

REPUBLICAN CAUCUS
302 North Chicago Street
County Board Committee Room
Joliet, IL

MINUTES

October 15, 2009

8:35 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER Mr. Bilotta called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

ATTENDANCE TAKEN BY STAFF:

Present were: Bilotta, Blackburn, Dralle, Goodson, Gould, Kusta, Moustis, Rozak, Singer, B. Smith, L. Smith and Weigel.

Absent were: Konicki, Maher, Riley and Wisniewski.

Also Present: Assistant State's Attorney Mary Tatroe; County Board Deputy Chief of Staff Melissa Johannsen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Kusta led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Dralle, second by Mr. Kusta, to approve the September 17, 2009 minutes. On a roll call vote, Dralle, Goodson, Gould, Kusta, Singer, B. Smith, and Weigel voting yes

MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Moustis and Mrs. Smith arrived at this juncture.

Land Use

Mr. Weigel stated he will need to amend Case 5866. There is a wrong description on the ordinance regarding the setback; it reads 320 feet and should be 30 feet.

Finance Committee

Mr. Kusta indicated some resolutions are clean ups in various budgets. There is also some grant money coming in, but no new money.

Public Works

Mr. Bilotta stated there are 31 resolutions this month; many are changing the speed zones at the request of the New Lenox Township Highway Commissioner; they are not county roads.

Judicial Committee

Mrs. Dralle indicated there is a presentation from the Legal Help Center that should be interesting. She also has the annual report from IDOC on the ADF. There are almost 400 checkpoints and the ADF passed everything at 100%.

Public Health & Safety Committee

Mr. Gould stated a number of the resolutions are renewing the third year of contracts. The first resolution allows us to get additional money from the state, which is a good thing.

Mr. Singer suggested asking Mr. Cicero if he would be able to provide an update to the board on the H1N1 vaccine.

Mrs. Dralle asked who is getting the shot.

Mr. Gould answered the shipments are piecemeal; they are coordinating when they get it in. Mr. Cicero has been informing the committee as well as the Board of Health.

Mr. Kusta commented there is a resolution under the Finance Committee regarding H1N1 grant funds.

Mr. Moustis suggested the update be done under the Public Health & Safety Committee.

Mr. Bilotta asked Mr. Gould to check with Mr. Cicero to see if he is prepared to provide an update today; if not we will schedule it for next month.

Legislative Committee

Ms. Goodson stated the veto session is going on; there was some talk about the fumigation bill. She received a call from the Forest Preserve District lobbyist; there is a bill regarding the airport, which was an amendment that was introduced yesterday to SB267. When there is condemnation on a piece of property and the Judge determines the appropriate amount for condemnation, the funds will be held in escrow. If the airport moves forward those funds will be paid to the homeowner; if it is not built those funds will be reimbursed to IDOT. This is giving a little piece of mind to homeowners if they are subject to condemnation but it also helps to complicate the whole process.

Mrs. Rozak arrived at this juncture.

Mr. Singer indicated these people are forced to go through the condemnation process but then they may not actually take the property from them. Who are the sponsors?

Ms. Goodson answered the sponsor for this amendment is Rep. Dugan; this amendment was introduced yesterday and is already on the second reading.

Mr. Singer stated the argument has been why can't people in eastern Will County be given the same rights as people around O'Hare? He understands what they are trying to do here – they will not take the property until they know they have a project.

Ms. Goodson commented it is referred to as just compensation; it leaves the door open as to what that is.

Mr. Singer indicated once condemnation is filed the value of the property is set; when the lawsuit is filed. The property value is based on 2009 value when the airport might not be built for 15 years; that is absolutely outrageous.

Ms. Goodson stated there are many unanswered questions; she will try to make a call and get more information before the board meeting.

Mrs. Johannsen suggested checking with Ms. Lyne to see if she has any information on this.

Ms. Goodson commented we are also still paying attention to SB1607.

Mr. Moustis indicated he had received a call that they are still trying to move it forward; it is something that is still profitable for the quarry owners.

Ms. Goodson stated Will County has been recognized as surpassing our 1 million pound mark of electronic recycling in just 2 years; this is something for us to be proud of.

Capital Improvements

No report.

Executive Committee

Mr. Moustis asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Singer stated there has been some discussion that the capital bill may be in jeopardy given the state's funding mechanism is not built on solid ground. It will be interesting to see if the state can promise that funds will ultimately be available to buy property from people if the capital bill is in jeopardy.

Ms. Goodson commented that is a good point

Mr. Bilotta indicated Attorney General Madigan believes that more and more communities are opting out of the video gaming.

Ms. Goodson commented there was a bill that was signed in August by the Governor allowing internet gambling.

Mrs. Dralle stated there is a report from Mr. Bill Mahar that deals with probation funding. Madison County laid off 31 people. There seems to be movement around the state where the General Assembly is not funding certain bills and the counties are taking drastic steps.

Ms. Goodson indicated she attended a Metro Counties meeting and the feeling of the metro counties is that probation has been underfunded; it should have been funded 100% by the state. Metro Counties' suggestion is that we all join together that we are not going to fund it out of county budgets to continue to provide for the probation department.

Mrs. Dralle commented laying off 31 people is a very tough move.

Mr. Moustis indicated we have reduced probation budget by 100% of the cut; we may end up doing that. There has been discussion that they will restore about 40% of that cut; we will not put it in their budget until we see that money.

Mrs. Dralle commented the expense for the Bischoff project could be up to \$175,000.

Mr. Moustis indicated we tried to fill that with courthouse parking lot money but the Chief Judge has indicated that is under his budget. We can take it out of the budget and they can challenge us. The money was not generated by the courts; it was generated by property the county owns.

Mrs. Dralle expressed concern about the probation department; they have always been understaffed. What happens when we cut probation and they cannot service any new unfunded mandate such as the Bischoff Law? What is our liability?

Mrs. Tatroe answered we would be in contempt if that is what the Judge ordered.

Mrs. Dralle asked Mrs. Tatroe to provide the liability issues in writing.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dralle, second by Mr. Kusta to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 a.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.