

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

MINUTES

November 19, 2009

8:35 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER Mr. Bilotta called the meeting to order at 8:44 a.m.

ATTENDANCE TAKEN BY STAFF:

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

Ms. Smith arrived at 8:45 a.m.; Mr. Blackburn arrived at 8:50 a.m. and Mr. Gould arrived at 9:05 a.m.

Absent were: Konicki, Maher, Moustis, Riley, B. Smith and Wisniewski

Also Present: Assistant State's Attorney Mary Tatroe

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mrs. Rozak led everyone in the pledge.

Ms. Smith arrived at this juncture.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Weigel, second by Mrs. Rozak, to approve the minutes of October 15, 2009. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES

Mr. Bilotta advised that PACE, RTA and Metra would be presenting their respective budgets at the County Board meeting.

Staff advised that the representatives were Gary Kirkman for RTA; Rocky Donahue and Rick Kwasneski for PACE and Carol Davis and John Partelow for Metra.

Proclamations

Mr. Bilotta stated that there are no actual proclamations. We would be recognizing Joe Babich, Frank Stewart and Jim Moustis for their reappointments to the NACo Steering

Committees as well as County Clerk Nancy Schultz Voots for receiving the 2009 Telly Award for Election Judge Training Video and Mr. Smolich for his receipt of the Presidential Unit Citation Medal.

Land Use

Mr. Weigel stated he did not have any zoning cases so there would not be a public hearing.

Mr. Weigel advised that he had three resolutions. Resolution 09-367 is regarding CMAP and the water supply planning group. We are taking the position that we don't agree with some of the Metropolitan Agent in Planning recommendations. They are trying to limit some of the growth in the region and we would like to retain local control so we are objecting to some of their recommendations. Chicago would like less expansion out, maintaining control of the water supply.

Finance Committee

Mr. Kusta advised we would be passing the 2010 budget this month. This has been a long hard process. We will have a public hearing on the budget.

Mr. Bilotta stated that Diane Ross from the University of IL Extension has signed on to talk regarding the budget.

Mr. Bilotta asked Mr. Kusta to explain, due to all the inquiries the board members have received especially regarding 4H, what we told them.

Mr. Kusta replied that we told them there were no funds in the 2010 budget. We will revisit this issue again in March, April or May and if there are any new found revenue sources to give them some money then we would be happy to do so. We understand the importance of the program but at this point we have to scale back.

Mr. Bilotta stated there are 11 other social programs that we cut funding on.

Mrs. Dralle stated that we gave them \$25,000.00 in 2009 and she supports the cause.

Mr. Blackburn arrived at this juncture.

Mr. Kusta replied yes. He also stated that there were misconceptions that if we did not fund them, they would have to close their shop. Mr. Kusta felt they were misled and hopefully we will find some money in April or May of next year to help them out.

Mr. Bilotta stated we definitely support their cause.

Mrs. Rozak stated that Mr. Moustis had stated at the Committee of the Whole that we would revisit it and inquired if this is what Mr. Kusta stated at his meeting or what Mr. Moustis indicated.

Mr. Kusta replied it was both. I told them no and Mr. Moustis said let's look at this in the future and at the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Moustis again stated we would look at in the future.

Mr. Kusta also indicated that he would revisit the issue at the Finance Committee.

Ms. Goodson stated that we are looking at this early in the next year because the money that is in our budget from our previous budget year, that is when their money will run out or their fiscal year will end.

Mr. Kusta advised that we were trying to line up with the State's fiscal year so that we could give them a commitment of some dollar amount so then they could pass that onto the state so the state would be able to include it in their numbers.

Mr. Bilotta stated the money we gave them carries them to the end of June.

Mrs. Dralle stated that there are 11 other service agencies that also requested funding from us. She requested a list of those other 11 agencies so that we have an idea. She is an advocate of the University of IL Extension but it has to be fair and equitable across the board. If there are other agencies that is something we need to look at when it comes back to Mr. Kusta's committee.

Mr. Kusta stated that once we open the door we will receive more requests for money.

Mr. Singer advised that he has received numerous calls, including Dr. Ross. He explained to Dr. Ross that there is no money in the budget and we have to make choices.

Mrs. Rozak stated they understand that they will have to do more fundraising.

Mr. Kusta left at this juncture.

Public Works

Mr. Bilotta advised that Resolution 09-394 attachments have to be amended because it did not include Crete Township's share of the cost and there was a typo.

Mr. Bilotta further advised that there are resolutions for Laraway Road speed limits. We have revisited the speed limits on Laraway Road. We started at 50/55, reduced them to 40, revisited with a study and are now increasing the limit to 45 in some areas. There

are no studies indicating that the lower speed limit increased accidents. When we do speed studies, they are based on the safe flow of traffic. There will be two speakers.

Mr. Singer stated that Mr. Weigel and Representative Kosel worked hard to have the speed limit lowered but we might have been overachievers in moving lower.

Mr. Singer believes moving it back up some will help.

Ms. Smith inquired are we not raising it any higher than 45?

Mr. Singer explained that in the action we are taking today Route 52 to Gougar would be 50 mph; Gougar east to LaGrange/Route 45 would be 45 mph. This is more consistent with the study.

Mr. Bilotta stated we could also do speed studies every year especially if there is more development.

Judicial Committee

Mrs. Dralle stated there were no resolutions but they were proceeding with administrating the adjudication process. The Health Department, Land Use and Sheriff's Department are continually meeting. They are attending municipal hearings and are looking into potential software.

Mrs. Dralle further advised that hopefully by spring there will be a hearing officer on staff and that he will be hearing some of these ordinance violations.

Mr. Bilotta inquired if the hearing officer has to be a judge.

Mrs. Dralle replied no, it didn't. This is quasi judicial setting and not a court setting. It is for ordinance violations. If the person comes before the hearing officer and doesn't like the ruling then it goes into the judicial hearing. They can appeal to the courts if they disagree with the adjudication but this will free up the courts otherwise.

Mrs. Dralle stated this should be a cost saver and personnel saver and it will give us a tool to remedy some of these minor infractions.

Mrs. Dralle advised that they continue to move forward with placing laptops in the Sheriff's vehicles.

Mrs. Rozak inquired if the hearing officer needs to be a lawyer.

Mrs. Dralle replied yes. I believe the County would want an attorney. Having the ability to fine someone or issue a ticket on site eliminates a lot of work.

Ms. Smith stated that a lot of the municipalities are starting to do this and it is a magistrate forum.

Mrs. Dralle advised that we are using this as a pilot program and will hopefully take it to legislative committee to look into using for juveniles also.

Ms. Goodson stated that they will be preparing the 2010 Legislative Agenda and we should add this to it.

Public Health & Safety Committee

Mr. Bilotta stated that they have grant dollars from flood disaster funds which is Resolution #09-398.

Legislative Committee

Ms. Goodson advised that they removed the resolution at the Executive Committee regarding the Ridgewood project as the funding will be from various sources. The IEPA were going to provide a low interest loan but have now advised that it will be an interest free loan. The project is moving forward. This is for the final two phases but does not include hook up. Hopefully, some CDBG funds will help with some of those connections as well as forming an SSA.

Mr. Gould arrived at this juncture.

Ms. Goodson advised that since the acquisition of the EJ& E rail by CN, they have a board member and a new chairman, Daniel Elliot. He came to the area for a visit regarding the CN issue. He has met with the TRAC group. There will be additional mitigation and Mr. Elliot could not believe the lack of cooperation from CN. They did make two concessions to fund an overpasses at Odgen Avenue and another one.

Ms. Goodson advised that Melissa Bean reintroduced TRAC bill which will permit the Surface Transportation Board to also take into consideration how these transactions affect these communities because at this point the rules don't give them that authority. They are also looking to implement the STAR line.

Ms. Goodson stated nothing came out of the veto session. They expected the construction debris to move forward but Rep. Curry did not rush it. The environmental groups are on board.

Capital Improvements

Mrs. Dralle stated that Wight is still moving forward on the needs assessment.

Executive Committee

Mr. Bilotta stated that they met with AON and advised that we are renewing with them and there will be an increase. We will be going out for bid next year.

Mr. Bilotta advised that AON has helped reduce the number of worker's compensation claims. This is a huge cost and we are going to have to start looking at this, even in our union negotiations. We have 100% comp so there is no incentive to get back to work .

Mr. Bilotta stated that in Resolution #09-403 that we will be getting over \$3 million in grants. \$1 million went for the energy efficiency conservation strategy. This went through the CDBG committee and we are formulizing it so we can get the funds.

Mr. Bilotta advised there is a replacement hire in the Highway Department, a snow plow driver.

Mr. Bilotta advised that there were approximately 100 people at the video gaming public hearing held on November 18th. 90% of those people were unions (150 and AFL/CIO) who were in favor of this capital bill.

Mrs. Dralle inquired if we could provide some hard numbers on how much money this would bring to the county. These are not major dollars.

Mr. Wisniewski arrived at this juncture.

Mr. Kusta returned at this juncture.

A motion was made by Mr. Kusta, second by Mr. Weigel to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

MOTION CARRIES