

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD  
KNOX COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

**August 23, 2017**

STATE OF ILLINOIS        )  
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COUNTY OF KNOX        )        SS

Proceedings of the Regular Meeting of the Knox County Board held at the Knox County Courthouse, Galesburg, Illinois on Wednesday, August 23, 2017, at 6:05 p.m.

The Meeting was called to order by County Board Chairwoman Pamela Davidson and upon roll call the following Members reported present:

District 1	Lyle Johnson
District 2	John Hunigan
District 4	Jared Hawkinson
District 5	Ricardo “Rick” Sandoval
District 2	David Amor
District 1	Cheryl Nache
District 3	Pamela Davidson
District 5	Brian Friedrich
District 1	Richard Conklin
District 2	Robert Bondi
District 3	Trisha Hurst
District 4	Sara Varner
District 5	Todd Shreves

And those absent:            District 4        David Erickson

Also present were County Treasurer Robin Davis, Sheriff David Clague, State’s Attorney John Pepmeyer and County Clerk Scott Erickson.

Sheriff David Clague delivered the proclamation. Chairwoman Pamela Davidson led the Members in the pledge to the flag. In lieu of a formal invocation a moment of silence was observed.

Chairwoman Davidson asked for additions or deletions to the agenda. She announced that there would be a closed session of the Personnel committee immediately following this Meeting.

Chairwoman Davidson asked for public comment. She asked that those individuals making public comments refrain from using personal names.

Jody Hanen addressed the Board concerning some ongoing problems at the Knox County Nursing Home. She has worked at the Nursing home for thirty years and has always been a union member. Previously she has addressed the Board about some problems that were resolved. Since

she has served as union president she has seen a lot of administrators come and go. There have been problems in the past. At one point, there was a crisis as the Nursing Home only had 82 residents. That was a bad situation but they made it through. They are facing another bad situation, but this one is different. They are short of employees. Good employees have left including union members, supervisors and their Director of Nurses. The Board needs to know that they have a serious problem at the Nursing Home. This is about the fifth time they have come to the Board to voice their concerns. The remaining Nursing Home employees are questioning if the Board Members are even listening. There is a shortage of staff working at bare minimum levels in all departments. CNA's and LPN's are working 12-15 hour shifts on a daily basis. They have talked to management and nothing is getting done. She has been embarrassed and humiliated by management on numerous occasions and feels they are using her position as union president against her. She has been in the office quite often to represent fellow union members as they are getting disciplined. There are serious issues going on and they have to make things better before another good employee has had enough and decides to quit. When she leaves this Meeting, she wants to know that the Board has listened and is working to make some of these problems go away. If they have questions they can contact her at any time.

Randy Lynch, staff representative from AFSCME # 31, addressed the Board and shared some of the same issues that Jody Hanen had presented. He is there to represent local Union #1047; many of those members were in attendance. He read from his prepared statement. Previously he had addressed some of these same issues and for a time it seemed that things were getting better but then everything returned to the way that it was before. Nothing really changed. This is the fourth time they have addressed the Board concerning issues at the Knox County Nursing Home. No way does this have anything to do with the current contract negotiations at the Knox County Nursing Home. Under the current administration, there have been several setbacks that have severe consequences that affect both union and nonunion employees and include the residents' safety and wellbeing. The current administrator has created a workplace atmosphere that generates division and discontent between the union and the management. There is now a management vs union and a union vs management concept instead of a team concept in which employees work together. It is a belief of the majority of employees that the administrator does not appreciate the employees and has no respect for them. This attitude is well known in the community to the point that the Nursing Home has been unable to recruit employees, especially in the nursing field. The word in the nursing home community is that you don't want to work for this nursing home because of the lack of respect for their employees and that management will jeopardize your licensing career due to management's inability to manage and always putting the blame on staff. Last year there were 275 pre-disciplinary investigations which resulted in 25 letters of discipline for violation. The result is much resentment and distrust between management and employees.

Staffing levels are a major concern. LPN's and CNA's are severely understaffed. Some are working 12 hour shifts on a regular basis. One nurse who is assigned to work weekends is scheduled to work 13 double shifts in December alone. One of the nurses recently worked 13 days in a row on the floor as a nurse. The burn-out factor is approaching dangerous levels. The principal concern is the health and safety of the employees and the residents. The current director of nursing submitted her letter of resignation due to the lack of leadership and the inability to manage. The rumor is that two other supervisors plan to resign as well.

It is also well known that the current administrator favors preferential treatment. One of her family members is currently assigned to a wing that is reserved for bariatric care and private care patients only. She has denied other patients and family requests to have their family members assigned to this wing. One family has moved their family member from this facility and into private hospice care. One resident who should be assigned to bariatric care was assigned to another wing which has resulted in less care and without the appropriate equipment for this patient.

The Department of Health and Public Services has issued several tags to the Nursing Home for the administrator not abiding by policies and failure to perform administrative duties. This is a serious issue that should be reviewed and investigated by the Knox County Board. It is also well know that due to the inability of the administration to promptly file paperwork with State and Federal agencies that the Nursing Home not been receiving the money that is owed to them.

The union has been willing to work with the administration on several issues. Many of these issues have been discussed before and management agreed to implement new ideas and policies. However, these ideas and polices are not always implemented. This has created a negative impasse between union and management. The administrator has created an anti-union atmosphere within the workplace. The administrator has created an unfavorable relationship between the union and management and even the residents of the Nursing Home. This is direct violation of federal and state labor laws. Appropriate action will be taken to address these issues. He thanked the Board for their time. He asked the Board to carefully consider these important issues. If there are questions, Members were encouraged to contact him.

Chairwoman Davidson thanked the Nursing Home employees and Mr. Lynch for presenting their concerns to the Board. She stated that the Board does listen.

Motion was made by Member Bondi and seconded by Member Amor to approve the following items of the consent agenda: 1) minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on July 26, 2017, 2) claims by Members for per diem and mileage for the meetings of August 2017 and other claims for per diem from meetings, and 3) sales tax and various taxes for the month of May 2017 in the amounts of \$119,133.48 and \$27,222.32 and public safety tax in the amount of \$186,128.39.

Member Hurst asked for a correction to the Board Minutes. The original motion was amended to include this correction. Roll call vote on the amended motion is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Sandoval and seconded by Member Amor to approve the appointment of Tara Wilder to the Knox County Board to represent District 3. This is the seat previously assigned to Michael Nelson, who submitted his letter of resignation at the July Meeting. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(13). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

County Clerk Scott Erickson administered the oath of office to Tara Wilder. She was officially welcomed to the Board and she took her seat.

Motion was made by Member Nache and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve the proclamation of diaper need awareness week to be observed September 25-October 1, 2017. Chairwoman Davidson read aloud this proclamation, a copy of which is included in the packets. Those interested can drop off diapers at the following locations: Pete's Auto Body, Klassy Kids, First Mid-Illinois Bank (all locations), and Learning Connections. Voice vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hawkinson and seconded by Member Bondi to approve the resolution on the deed of conveyance for PIN 12-20-100-032. A copy of this resolution is included in the packets. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Member Friedrich presented the monthly report from the Finance, Insurance, Treasurer, Judicial and Clerk committee. The monthly report is in the packet. The budget meeting was postponed. Another budget meeting will be held August 30, 2017. There were some bills that were not presented in the finance committee meeting and those were passed around for Board Members to review. There were also some bills from the Sheriff's Department. Some bills were pulled pending further investigation.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Sandoval to approve to bid and bring back for electrical and gas services. County Clerk Scott Erickson stated that this would be for a three year contract. The present contracts will soon expire so they are trying to do some preliminary work.

Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Member Friedrich reported that there was not a quorum present for the Sheriff, Jail, Mary Davis Home, Animal Control, and Nursing Home committee. Their action items are included under the Finance committee.

Motion was made by Member Hawkinson and seconded by Member Amor to approve the bid for two squad cars for the Sheriff's Department. Member Hawkinson reported that currently the Sheriff's Department has nine patrol cars with over 160,000 miles on them and two of those have over 200,000 miles. This bid is for two 2018 Ford Taurus police interceptor cars from Yemm Ford in the total amount of \$54,249.16 with the funds to come from the impound fees. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(13) Noes—(0). Pass—Sandoval—(1). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hawkinson and seconded by Member Johnson to approve the bid for two transport cars for the Mary Davis Home. The bid is for two 2016 Chevy Impalas from Yemm Chevrolet in the total amount of \$43,980 with the funds to come from the public safety fund. This purchase will replace a couple of their high mileage vehicles. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Nache, Amor, Davidson,

Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(13). Noes—(0). Pass—Sandoval—(1). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hawkinson and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the bid for the fuel purchase for the fuel tanks at the Mary Davis Home in the amount of \$1.797 per gallon for 40,000 gallons from Herr Petroleum. Bid information is included in the packets. Member Hawkinson reported that this bid is substantially lower than some of the other bids. The County has done business with this local company before and they provide good service. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hawkinson and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the vehicle purchase for Sheriff's Department. This vehicle is a 2016 Ford Taurus from Yemm Ford in the amount of \$23,455.00 with the funds to come from the public safety fund. This vehicle will replace a 2010 Ford Taurus with approximately 100,000 miles on it and really starting to show its age. That vehicle will be kept to be utilized by the local process server. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, and Shreves—(12). Noes—(0). Pass—Sandoval and Varner—(2). Motion carried.

Member Johnson presented the monthly Building, Courthouse and Annex committee Report. A copy of the report is included in the packets.

Motion was made by Member Johnson and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve change order #6 for the Courthouse Project in the amount of \$29,497.50. Information is included in the packets. Member Johnson explained that this is for exterior work that needs to be done and was not visible during the original inspection. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Johnson and seconded by Member Amor to approve the invoice from Klingner and Associates for the Courthouse electrical and plumbing project in the amount of \$13,352.75. Information is included in the packets. Member Johnson added that they have been getting this ready for bid and it was part of a budgeted item. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Member Hawkinson presented the monthly Sheriff, Jail, Mary Davis Home, Animal Control, and Nursing Home committee report. There was no quorum present at their meeting. No votes were taken. But the committee did review and discuss several items. Action items were forwarded to the Finance committee. A copy of the report is included in the packets.

During this meeting there were several comments from the audience. There were nine different speakers and eight of those addressed issues at the Nursing Home. It was similar to the discussion that Randy Lynch presented earlier in this Meeting. Another comment had to do with

a request to purchase a lawn mower for the grounds keeper at the Nursing Home. The current one was purchased in 1988.

The Mary Davis Home did receive a payment from the State in the amount of \$87,024.97. However, the State still owes the Mary Davis Home approximately \$630,656.70 for the current fiscal year. Perhaps, now that there is a State budget, funds will be distributed. They are researching grants from Ameren IP to replace the aging boiler system. The fuel pump at the Mary Davis Home has still not seen any attention from the contractors. The average daily July total census is 16.32 juveniles and of that amount 4.7 is the average daily total from Knox County.

The Sheriff's Department report includes the vehicles that are included on this agenda. At some point in the future the roof of the jail will have to be addressed. The Merit Commission has made some changes in their requirements. Now under certain requirements the Sheriff's Department will accept certain lateral transfers. This could save approximately \$14,000 per employee.

The Nursing Home has a total amount of fees that are owed in the amount of \$1,532,366. Some of that amount the Nursing Home will not recoup. A lot of that amount is included in the State budget woes. The committee did discuss staffing updates. There currently is a radio campaign and ads in the newspaper to try to recruit RN's and LPN's for the Nursing Home.

Member Hunigan presented the monthly Assessor, Zoning, GIS, Recorder's Office, Highway Department and Landfill committee reports. The minutes and reports are included in the packets. As regards the Landfill, they discussed some budget line item moves that were forwarded to the Finance committee. The Landfill is exploring the possibility of a 5 year contract with the City of Galesburg.

Motion was made by Member Hunigan and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the bid for pavement striping—Section 17-00000-00-KC. Information is included in the packets. Member Hunigan reported that Varsity Striping from Champaign, Illinois submitted their bid in the total cost of \$67,862.51. This is for over 1,000,000 linear feet. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hunigan and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the decision from the Zoning Board of Appeals for Case #CU-05-17—Conditional Use Permit for a gunsmith business in the "A" Agricultural Zoning District, filed by Tyson Woolridge. The decision from the ZBA is to approve this request. Information is included in the packets. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Hunigan and seconded by Member Amor to approve Zoning Board of Appeals Case #AM-04-17—Knox County Solar Energy Ordinance, Appendix C, to the Knox County Zoning Ordinance. The decision from the ZBA is to approve this ordinance. A copy of this ordinance is included in the packets. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson,

Friedrich, Conklin, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(13). Noes—(0). Pass—Bondi—(1). Motion carried.

Member Amor presented the monthly report from the Knox County Board of Health. He reported that he was not able to attend this meeting nor was he able to find someone to attend in his place.

Member Varner presented the monthly report from the Galesburg Convention and Visitors Bureau. Various organizations in Western Illinois worked together to promote coming to Western Illinois to view the eclipse. Some businesses on Seminary Street offered special discounts as did other Galesburg businesses as well. Amtrak ridership was doubled the day of the eclipse. She stated that soon the “Fireball Run” will be coming to Galesburg.

Member Hawkinson presented the monthly report from the 9-1-1 committee. This meeting was held August 17<sup>th</sup> at the Public Safety Building. The committee approved the purchase of a new generator to replace the emergency generator at the Public Safety Building. The current one is over thirty years old. It is crucial to have an emergency generator to make sure that the dispatch call center can provide service in the event of a power outage.

They discussed the 9-1-1 surcharges that the State added to phone bills in the amount of \$1.50 each. The State of Illinois does not protect these surcharges and therefore these funds can be used for other purposes without any oversight.

For the months of June and July the total number of 9-1-1 calls was 3,653. The majority of these calls were from cell phones as the use of land lines continues to decline. The total number of calls received was 21,860.

They also discussed a capital upgrade plan. Five years ago they would not have been able to begin planning this far into the future. They have invested \$700,000 for future capital expansion. The future plan is to improve some rural fire communication systems.

Ken Springer presented the monthly report from the Knox County Area Partnership for Economic Development. He expressed his thanks to the Board and Superintendent of Assessment Chris Gray and her staff for all the hard work on the Solar Energy Ordinance. They are seeing a lot more interest in alternative energy development. This is a very pro-active move for the County to adopt this ordinance that will allow this development to move forward on both a commercial and residential scale.

He spoke of an upcoming television show that will be filming in Knox County, called “Fireball Run.” This is produced by Amazon and is like a cross country scavenger hunt making stops in Knox County September 26<sup>th</sup>. They will be stopping in Knoxville and include shooting in Seminary Street in Galesburg. There will be eleven minutes of footage of Knoxville and Galesburg. This is a great opportunity for our community to show itself to a national audience. Congratulations to Jessica Linder from the Chamber of Commerce and Visitor’s Bureau for securing this television show. That took a lot of work to accomplish this.

August 31<sup>st</sup> the Partnership will be holding a public open house for the CEO Program. This is the dual credit program for high school juniors and seniors that teaches entrepreneurial education. Some students will be coming down from the Sterling program to address the students as to how this educational program has really changed their lives. This is one of the biggest

programs that they are currently working with. In the fall of 2018, this program will be extended to all of the five high schools in Knox County.

Member Johnson presented the monthly report from the Prairie Hills Resources Board. Their executive board meeting was the previous week. Because of getting accredited with the land trust, they had to adopt a new privacy policy, advocacy policy, and a conflict of interest policy. They are working on additional projects. They are doing a fundraiser that will be a craft beer tour which will be held November 5<sup>th</sup>. Last year they applied for a grant from Brown Field. They did not get that grant but are applying again this year.

Member Johnson presented the monthly report from the United Council of Counties. He reported that there was no meeting this month.

Member Hurst presented the monthly report from the Ad Hoc Committee for Technology Services. They met August 1<sup>st</sup> and a copy of this report is included in the packets. They discussed upgrades to Microsoft Office. They are looking into obtaining a price quote for a new phone system for the Landfill. The Landfill would like to have the option of accepting credit cards as they have had some problems with checks. The IT Department is trying to work with the Landfill to solve some internet connectivity problems. Likewise the Highway Department has had some similar problems. The licensing is complete for the new phones at the Nursing Home and the new phones should be operational soon. After 2020, Windows 7 will no longer be supported. The County will have to upgrade to Windows 10. IT is budgeting for upgrades to the Board Members I-pads.

Chairwoman Davidson presented the monthly report from the Personnel committee. She did not attend that meeting. There have been some hiring offers at the Nursing Home to replace the Director of Nurses who has resigned. Member Friedrich added that Circuit Clerk Kelly Cheesman has an opening that needs to be filled.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Hawkinson to approve the opening of the budget for specific line item changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Proposed line item changes are included in the packets.

Motion was made by Member Johnson and seconded by Member Friedrich to approve the proposed specific line item changes. Roll call vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Sandoval, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Bondi, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Hurst to approve the claims against Knox County, Illinois, for the period of July 27, 2017 through August 23, 2017 (ordering that invoices be accepted and approved and that the County Clerk and County Treasurer be authorized and directed to issue County Warrants in payment of the bills, with the exception of some bills that were pulled pending further investigation.)



Member Varner questioned some of the Veteran's bills. Specifically she questioned if these office personnel are required to wear uniforms. Member Friedrich responded that they are not required to do so. Member Varner questioned why taxpayers are paying for clothing and hats for these employees. Why is the Board approving the purchase of hats when hats should not be worn in the building? She has seen this practice for years. This bill is for \$227 for clothing and hats for these employees.

Chairwoman Davidson responded that the bill should be pulled for further investigation.

Member Varner also questioned the bill for water for the Veteran's Office. Don't they have access to the water fountain? If the water is just provided to the veterans, then that is within reason but if it primarily for the employees then why should taxpayers be paying for it? The County does not pay for water for any other employees with the exception of the Landfill employees. She also questioned some other bills from the Veteran's Office.

Chairwoman Davidson stated that those bills can be pulled.

Roll call vote to approve the claims against Knox County, Illinois, for the period of July 27, 2017 through August 23, 2017 (ordering that invoices be accepted and approved and that the County Clerk and County Treasurer be authorized and directed to issue County Warrants in payment of the bills, with the exception of some bills that were pulled pending further investigation) is recorded as follows: Ayes—Johnson, Hunigan, Wilder, Hawkinson, Nache, Amor, Davidson, Friedrich, Conklin, Hurst, Varner and Shreves—(12). Noes—(0). Pass—Sandoval and Bondi—(2). Motion carried.

## STATEMENTS OF GENERAL CONCERN

Member Johnson expressed his concern about current events in Charlottesville. He would hope for a more peaceful settlement.

Member Hunigan shared that same concern. He spoke of the need of social justice. People need to stand up for what is right.

Member Wilder and Member Hawkinson had no comments at this time.

Member Sandoval welcomed Member Wilder to the Board.

Member Nache also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board.

Member Amor also welcomed Member Wilder. He spoke of the situation in Charlottesville. Those who foster hate should be rejected. He also shared his concern for school children in Illinois who are returning to school when there is no school funding in place. The current division in the State between Chicago and downstate should be rejected. Residents should contact their legislators to tell them that we need school funding.

Chairwoman Davidson also extended a warm welcomed to Member Wilder. She is looking forward to her input. Regarding the employees of the Knox County Nursing Home, she stated that the Board does hear them.

Member Friedrich also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board. He looks forward to working with her. He also thanked Ken Springer for all of the work that he does. The Board is glad to have him and his staff.

Member Conklin also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board. He thanked Member Varner for picking up those items in the bills.

Member Bondi also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board. He looks forward to working with her. He thanked Member Hurst and Member Hawkinson for filling in for him.

Member Hurst had no comments as this time.

Member Varner also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board.

Member Shreves also welcomed Member Wilder to the Board.

The next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 27, 2017, 6:00 p.m., at the Knox County Courthouse, Galesburg, Illinois.

Motion was made by Member Friedrich and seconded by Member Sandoval to adjourn from this Meeting. Chairwoman Davidson reminded Members of a closed session of the Personnel Committee to be held immediately following this Meeting.

Voice vote is recorded as follows: Ayes—(14). Noes—(0). Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.