

WILL COUNTY BOARD
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

September 6, 2011

Will County Office Building
County Board Committee Room
302 North Chicago Street
Joliet, IL 60432
9:30 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kusta called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present were Members: Maher, Dralle, Gould, McPhillips and Kusta.

Absent were Members: Zigrossi and Wilhelmi.

Also Present: County Board Chief of Staff Bruce Friefeld and County Board Deputy Chief of Staff Melissa Johannsen.

Present from State's Attorney's Office: ASA M. Manning.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Gould led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Maher, second by Ms. McPhillips, to approve the minutes of the Aug. 2, 2011 meeting. All in favor. MOTION CARRIES.

OLD BUSINESS

Request for Appropriations to Fund Security for Executive Centre for Public

Defender

Mr. Astrella stated there had been a meeting with Joliet City Manager Tom Thanas and the chief of police. If there is a problem, a call to 9-1-1 will summon officers. The police cannot patrol the parking deck because it is privately owned.

Mr. Kusta asked if anyone had spoken to John Bays, the owner of the property.

Mr. Palmer replied that Mr. Thanas was going to meet with Mr. Bays. Some additional security cameras have been installed, but that is reactive measure, not a proactive one.

Mr. Kusta commented that the members of the committee seem to be convinced there is a security issue. Is the county willing to pay for security? Should the property owner be responsible for that expense? Or should there be some split? Because there has yet to be a discussion with Mr. Bays, could the decision be delayed for another month?

Mr. Astrella noted the cost for around-the-clock security was estimated at \$60,000, the sum might be halved if security was provided only during the day time. It is more important to have security during the daytime when the Public Defender's office is open than at night.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the problems happened during a particular time frame.

Mr. Astrella answered the crimes happened while the staff was in court. In the evening, the homeless tend to spend a lot of time in the parking deck. When the staff returns in the morning, the homeless can be found sleeping in the deck and its stairwells.

Mrs. Dralle asked which county offices were housed in the building.

Mr. Astrella answered the Public Defender, the Land Use Department and the Recorder of Deeds. There also was a private law firm.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the three county departments had enough money in their budgets to pay a portion of the bill for security.

Mr. Rafac replied that it would be funded from the rental line if that was the path the County Board wanted to take. It would be added to the existing leases. If there was a stop-gap solution, the same thing would be done.

Mr. Kusta asked if the final two months of the fiscal year were the current concern.

Mr. Astrella replied yes.

Ms. McPhillips noted the other court-related county buildings had security.

Mr. Kusta stated there should be a concrete dollar figure for the committee to approve.

Mr. Palmer suggested the County Executive's office should contact Mr. Bays, and the Joliet police should be allowed to do their job. If the police were summoned regularly, perhaps the homeless and the criminals might stay out of the parking deck. There also is a bigger issue of security in the county's buildings. Should all of them have security? And if so, what type?

Mr. Maher asked if the Joliet police would patrol the deck on a regular basis.

Mr. Palmer replied yes. There is a golf cart that patrols the city's lots. The employees of the Public Defender's office should not have to police the parking deck.

Mr. Maher asked how many police reports had been filed each month regarding damaged vehicles.

Mr. Rafac replied that he was unaware of the issue until it was raised by Mr. Astrella.

Mrs. Dralle asked if there had been any insurance claims.

Mr. Rafac answered there hadn't been any claims.

Mr. Kusta noted it was a leasing issue and that it would be brought back to committee in October.

Outside Audit Presentation by Baker Tilly Virchow Krause

Mr. Rafac stated it was the first year with a new audit firm. The contract with Baker Tilly was a one-year agreement with two one-year extensions. The Finance Department recommends the renewal of the contract.

Ms. Acker explained that Baker Tilly did audit or consulting work for more than 500 units of government primarily in the Midwest. The audit process started in the middle of winter and will begin again soon with a look at internal controls, systems and processes for the identification of any weaknesses. Baker Tilly issued a "clean" or "unqualified" opinion on the county's financial statements, the highest level of assurance provided in an audit report.

Other Old Business

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for intent to Abate Property Taxes for Archer Wire International

Corporation

Mr. Greuling stated the company currently is located in Bedford Park, has a facility in northwest Illinois and is in the process of buying a company in Michigan. The corporation's goal is to consolidate the three operations, and the leaders have been trying to find a new location. They have identified a building at 8550 W. 185th Street in Tinley Crossing. The 60-year-old company manufactures wired goods for products such as barbeque grills and baseball catchers' masks. Everything is made in America. The company also is considering sites in Michigan and Indiana. The company has requested a tax abatement, and it qualifies for a four-year, 50% abatement under the Center for Economic Development's guidelines. The County Executive's cover letter indicates a total abatement of more than \$230,000, assuming that the company would pursue tax abatement from Tinley Park and the two school districts.

Mr. Kusta asked if the company had requested those tax abatements.

Mr. Greuling replied that the company had not. The company is working with Tinley Park on an incentive package, however.

Mr. Kusta asked if the county typically considered abatements after the other municipalities and school districts had revealed their position.

Mr. Friefeld stated that has been the policy.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the members of the committee typically received an evaluation of businesses requesting abatements.

Mr. Greuling replied yes.

Ms. McPhillips noted companies typically receive a three-year, 50% abatement. Is the four-year abatement a reflection on the company's score?

Mr. Greuling replied yes, adding it was a combination of the 75 jobs created; the 25 jobs retained or transferred; the total payroll of about \$5 million; and the average employee's salary of \$41,600.

Mr. Friefeld noted that the applicant had yet to decide if it would seek an abatement from the school district or the village. Could the decision be postponed until October?

Mr. Greuling replied the company was in negotiations for a building and would like to have a contract by the end of September. Tinley Park currently is preparing its offer, and the school districts might not have an answer by Thursday.

Mr. Friefeld stated it might be difficult to move the issue forward without knowing Tinley Park's position.

Mr. Greuling commented that he might have that information later in the day.

A motion was made by Mr. Gould, second by Ms. McPhillips, to send the request for the abatement to the Executive Committee. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Request for Transfer Within the Sheriff's Corporate Budget

Deputy Chief Romeo asked for a transfer of \$21,585 from machinery and equipment small value to machinery and equipment. The Adult Detention Facility needed two new ovens. The existing ovens are more than 20 years old, and the cost of repairing them was higher than the cost of buying replacements.

A motion was made by Mr. Gould, second by Ms. McPhillips, to place a resolution authorizing the transfer of funds on the County Board agenda. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Request for Assignment of Tax Sale Certificates

A motion was made by Mr. Maher, second by Mrs. Dralle, to assign the tax sale certificates. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Request for Resolution Authorizing the County Executive to Execute Necessary Documents for the Delinquent Tax Program

A motion was made by Mrs. Dralle, second by Mr. Maher, to authorize the County Executive to execute necessary documents for the delinquent tax program. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Request to Present Auditor's Quarterly Report at September County Board

Meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Gould, second by Ms. McPhillips, to place the request to present the Auditor's quarterly report on the County Board agenda. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Request for Appropriation of Grant Funds in Health Department Budget

Mr. Cicero explained the one-time funding of \$28,500 was from the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority and would be used to buy new computers along with a television and some DVDs to be used for educational purposes. The money must be spent by the end of September.

A motion was made by Mr. Gould, second by Mr. Maher, to place a resolution on the County Board agenda appropriating funds in the Health Department's budget. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Authorize State's Attorney's Office to Review Executive Session Minutes and Concur with their Recommendation

Mr. Friefeld stated the rules regarding the audio of Executive Session minutes are different from the rules for regular minutes.

Ms. Tatroe noted the audio tapes for Executive Session minutes must be saved for 18 months before they can be destroyed.

Mr. Friefeld stated the regular session minutes can be destroyed after they have been approved.

Ms. Tatroe stated the County Board must make a decision to destroy them.

Mr. Friefeld indicated there should be a policy resolution on the matter.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dralle, second by Mr. Maher, to authorize the State's Attorney's office to review Executive Session minutes and concur with their recommendation.

All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.

Update on County Finances

Ms. Hennessy distributed a packet of material detailing the county's finances through July. The year-to-date revenues were \$83.3 million, and adjusting for accruals brings it to \$97.4 million, a figure that is roughly 57% of the county's budget. The year-to-date expenses are \$96.9 million, and adjusted for accruals the figure is \$99.9 million, or 58% of the budget. There is nothing alarming in either revenues or expenses. The revenue is coming in, even from the state. On the expense side, the county is within \$200 of what was spent year-to-date last year. As far as salaries are concerned, there are just two departments that are over. One is the County Clerk and that is due to the timing of the elections. The other is the Sheriff's Adult Detention Facility, but the other two departments are down so it is a matter of moving funds.

The cash balance at the end of July is \$42.4 million and is a little above this point last year, perhaps because of the timing of payroll.

Ms. McPhillips asked for an explanation of the accrual of \$7 million in the revenue.

Ms. Hennessy replied it was the quarterly transfer of FICA and IMRF.

Mr. Maher noted the RTA Tax was on Page 8 and asked if the total was \$9.3 million.

Ms. Hennessy answered yes.

Mr. Maher asked how that compared to previous years.

Ms. Hennessy replied it is the same. There is a two-month lag, and RTA is about \$1.4 million a month.

Other New Business

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Kusta commented that the new budget would be presented at the September County Board meeting, and there will be at least two or three meetings in October so the Finance Committee can consider it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Gould, second by Mr. Maher, to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.