

Members Present

Mr. Bossert, Mr. Liehr, Ms. Bernard, Ms. Schmidt, Mr. Tripp, Mr. LaGesse, Mr. James, Mr. Vickery, Mr. McLaren, and Mr. Washington

Members Absent

Mr. Whitis

In Attendance

- **Board Members**

Mr. Arseneau

- **Department Heads**

Kevin Duval, Bonnie Schaafsma, Dick Campbell, Lynn Mackin, Roger Diercks, Bob McElroy, and Lori Gadbois

- **Others**

Ed Meents

- **Media**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Bossert, at 9:00 a.m. Quorum present.

2. Public Comment

3. Approval of Minutes – June 24, 2010

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Tripp and seconded by Mr. James. Motion carried with a voice vote.

4. Presentations

5. Legislative

Ed Meents stated that there have been two meetings. One was a special meeting on the fourth Monday in June in Springfield and the topic of that meeting was the health insurance programs. There is a long way to go on that, but they are beginning to study the various kinds of population and needs. The second meeting was at the Eagle Ridge Resort which was at the beginning of this week. The primary discussion that came out of that was pertaining to the State's Attorneys allocation from the State that has been cut back to \$4 million dollars; it had been \$14 million. The consensus is that it will be the counties' responsibility to make up the pay for the lost money. The reason for that is that the State's Attorney; although, theoretically works for the State he also does work for the County. The education seminar was about how counties can control costs and where the money is going to come from to offset those expenses. It was suggested to take a closer look at collecting court fees; there may be some revenue there.

- **Resolution Opposing HB5055**

Mr. Bossert stated that this particular matter was brought up in the Criminal Justice Committee and he is bringing it up with this committee and asking for some action. In the packet is an email that came from the Illinois Association asking for some support in asking the Governor to either amendatorily veto or outright veto this particular bill because of its provision that would take the foreclosure sale process away from the local Sheriff and would open up the process to any business, at the discretion of the court or the holder of the mortgage in the foreclosure process. Sheriff Bukowski outlined in the packet some particulars in terms of the money it may generate this year for our County and what services our Sheriff's office provides. There are several letters in the packet from other counties pointing out the hardship that this may cause to local counties. He was in contact yesterday with Senator Dahl and expressed the same concern and was

asking him how he saw the landscape here. Senator Dahl said that there is a movement to encourage the Governor to change the bill or veto it outright. The Chicago Tribune print-out that is also in the packet points out that there seems to be a movement even among the bill sponsors that they are back pedaling on this bill and would support some changes. He is asking for a motion to draft a resolution that would support a letter from him and the Board to the Governor asking for his veto of this measure.

Mr. James made this motion and Mr. Washington seconded it. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Discussion

Ms. Bernard asked how our other three area state reps and senators voted on this bill.

Mr. Bossert stated that it passed unanimously in both house of the legislature. He thinks what happened is that this particular provision was inserted as an amendment late in the game and it did not draw much attention. It passed very quickly and did not seem to be controversial at all until Counties Association starting to look at it and realized the impact that it could have. Senator Dahl said that if we are going to do something we need to do it quickly because the timeline is running in terms of how soon the Governor has to act on this bill.

Mr. Washington said to keep in mind that we are suffering through a horrendous loss of income throughout the US and looking at the dump that has already been made on us for picking up the balance of the monies that we pay to the State's Attorney, he thinks it is ridiculous to sit back and accept something like this when we are getting no support from the State from almost all of the programs that we have had in the past. He cannot understand even accepting the thought of having another item taken away from the County that generates income.

Mr. McLaren stated that he is in full support of this resolution. Beside the money aspect of this, our Sheriff Department is trained for all the things that the victims of foreclosures go through; such as, finding storage for their personal items.

Ms. Schmidt stated that the flip side of this is that the reason they wanted to pass the bill in the first place is because private companies can often put homes back on the market within weeks after foreclosures compared to months with the Sheriff's department. Quicker proceedings may save families money and could improve surrounding property values and save the municipalities the cost of upkeep of abandoned homes. The issue of the upkeep of abandoned homes was discussed at the PZA meeting. She hates to get rid of the whole bill if there is some way it could be worked out where the Sheriff's Department still does their part and then find a way to expedite it quicker. She doesn't think the whole bill is bad; we have to find a happy medium between all of it.

Ms. Bernard asked if the Governor could veto parts of the bill. Do we need to modify the resolution?

Mr. Bossert stated that the Governor can modify any bill in the process. He thinks the committee gave him enough discretion that he can go ahead with it. He would encourage amendatory veto as it concerns the revenue portion of this bill. He will look at how the other counties worded it and follow suit. With the committee's permission he will get a letter off right away and not wait for the full board meeting. We need to adopt it at the full board.

The committee gave him permission to do this.

Mr. Bossert stated that he is working with our Planning Department to work on some language for a cell tower bill that we could see introduced. We were hoping for some legislation that would alter the terms of county control over cell tower siting; in the end that did not happen. There is still an opportunity to reintroduce this. He thinks we need to be proactive on some legislative issues and work with our legislators to get some language that we want rather than reacting after the fact and complaining when things don't go our way. Next month between PZA and this committee we will have some model language we would like to see introduced. He hopes we do more of that in the future.

Mr. Vickery stated that two things came out of the seminar in Galena that stood out to him. One is kind of important because we are fighting the budget battle. It was clearly stated that the Sheriff does not have to patrol the highways. He has no statutory requirements to do that. His statutory requirement is to cover the Courthouse and the Jail. We will need to take that into consideration when we work on the budget. The other thing that came out of the seminar is that the U of I people have done a study and it shows that Illinois is not a high tax state; although, the political process promotes the perception that we are a high tax state. The facts do not support that. Also, we are not a high debt state if you take pension out of it. These two things from the seminar stuck with him as the most important things that came out of the conference.

Mr. Liehr stated that he felt very comfortable with the fact that many of the recommendations that were coming from the Stevenson County Chairman were things that we already acted on; such as, hiring a private collections firm and shifting money from special funds. There were also some things that we need to look at that he will be discussing with the Chairman.

6. Information Services

Mr. Duval did not have anything to report to the committee.

7. Health Department

Ms. Schaafsma did not have anything to report to the committee.

8. Pledge for Life

9. Schools

10. Veterans Assistance Commission

- **Monthly Report**

The Committee reviewed the June 2010 VAC report.

A motion to accept the "VAC Report for June 2010" was made by Mr. Vickery and seconded by Mr. McLaren. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Mr. Campbell stated that they received a \$45,000 Illinois lottery scratch-off grant and a KCCSI grant for \$23,000 for dental, eyeglass, and hearing aids; this money is already spent. The dentist took the lion share of that. Hearing aids are going for \$2900 a piece which is a cheap price. Unemployment has been reinstated for most of his clients so a lot of people will be going off of his rolls but they will be back again when unemployment kicks off.

Mr. Bossert asked if there has been any progress on the relocation of the local veterans' clinic.

Mr. Campbell stated that they are looking at two different sites. He doesn't know what is coming. They have not put out the van drivers for the vans going from Manteno to Hines and returning. From what he understands there will be seven full-time drivers and one-part time driver. They have the vans but are not ready to start on the bids for the jobs. People have been after him about the Veteran's Court. He doesn't know anything about it. This is for veterans who are convicted of nonviolent crimes and in case they are related to PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) there is a special court set up for that. That is all he knows and wanted to bring it to the committee's attention.

Ms. Bernard stated that her only concern about hearing about a separate court for PTSD for veterans is that PTSD and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) are also categories of disability and victims of crime also can experience PTSD. What do we do for PTSD victims that are not veterans? Do they get the same consideration?

Mr. Campbell stated that he thinks that is a whole other issue that can not be addressed by the Veterans Administration.

Mr. Vickery stated that this should probably be put on the Criminal Justice Committee's agenda.

Mr. Bossert agreed.

11. Personnel/HR Issues

Mr. Bossert stated that the Finance Committee moved forward last week with a recommendation on our health insurance for the County as well as dental and vision. After board action, next month we will move ahead with reenrollment.

Ms. Bernard asked what the premium cost is going to be.

Mr. Bossert stated that he does not have that with him. It is a 7.4% increase on the premium for all levels; a \$250 deductible is being proposed on the lower class plan versus a 0% deductible that was in place this year. Blue Cross and Shield did caution us that while they are giving us a firm bid they are qualifying that by saying that until there is final regulations issued on many aspects of the PPACA (Obama Care) premiums may get adjusted at any time.

12. Administrative Issues

a. Reappointments/Appointments/Resignations

- Reappointment of Sonia Baspineiro Edwards to the Ethics Commission
- Reappointment of David Hinderliter to the METRO Board
- Appointment of Jason O'Connor to the Raymond Drainage District

Jason O' Connor's appointment was pulled from the agenda; we are still waiting for his paperwork.

Mr. Vickery made a motion to approve the two reappointments and Mr. Liehr seconded it. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Mr. Bossert stated that Marty Whalen is asking to be removed from the Ethics Commission because he is moving out of the community. There will be an opening on the Ethics Commission.

13. Information Items

Mr. Bossert stated that concerning the Aqua Hearing the comment has come back from the Attorney General's office to remind us in the community that comments concerning the Aqua request for a rate increase can be made online on the ICC website. The Attorney General is encouraging the community to make some comments and get them posted online. We will get a press release out to that effect – to remind people that if they have something to say they need to submit their comments. The ICC Commissioners do watch those things. Go to www.icc.gov to post comments; the docket number is 10-0194. He thinks comments can be posted up until a decision is made.

14. Old Business

15. New Business

- **Competitive Bidding Procedures & Amounts**

Mr. Bossert stated that a resolution is in the packet for the committee's consideration.

Mr. McElroy stated that the state statutes in county code allow counties to not bid on certain purchases of items. There are two types of items – general items and computer items. The state statute has increased the amount from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for general items and from \$25,000 to \$35,000 for data processing type equipment. It has probably changed twice since we changed here in the County; we changed the amount six years ago. In addition to that, they are recommending some slight language changes. The word “the” was added as a grammatical change and the phrase “items with a sole source of procurement, or those transactions” was added to clarify some of the language in our code. This resolution will bring our code up-to-date with the state statute.

Mr. Washington made a motion to adopt this resolution and Mr. LaGesse seconded it. Motion carried with a voice vote. Ms. Bernard opposed.

Discussion

Ms. Bernard stated that she is concerned with the economic conditions that we have right now in the County. Given our budget constraints right now, she is uncomfortable raising the limit at which we are not going to have to go out for bid. She thinks right now every nickel matters.

Mr. James stated that was his first thoughts, also. He would be interested in knowing how many times we activate this program. At what point could we determine that it is being abused? He thinks that is what people are concerned about.

Mr. Bossert stated that the bidding process is most prevalent in the building and maintenance activity as well as highway. Our department heads are very diligent about getting the best price that they can. Do we want to hamstring departments if they feel like they can go ahead and get their best price and move ahead rather than waiting for a whole bidding process? There is a cost in going through the bidding process.

Mr. Vickery stated that the departments all end up on a bottom-line budget so it behooves them to be very prudent. By raising those limits we speed up the timeframe on getting some projects done. If we sense abuse, we can always decide to bid.

Ms. Schmidt stated that someone brought to her attention that DeKalb County got a grant for \$2 million dollars to improve their broadband. There are all kinds of people who are tapping into that because that is a big Obama thing. He wants the internet to be very accessible. She thinks we should look into tapping into some of that money. It is good for rural communities and she thinks it would make us look more

advantageous to companies that are looking for a place to come. It is money that we could tap in to right now that we could use for something. She will email Mr. Bossert the list that she was given.

Mr. Bossert stated that any info she could give him would be helpful.

16. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn at 9:40 was made by Mr. LaGesse and seconded by Mr. James. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Mike Bossert, Chairman
Joanne Langlois, Executive Coordinator