

WILL COUNTY BOARD
DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS MEETING
MINUTES

January 21, 2010

8:45 a.m.

Will County Office Building

Auditor's Office Conference Room

302 N. Chicago Street

Joliet, IL

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Adamic called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present were: Traynere, May, Brooks, Stewart, Winfrey, Babich, Wilhelmi and Adamic.

Absent were: Anderson, Deutsche and Seiler.

Also Present: Pam McGuire, Duffy Blackburn, Matt Ryan and Nick Palmer.

Present from State's Attorney's Office: Melanie Manning.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Stewart, second by Mr. Babich, to approve the minutes from the December 17, 2009 meeting. All in favor. MOTION CARRIES.

DISCUSSION OF JANUARY 21, 2010 AGENDA

PROCLAMATIONS

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. DuBois stated there are two cases this month. One is a variance for a fence height; the committee recommends approval. There was reference to some requests for fences that had been denied in the past; these are different circumstances. The other case is for an SUP for a lawn maintenance business and the committee recommends approval. The resolution is for the Landmark nomination for the Octagon House in Wilmington; the committee also recommends approval as well.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Adamic indicated the resolutions are just clean up; they are pretty self-explanatory.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr. Babich stated the first six resolutions are for altered speed zones. He provided an overview on the remainder of the resolutions.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Stewart indicated there is one resolution authorizing an intergovernmental agreement with Godley Park District for law enforcement services; we will charge a small fee for those services.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mr. Babich stated the only item on the agenda was replacement hires for Sunny Hill.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Brooks indicated there was discussion at the committee regarding cell phone towers.

Mr. Adamic stated the federal and state legislative priorities are on the agenda this morning.

Mr. Babich commented wind farms are becoming very popular.

Mr. Adamic indicated it is a good thing, environmentally speaking.

Mr. Palmer stated every year we put together the booklet for the federal agenda. We have a variety of issues we are working on, going after a number of projects such as water studies, law enforcement and road projects. We use this to explain to our congressional delegation what projects they will try to get through committee. We have brought in about \$3.5 million; that is a pretty good return on what we have spent.

Mr. Babich asked about the funding for the Ridgewood project.

Mr. Palmer answered it takes a few months before we get the money.

Mr. Adamic commented that has been an issue for many years; everyone deserves to have clean water.

Mr. Palmer indicated one of the issues on the agenda is funding for the mental health and substance abuse programs, especially as the Tinley Park Mental Health Center winds down. We are asking for funding for 2 projects for water studies. We are also requesting money for an economic development study; the CED is currently doing

an inland port study; this proposal will take that further. How do we take and market the county better to bring in manufacturing and also mitigate the trucks on the road? There is also a white paper on the Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization. This has been on the books to reauthorize, but it has not been done and there seems to be a push now. We would like to keep control locally. They are considering taking a portion away from counties and give it to the state; this would take away our authority and we want to keep the control here, where we can decide what is best instead of the state or some regional board.

Ms. May commented this issue is about state control versus local control. It has always been an issue but there will be a push to use that money at the state level.

Mr. Palmer stated as it stands right now, it comes to the County Board to decide how those dollars are spent; those contracts come through County Board.

Ms. Traynere arrived at this juncture.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Adamic asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Wilhelmi arrived at this juncture.

Mr. Ryan explained the modification to the Teng contract. The contract expired in March, but more oversight visits occurred after that date. The amount came in at \$150,000 but was negotiated to about \$60,000. We could not pay it unless we modified the contract; this will be paid out of the bond proceeds.

APPOINTMENTS

Other Business

Ms. McGuire advised the caucus of a meeting to be held on February 8 at 2:00 p.m. regarding the design blueprint for the integrated justice system, which would connect everyone together. The meeting is with a company who has experience in integrated justice systems.

Mr. Palmer commented this is part of the federal agenda we have had the last several years; it is a multi-phase, multi million dollar effort. This is part of the ongoing effort to look at what we have and hopefully get a blueprint out of this to move forward so we can make the courts and criminal justice system more efficient.

Ms. May indicated her district has the Intermodals and people have complained about the roads and the trucks but they put up with it because there are jobs for the people. There were also complaints about the jobs, being hired through a temp agency

and after 89 days they are let go. She requested information on the number of companies in the Intermodals, the number of employees, salary information and if those that are hired through a temp agency.

Mr. Palmer stated the goal of Workforce Services is to increase the ladder so people can get entry level jobs but also attract higher paying jobs. The study we are proposing is how we can attract more high-tech jobs. The CED study is doing that right now – getting an inventory of the companies.

Ms. Winfrey commented she would be interested to know how the pay compares to similar positions elsewhere in the county.

Ms. Traynere asked when the study will be completed.

Mr. Palmer answered either later this spring or early summer is when the CED study will be done. If we are fortunate to get the money, which is just a request at this point, we would get the money next year. We do not want people to stay at minimum wage jobs; we want people to be able to move up.

Mr. Stewart commented many of the warehouses received tax abatements. Are there requirement in the contracts?

Mr. Palmer stated that is why we are doing fewer incentives for warehousing.

Mr. Brooks indicated Senator Wilhelmi wants to start some dialogue as soon as possible regarding all these concerns that have been raised the last few weeks.

Mr. Palmer commented it would be helpful to have the CED at those meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Traynere, second by Mr. Stewart, to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 a.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.