chairman, Transportation Committee, advised that the Transportation Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee. He reported that all of the bidding that took place for the Highway Department ran from -6% to -45% below the estimated cost. Mr. Hoselton added that everything was within the budget.

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

Mr. Terry Lindberg, County Administrator, advised that there is an item for discussion on the agenda, namely the organizational options for election administration in McLean County. He noted that the McLean County League of Women Voters has been studying this matter for some time. Mr. Lindberg indicated that the League has released a report on election issues, and has had conversations with a number of Board members. He stated that, at the request of a number of Board members, representatives of the League of Women Voters were invited to address the Committee, as well as County Clerk Kathy Michael and Mr. Paul Shannon, Executive Director, Bloomington Election Commission. Mr. Lindberg also noted that Attorney Bob Day, representative for City Election Commissions through the State of Illinois is also in attendance.

Mr. Lindberg introduced Ms. Julie Prandi, a representative of the League of Women Voters of McLean County who presented the League's stand on the organization of a County Election Commission. Mr. Lindberg advised that all the parties were invited to submit information for the packet. He noted that the League provided a report and Mr. Shannon distributed a one-page handout on the amount of money the Election Commission has turned back to the County over the years since the agreement between the Bloomington Election Commission and the County was put in place.

Chairman Sorensen advised that the intent of this effort is to share information and provide an opportunity for discussion. He reminded the members that there is no action item on the Agenda; rather this is an information item only.

Ms. Prandi thanked the Committee for inviting the League to make this presentation. She indicated that the action the League would eventually desire the Board to make is for the McLean County Board to pass a resolution that they would establish a County Election Commission in McLean County if and when the voters of the City of Bloomington voted to abolish the Bloomington Election Commission.

Ms. Prandi shared basic information about the establishment of a County Election Committee, as follows:

1. The County Board Chairman appoints the County Election Commissioners, and not a Circuit Judge Court which is true of City Election Commissions in our state;
2. The budget of County Election Commission, if it should be established, is entirely controlled by the County Board;
3. The sitting County Clerk has the option to be one of the three election commissioners in the County Election Commission.

Ms. Prandi summarized the League's points supporting a County Election Commission, as follows:

1. The current situation: According to Illinois Law, consolidation of Bloomington Election Commission (BEC) and election operations under the McLean County Clerk (CC) could happen either:
 - a. By adding the City of Bloomington to the jurisdiction of the McLean County Clerk; or
 - b. By the creation of a new body, a County Election Commission (CEC), which would take over all election-related duties previously handled by BEC and the County Clerk.

Ms. Prandi advised that, after a 2009 League study on the 2008 elections, the League of Women Voters of McLean County discussed these two possibilities. The consensus of the participating members was in favor of creating a County Election Commission. The League does not support consolidation into the County Clerk's Office.

2. Cost Aspects: LWV is convinced that one authority would save a significant sum for the County no matter how it is done. In Sangamon County, where the County Clerk took over the Springfield Election Commission, printing and publications expenses dropped 40% (four year average).

Ms. Prandi stated that she spoke with the County Clerk of Sangamon County about the savings and he told her that the "larger more obvious savings were supplies and publication costs that were reduced through our ability to purchase in volume and eliminating duplication of publication."

3. Eliminating Confusion: Having a single election authority would eliminate confusion about registration and voting; and make maintaining voter registration after moving, for example from Normal to Bloomington, easier. Many voters move within the County and do not realize that they need to

register and there may be a delay if the election authority is different. This would not be necessary if our County had only one election authority. Some candidates running for office in the County have voters residing in the jurisdictions of two different election authorities; an unnecessary inconvenience that would disappear if there were a single election authority.

4. Appointed rather than elected officials: Elections should be run by a County Election Commission, which appoints the director, instead of by an elected official like the County Clerk. Experience in running elections is important for smooth functioning, and appointed directors are more likely to have and maintain this experience than County Clerks, who have to run for office every four years.

Ms. Sally Rudolph, League of Women Voters, mentioned that the League position since the 1970's supports the position that policy administrators, such as those supervising election activities, should be appointed (in contrast to policy makers, such as legislators, who should be elected). She indicated that for people who stand for election or re-election, there is no way to evaluate their performance for the voter because they don't set policy. Ms. Rudolph noted that she disagreed with the Board member who was quoted in the *Pantagraph* as saying that it was easier to get rid of an elected official than an appointed official. She indicated that in her 40 years of participating and observing County government she found the opposite to be true.

5. Partisan issues with County Clerks: The position of Executive Director of CEC would be a non-partisan one, while county clerks are elected on a partisan basis. It is awkward for the sitting County Clerk to be in charge of counting ballots in a race where he or she is running. Under election commissions, the tallying of votes on Election Day is presided over by election commissioners, which represent both parties, while under County Clerks the law does not require representatives from both parties to observe while official vote tallies are made and checked. The system of selecting election judges has a more partisan aspect under County Clerks than it does under election commissions.
6. More Effective Operations and Staff: After the 2008 primary, voters filed complaints with Rep. Dan Brady that they were denied the vote because of delays in processing address changes from Normal (under the County Clerk) to Bloomington. The County Clerk wears many hats (taxes, birth, death and marriage records, as well as elections) and clerk staff from other areas are required to work in the election areas when needed, often doing overtime. In 2008, the County Clerk had difficulty doing tax work

and preparing for the early election presidential primary at the same time – a conflict a CEC would never have.

Election Commissions have a single focus: elections and everything connected to that, such as voter list maintenance. Veteran State Board of Elections official Jesse Smart believes elections commissions in general are more efficient and may give better service than County Clerks who run elections. Continuity in the top executive running an election authority is better provided by a CEC.

Ms. Prandi stated that because of state law, it is more complicated to establish a CEC. She indicated that it would be nice to be able to have a County Referendum and let the voters choose whether they want to do this or not. However, the way the state law is written, it makes it very difficult because if you have a city election commission, you can't just pass a referendum until the city election commission is abolished. Ms. Prandi noted that the two actions have to be considered at two separate elections. She explained that a referendum to get rid of the Bloomington Election Commission must be considered and passed during one election cycle and, if successful, it would be necessary to wait until the next election cycle to submit a referendum to establish a County Election Commission. Both referendums cannot be placed on the same ballot.

Ms. Prandi advised that the League believes that the most feasible way to do this is for the County Board to pass a resolution establishing a County Election Commission after the Bloomington Election Commission is rejected by the Bloomington voters. She indicated that this action should take place before November 2012.

Ms. Rackauskas asked who would create the County Election Commission. Ms. Prandi replied that the County Board could establish the County Election Commission through a referendum. She explained that according the state law, there are two ways to get a County Election Commission:

1. The County Board votes on and passes a resolution establishing a County Election Commission; and
2. By referendum which would have to be in a separate election held after first dissolving the Bloomington Election Commission in an earlier election.

Ms. Prandi stated that the League believes that there needs to be a process in the state law that says the County Board can create the County Election Commission once the Bloomington Election Commission no longer exists. She indicated that the League could work to get signatures to put a referendum on the ballot to get rid of the Bloomington Election Commission, but it would be impossible for the League to campaign for this unless they could tell the citizens

of Bloomington that the County Board has passed a resolution indicating that they intend to establish a County Election Commission.

Ms. Prandi indicated that if the County Board votes to establish a County Election Commission, then the County Board Chair is empowered to appoint three commissioners, two from the Republican Party (the majority party) and one from the Democrat Party. She noted that one of the commissioners could be the County Clerk if the County Clerk opted to do that. Ms. Prandi explained that the three commissioners are not full-time employees and only receive a small stipend of approximately \$8,000 combined salary for the year. She noted that the three commissioners would hire the Executive Director of the County Election Commission, an Assistant and whomever else would be hired under the Executive Director. The commissioners would not handle the day to day operation of the commission.

Ms. Prandi advised that the budget of the County Election Commission is entirely under the control of the County Board.

Ms. Prandi stated that if this happens the way the League envisions it, the election function would leave the County Clerk's Office. She added that the County Clerk's Office would continue to have many other functions, including taxes and records, and the election functions would be put into the County Election Commission. Ms. Prandi indicated that the one County Election Commission in the state is in DuPage County.

Mr. Owens asked if there is anything in the statute that the three commissioners on the County Election Commission could be sitting County Board Members. Ms. Prandi read the statute, 10 ILCS 5/6A-3 as follows:

"If the County Board adopts an ordinance for providing for the establishment of a County Board of Election Commissioners, the Election Commissioner shall be appointed by the Chairman of the County Board rather than the Circuit Court. However, before any appointments are made, the appointing authority shall ascertain whether the County Clerk desires to be a member of the County Board of Election Commissioners. If the Clerk so desires, he or she shall be one of the members of the County Board of Election Commissioners and the appointing authority shall appoint only two other members."

Ms. Prandi stated that she does not believe that there are any restrictions that she knows of except that two members of the commission are Republican and one is Democrat.

Ms. Rackauskas asked where the County Election Commission will be housed. Chairman Sorensen responded that the County would find space to house the commission as if it was any other County department.

Ms. Rackauskas expressed concern about the cost of preparing space for the Commission as well as the purchase of compatible equipment. Chairman Sorensen replied that likely the existing space where the Bloomington Election Commission resides would be the space used for a County Election Commission.

Ms. Prandi indicated that the County Clerk's Office and the Bloomington Election Commission have had different sets of machinery. She stated that they are in the process of making them the same (sic). Ms. Prandi added that machines have to be replaced on a certain schedule, and as machines are replaced, compatible equipment can be purchased.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any further questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Prandi.

Chairman Sorensen invited Mr. Paul Shannon, Executive Director, Bloomington Election Commission to share his thoughts and comments.

Mr. Shannon advised that he did not prepare a statement but would be happy to answer any questions. He stated that as an election commission, they are non-partisan. Therefore, the Commission does not take a position on anything that might be on the ballot. Mr. Shannon indicated that with the City Commission, the Commissioners are not allowed to hold any other elected office, which makes the Commission more independent from other influences.

Mr. Shannon noted that, to his knowledge, the County Clerk is not changing their equipment. The only change is that the County Clerk's Office is getting the same electronic Poll Book hookup equipment that the Bloomington Election Commission uses. Mr. Shannon added that the rest of the election equipment is not changing for either office at this time.

Mr. Hoselton asked what the frequency of problems are seen in terms of voter confusion. Mr. Shannon replied that about 100,000 voters are registered in the County and he believes that less than 100 voters may experience problems voting. He noted that the voters are sent a card apprising them of their voting location.

Mr. Owens asked Mr. Shannon how much time he spends researching new voter regulations to make sure the Bloomington Election Commission is in compliance with state laws. Mr. Shannon responded that he spends three hours a week looking up election laws to see what changes have been made or might be

changed. He noted that he is going to an educational conference to further his education for the Certified Election Registration Administrator (CERA) Program and will receive his CERA degree this year.

Ms. O'Connor asked Mr. Shannon what the pros and cons would be if we went to a County Election Commission. Mr. Shannon responded that a County Election Commission, ideally, could be more independent than in the office of a County Clerk. The perception is that a County Clerk has the possibility of becoming more political than a County Election Commission. Mr. Shannon indicated that the non-partisan aspect of having a County Election Commission would be a pro. He noted that the only con he can see is the necessity to convince the voters in the City of Bloomington to dissolve their Commission.

Ms. O'Connor asked Mr. Shannon if he felt the Bloomington residents would vote to get rid of their Commission. Mr. Shannon replied that he doesn't have any idea as to the outcome of such a referendum.

Ms. Rackauskas expressed concern with how to educate the public and the complexity of the process. She pointed out there would be an expense associated with educating the public.

Chairman Sorensen quoted the statutory language that will be on the ballot should the question go on the ballot:

“Shall the City Election Law be rejected”?

Mr. Shannon stated that in terms of education, the Election Commission is non-partisan and would not take a stand either way. He expressed his belief that the responsibility of educating the public would fall to the League of Women Voters since they are the ones proposing this change.

Ms. Rackauskas asked how many counties in Illinois have a single commission versus a dual commission. Mr. Shannon responded that there are 102 counties in the State of Illinois and there are nine city or county commissions, which represents approximately 40% of the voters of Illinois. He explained that the city commissions include Chicago, Peoria, Galesburg, East St. Louis, Aurora, Danville, Rockford and McLean. DuPage County has a county commission.

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

Chairman Sorensen invited Ms. Kathy Michael, County Clerk, to share her comments.

Ms. Michael indicated that she has a statement that she would like to read, as follows:

“We are here today because of an outdated study that was done three years ago by the Mclean County League of Women Voters, based upon a 2008 Election Study. It’s difficult to offer comment on this outdated and inaccurate study by the League. There are numerous problems with the research and logic that underpin this document. I think it is very easy to use that word “Study” and hope that people believe it was a legitimate investigation.

I would hope that voters and the McLean County Board would need more substantial proof of the methodologies applied during this study before anyone makes any monumental decisions affecting the electoral process in McLean County.

Regarding costs to the County, there are many costs to take into consideration before making this kind of decision, but cost should not be the determining issue.

The League also says in their position papers that voters in Bloomington and McLean County are confused about voting because there are two offices.

First, some voters are confused about voter registration in general. Very few voters are confused on where they register. Voters need two things; personal responsibility and voter education. Often many don’t know when and how to register, even though this issue is address often by our office and the media. Many don’t remember to change their registration if they move. Many think registration is somehow automatic if you renew your license plates. Many think voter registration is a permanent thing, like the issuance of a Social Security number. Some voters don’t know enough about the voting process in general. I urge the League of Women Voters to work with our office in our plans to continue efforts to educate the public about their voting rights, and spend less time in trying to rewrite the Illinois State Constitution.

It is not factual to blame voter confusion on the existence of the two offices.

Here are some more facts;

In these past four months since I have been in office, we have been tracking “voter confusion.” During Early Voting we had exactly four

individuals appear at our office to vote, only to find that they needed to take the elevator upstairs to the 4th floor to vote because they were City of Bloomington residents. Not much confusion there. We showed them where the elevator was and told them to press the #4 for the 4th floor. We had eight phone calls during a 120 day period asking about registration—from City of Bloomington voters. We transferred their call to the BEC office. We had one call from a City resident wanting to know where her polling place was on Election Day. We looked it up on the web and told her, rather than make her dial seven more phone digits.

We redirect voter registrations from one office to the other rather easily. We handle the paperwork rather quickly. All it takes is for either Kathy from BEC, or Kristin from my office, to ride the elevator up or down three floors and hand deliver the cards. We do it daily. Not a single voter was lost. Every voter got into our respective systems efficiently.

There are other mis-statements in the League's study.

The League infers appointed administrators are more efficient than elected officials. We actually have some very gifted administrators all around us in McLean County who have arrived at their posts via the voting booth and the choice of the People.

They say appointing people to important positions is less "political." This is a misguided and a dangerous thought. Politics and partisanship can take root anywhere, in anyone so inclined to mix their daily grind of administrative work with politics.

An elected Republican Judge doesn't send only Democrats to jail. I don't produce Birth Certificates with golden seals only to Republicans. My Elections Administrator is a Democrat.

Finally, if one really understands Elections Administration—one would know there is actually little a County Clerk can do to affect the outcome of an election. The process is so tightly controlled by State oversight and statutes that one would be foolish to think monkeying around with votes was a survivable risk.

The vast majority of votes cast in this state are administered by elected County Clerks. Yet there are few headlines reporting any electoral monkey-business. These facts belie the League's inference that elected County Clerks can't be trusted with elections.

Still the League thinks an appointed official would be *safer*. They say that appointed Election Commissioners have better supervision because they are “presided over” by a panel of Commission members.

But this argument, too, is weak.

The reason Election Commission heads *must* be “presided over” in this heavy manner is precisely because they are *not* Elected Officials under the direct scrutiny of the State of Illinois. I am “presided over” by the State Board of Elections, the McLean County Board, the Governor and Legislature of Illinois, and the 53,000 voters of McLean County.

The League wraps up their report by citing an often talked-about case of voter registration problems involving ISU in the 2008 election. Again I stress voter responsibility. My office has undertaken lengthy meetings and training sessions for ISU student Deputy Registrars. We hope this kind of outreach and training works and we invite the League to join us in educating voters.

The League suggests that having one Election Commission will have a miraculous effect on college students, making them more responsible and more organized in turning in their voter forms or turning out to vote. One ISU student voted in the last election.

In conclusion, I want to be very clear with my colleagues on the McLean County Board. The League of Women voters want the McLean County Board to pass this Resolution because they know they have a hurdle they can't jump over in order to achieve their purpose. That hurdle is **The Law**. The law of this state is very clear: Before any further discussion of reform or consolidation can take place, the residents of the City of Bloomington must vote by public referendum to disband their special Election Commission, which was put in place by the voters, 97 years ago. The Law, thank Goodness, makes this kind of retooling of a decades old tradition- *hard*- as it should be.

The League of Women Voters would like you to make their project easier. They want you to sweeten the deal for the Bloomington voters by promising to tear Elections away from the Clerk's office and hand it over to a new, mysterious, single Election Commission with an Appointee at the helm. They want you to enlarge and expand a vote by Bloomington residents at one election and make it “stick” on County residents as well—with no election. If Bloomington folks vote “yes,” you, the Board, would be committed to finishing the job without the need to run it past the voters of McLean County. They hope to use this “sweetener” to get the plan past

Bloomington first, and use the County Board's promise as a reassurance that it's all going to turn out for the good.

If the League of Women Voters truly believe their plan is wise, let them put it on a ballot and take their case to the voters. Directly. Vote on it. Up or Down. Yes or no. Follow the law.

That's the American way of Democracy.

I will tell you that should the administration of Elections be removed from the office of County Clerk that would be ok with me personally. However, I would miss elections. I love the process of participating, first-hand in Democracy. We do our work well, gladly, and professionally; but it is a lot of tough work to administer an election and we already have a lot of tough work to do every day. I would be neither upset nor offended by the Will of the People as expressed in the voting booths around this County.

But what would upset me would be if this dramatic change came about by taking away the rights of the voter.

Mr. Owens asked whether Ms. Michael or her elections employee spends a certain amount of time researching new and changing election laws. Ms. Michael responded that changes have been worked on since she came through the door. She noted that she works seven days a week, 14 hours a day except Sunday when she works two hours. Ms. Michael reported that her Director of Elections works strictly with the elections.

Ms. Rackauskas asked Ms. Michael if we were to take the Bloomington Election Commission and placed it under the jurisdiction of the McLean County Clerk, would the County Clerk's Office be able to absorb the responsibility. Ms. Michael replied that they would be able to absorb the Bloomington Election Commission responsibilities, but would likely require additional staff. She added that she and Mr. Shannon have a very good working relationship. Ms. Michael noted that the current situation is working very well since the changes that have been enacted in the last few years.

Ms. Rackauskas asked if Ms. Michael felt there would be an economic savings if the Bloomington Election Commission were assimilated into the County Clerk's Office. Ms. Michael responded that she doesn't know what the financial status would be. She would look to the County Administrator's Office for those answers. Mr. Lindberg replied that roughly speaking there are about 70 precincts under the jurisdiction of the Clerk and 52 under the jurisdiction of the Bloomington Election Commission. The staff complements are approximately the same for both offices. Mr. Lindberg stated that in terms of efficiencies, if you

are looking at precincts per staff person or investment per precinct, they are roughly the same.

Mr. Lindberg advised that if the election function were removed from the County Clerk's Office, it would be optimistic to think that every position that has a role in the election process would either go away or migrate to a new position. He noted that if the Bloomington Election Commission was removed, the existing staff would likely staff the new County Election Commission. Mr. Lindberg stated that it would be optimistic to think that the same amount of work could be done with half of the number of people. He indicated that in terms of major staff cost savings would range somewhere between a little less than one position to a little more than one position. Mr. Lindberg noted that the suggestion that there is a huge amount to be saved in terms of printing and advertising costs would not be the case in McLean County because the Commission and the Clerk get together and place joint ads.

Mr. Lindberg stated that you have to go back to the three issues that the League brought up, namely:

1. They think it is important to have an appointed chief election officer rather than one who is partisan elected;
2. They think it would eliminate confusion; and
3. They suggest that there might be a cost savings.

Mr. Lindberg referred to the single sheet that Mr. Shannon distributed that shows that the Bloomington Election Commission has given back a part of the money that the County is statutorily obligated to give them over the years. He reiterated that, based on what we are able to gather, there could be a staffing savings of a little less than one position to as high as a little more than one position. Mr. Lindberg cautioned that there is no way to know until there is some form of organization specified.

Ms. Rackauskas asked what the history is of the establishment of the Bloomington Election Commission. Mr. Lindberg responded that it is suggested that long ago there was a concern on the part of the City voters that something fraudulent may have occurred, which was the impetus. He indicated that it is a statute and authorization that has been around since 1914.

Chairman Sorensen advised that he wanted to make it clear that only the residents of Bloomington are allowed to vote on abolishing the Bloomington Election Commission. He noted that the process allowing the County Board to create a new County Election Commission in a one-step process is not available to the Board at this time. Chairman Sorensen indicated that this is a component to Senate Bill 1838, which is pending in state legislation. Mr. Shannon stated

that the County Board can still establish the County Election Commission after the City of Bloomington has abolished the Bloomington Election Commission. He noted that if there is no city commission, the County Board can establish a County Election Commission.

Mr. Lindberg indicated that the League is suggesting that, in order to motivate voters to vote to abolish the Bloomington Election Commission, the County Board pass a resolution saying that if the voters were to vote to reject the Bloomington Election Commission, the County Board promises ahead of time that it will move smartly to form a County-wide Election Commission.

Mr. Gordon asked Ms. Michael if her view that the League study is outdated is because of the changes made in the County Clerk's Office since she assumed the office. Ms. Michael replied that the study is outdated partly due to the changes and outlook in running the County Clerk's office and the Bloomington Election Commission. She offered to detail the inaccuracies and send out a report in the future.

Ms. Schafer asked if it is possible for these actions to take place prior to the November 2012 election and will it be accomplished. Mr. Lindberg responded that, under current statute, there will be a lag time. He indicated that the first thing that has to happen is to obtain an adequate number of signatures so that the question "Shall the City Election Law be rejected" can be put on the ballot. If the voters who are eligible to vote on that issue vote to reject the City election law, all of the election responsibility in the County would reside in the County Clerk's Office. Then, further action would have to be taken to create a County Election Commission either by action of the Board or by a referendum that would have to be put on a subsequent ballot. Mr. Lindberg advised that, under current statute, there is no way to flip the switch and have one go away and another one instantly appear. He stated that if Senate Bill 1838 might give other options for a county that has a city election commission existing in, such as McLean County, but Senate Bill 1838 has not moved and it is one of a number of proposed changes in election administration that may or may not appear later in the General Assembly cycle.

Mr. Owens introduced former Bloomington Mayor Jesse Smart who is currently a member of the State Board of Elections. He asked Mr. Smart if he has any comments on this issue. Mr. Smart responded that members of the State Board are reticent to make many recommendations. He advised that the time deadline of 2012 is impossible. Mr. Smart indicated that he would not suggest that the changes be made for cost savings. It should be done for efficiency and professionalism. Mr. Smart stated that the reason the change was made in DuPage County is because the County Clerk was sick of elections and simply turned the responsibility over to a County Election Commission.

Mr. Smart advised that State Board of Elections' staff in Springfield spends an inordinate amount of time just trying to keep ahead of the changes in Washington because in recent years the Federal Government has gotten into the elections process. He stated that it continues to get more complicated to maintain up-to-date information on elections, which is one advantage to a professional staff.

Mr. Smart indicated that he would be glad to meet with anyone to talk about anything in detail. He reiterated that the main reason to establish a County-wide Election Commission is to have a professional staff to keep up-to-date with all of the election changes that are taking place.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions for Mr. Smart. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Smart for his comments.

Chairman Sorensen reminded the Committee that it was a Member request that prompted this agenda item today. He stated that he hopes this discussion achieved the objectives of informing the Executive Committee about the debate and the different sides of the debate on the question.

Ms. Rackauskas asked why the League of Women Voters decided to take on this issue and what prompted their concern. Ms. Prandi responded that Leagues of Women Voters all over the United States study how elections are run. She noted that it is a normal activity and was not prompted by a specific concern of a member of the League. Ms. Prandi stated that part of the reason for preparing such a report is to talk about some of the issues and make improvements. She added that no matter what happens with this initiative, there are always improvements to be made and the League wants to help the election process run smoothly and continually improve.

Ms. Prandi advised that the 2008 report didn't have anything in it regarding this effort to combine the two election entities. Rather, as a result of doing the study, the League realized that different counties do different things. Ms. Prandi indicated that the League determined that combining the elections was a good idea. She noted that the League considered the options of having the County Clerk's Office take over all of the elections or establishing a separate county-wide election commission. Ms. Prandi stated that the League decided that a County Election Commission was preferred.

Mr. Segobiano noted that he was one of the individuals who requested this face-to-face dialogue and it has been very helpful. He informed the Committee that former Board Member, Pat Wannamacher, acting as Chairman of the Finance Committee, who negotiated with the City of Bloomington to have the Bloomington Election Commission return funds back to the County.

Mr. Segobiano indicated that he met with the League of Women Voters. He advised that he is in favor of having one election authority. Mr. Segobiano reported that if he were to vote today he would vote to have everything moved the County Clerk's Office. He pointed out that recently two Republican elected state officers, namely Ms. Judy Barnes Topinka and Mr. Dan Rutherford, recommended that their offices be combined to save the state money. Mr. Segobiano also pointed out the difficulties that arose after Bloomington dropped out of Metcom.

Mr. Segobiano advised that he favors having the election process be put under one umbrella to avoid confusion for the voters. He concluded that when we come together to exchange dialogue, it ought to be with an open mind and we should be able to use the word "compromise." Mr. Segobiano pointed out that the League is only willing to campaign for abolishing the Bloomington Election Commission if the County can promise the voters that they will obtain a County Election Commission in exchange. He noted that what is good for Normal and the County ought to be good for the City of Bloomington.

Mr. Segobiano announced that he had the privilege to attend the Drug Court Luncheon a couple days ago. He indicated that this is a wonderful program for which the County should be very proud.

Chairman Sorensen presented the March 31, 2011 bills as recommended and transmitted by the County Auditor for payment. The Prepaid Total is \$433,178.35 and the Fund Total is the same.

Motion by Segobiano/O'Connor to Recommend Approval of the Executive Committee bills as of March 31, 2011 as presented to the Committee by the County Auditor.
Motion carried.

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There being no further business to come before the Committee, the Executive Committee meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary