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MINUTES

SANGAMON COUNTY BOARD

AUGUST 9, 2016

The Sangamon County Board met in Reconvened Adjourned June Session on August 9, 2016 in the County Board Chambers. Chairman Van Meter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Stumpf gave the Invocation and Mr. Thomas led the County Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to call the roll. There were 24 Present – 5 Absent. Annette Fulgenzi, Mrs. Hills, Mr. Krell, Mr. Preckwinkle and Mrs. Ruzic were excused.

PROCLAMATION

Mrs. Williams presented a Proclamation in recognition of National Passport Month. Circuit Clerk Paul Palazzolo accepted the Proclamation. Karen Hasara first started issuing passports as Circuit Clerk in the mid 1980's, and since then all 102 counties in Illinois are processing passports in their Circuit Clerk's offices. In Sangamon County, two years ago they processed approximately 1,300 passports, last year 1,500, and so far this year they have processed over 1,600 applications. They have also added passport photos. The revenue has increased to \$43,000 with passports, and there is an additional \$11,000 in passport photo revenue since they started the one-stop shop effort to help Sangamon County citizens. They will generate more publicity with this awareness month to help bring more revenue into Sangamon County.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. Bunch, for approval of the minutes of July 12, 2016. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
MINUTES ADOPTED

CORRESPONDENCE

A motion was made by Mr. Bunch, seconded by Mr. Montalbano, to place correspondence on file with the County Clerk. A voice vote was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 1

1. Resolution approving the low bid for the micro-surfacing contract on County Highways 23, 33 and 59.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Hall, to place Resolution 1 on the floor. Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to call the roll. Upon the roll call vote, there were 23 Yeas – 0 Nays.

MOTION CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2

2. Resolution approving a professional services agreement for a structural engineer to perform repair inspections on the Sangamon Valley Trail bridges.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, second by Mr. Mendenhall, to place Resolution 2 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. O’Neill that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolution 2. A voice vote carried. Mr. Hall and Mr. Sullivan voted no on Resolution 2.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 3

3. 2016-014 – Paul K. & Libby J. Miller, 3977 Dinius Road, Williamsville – Granting a Variance. County Board Member – Todd Smith, District #2.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Stumpf, to place Resolution 3 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 3.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 4

- 4. 2016-020 – Rolla J. Womack, 14751 Bullard Road, Buffalo – Granting a Variance. County Board Member – David Mendenhall, District #3.

A motion was made by Mr. Mendenhall, seconded by Mrs. Deppe, to place Resolution 4 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 4.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 5

- 5. 2016-021 – Tommy Sheppard, 17020 Old Route 54, New Berlin – Granting Conditional Permitted Uses and Variances. County Board Member – Craig Hall, District #7.

A motion was made by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mrs. Small, to place Resolution 5 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections.

A motion was made by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Stumpf, to amend Resolution 5. Mr. Hall stated Resolution 5 should be amended on Page 5-2 to delete B. 2, and replace with the following language: 2. Outdoor activities associated with go-karts and tractor pulls shall cease no later than 8:00 p.m. Outdoor activities associated with volleyball shall cease no later than 10:00 p.m. A voice vote was unanimous on the amendment. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 5, as amended.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 6

- 6. 2016-022 – US Truss Company, 931 Lawndale Avenue, Springfield – Granting a Rezoning. County Board Member – Sam Montalbano, District #13.

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. Ratts, to place Resolution 6 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 6.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 7

7. 2016-024 – John & Carolyn Benanti, 3598 & 3626 Stagecoach, Springfield – Denying a Rezoning and granting a Use Variance and Variances. County Board Member – Harry “Tom” Fraase, Jr., District #1.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Ms. Sheehan, to place Resolution 7 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 7.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 8

8. 2016-025 – John Ridings Plumbing, 3609 S. Douglas, Springfield – Denying a Rezoning and granting a Use Variance and Variance. County Board Member – Linda Fulgenzi, District #12.

A motion was made by Mrs. Linda Fulgenzi, seconded by Mrs. Scaife, to place Resolution 8 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf to waive the reading of the professional staff's report. There were no objections. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 8.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 9

9. Resolution to approve the execution of a contract between the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Mr. Forsyth, seconded by Mr. Thomas, to place Resolution 9 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. O'Neill that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolution 9. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 10

10. Resolution setting forth budget policies for the preparation of the FY2017 Sangamon County Budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. Bunch, to place Resolution 10 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. O’Neill that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolution 10. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

WAIVER OF TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. Bunch, to waive the 10-day filing period. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD WAIVED

RESOLUTIONS 11 – 13

RESOLUTION 11

11. Resolution approving a professional services agreement with Building Maintenance Services to perform janitorial services at the County Building, Juvenile Detention Center and Public Health.

A motion was made by Mr. Ratts, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, to place Resolution 11 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Bunch, seconded by Mr. Smith, to consolidate Resolutions 11 – 13. Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to read Resolutions 12 and 13.

12. Resolution to provide public transportation in Sangamon and Menard Counties.
13. Resolution approving the purchase of computers for the Election Office.

A voice vote was unanimous on the consolidation. A motion was made by Mr. O’Neill that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolutions 11 – 13, as consolidated. A voice vote unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 14

14. Resolution to establish 3 advisory referenda questions to be placed on the November 8, 2016 ballot, and to submit the 4 advisory referenda to the full Sangamon County Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, where a written ballot is presented to the Committee of the Whole ranking the 4 proposed advisory questions in order of preference, with 1 being the most desirable and 4 being the least desirable, with the 3 lowest rank totals being submitted to the full County Board for approval to be submitted as the advisory referenda for the November 8th General Election. During the Committee of the Whole, public comment will be allowed for any persons desiring to address the Sangamon County Committee of the Whole on these issues.

A motion was made by Mr. Snell, seconded by Mr. Mendenhall, to place Resolution 14 on the floor.

A motion was made by Mr. Snell, seconded by Mr. Montalbano and Mr. Bunch, to adjourn to sit as a Committee of the Whole to consider 4 advisory referenda questions. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

ADJOURNED TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

SANGAMON COUNTY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chairman Van Meter called the Committee of the Whole to order. County Clerk Gray read the four advisory referenda questions.

A. Advisory Referenda Questions

1. Shall the office of township collector be abolished in Sangamon County with the duties to be assumed by the County Treasurer?
2. Shall the fire protection districts in Sangamon County, with voter approval, organize regionally in order to improve response times?
3. Shall all fire protection district trustees be elected rather than appointed by the County Board?
4. Shall the Sangamon County Board support, with existing funds, the further development of the Regional Leadership Council, a coalition of mayors and village presidents representing each of the municipalities in Sangamon County, so that the Council can develop cooperative programs, such as joint purchasing, that will improve local government efficiency?

B. Public Comment

Chairman Mike Murphy and Member Bob Wesley, of the Citizens Efficiency Commission, addressed the County Board. Citizens Efficiency Commission Member Robert Park was also present.

Mr. Murphy addressed the first referenda question. He stated Sangamon County is currently one of only two counties in Illinois that has a township tax collector. Neither Sangamon County nor Peoria County has collectors in all the townships in their counties. The Sangamon County Treasurer has indicated his office can take over these duties and would not require additional staffing. In many cases, it would streamline the tax collecting process. The Treasurer sent out a letter on June 19, 2015 to all townships indicating this. Mr. Murphy suggested they all read that letter, if they have not done so already. Currently there are six townships in Sangamon County that operate without a collector, and some of these are the larger townships, without any problems. They feel this is an example showing they are saving taxpayer's money and are also improving service. They are asking for the County Board's consideration for this to be put on the ballot.

Mr. DelGiorno asked, if passed, how this would actually be effectuated since this is only an advisory referendum. He is assuming it is done now through an intergovernmental agreement with townships that don't have a collector. Mr. Murphy stated that is right. There are several different ways this has been done throughout the state. There are 100 plus counties who do not have this. Research would have to be done on the most effective way. One of their concerns was there are some townships who decided not to fill the vacancy, and they have discouraged anyone from running by reducing the salary. The CEC does not feel like that is the best method, so they would like to come up with a method to totally do away with this position as a township office.

Mr. O'Neill asked Sangamon County Treasurer Tom Cavanagh if they would have to hire more staff since they already collect about 88% of the taxes. Mr. Cavanagh referred to a couple of statistics. Through intergovernmental agreements this year, Sangamon County prepared and printed 100% of the tax bills, mailed out 70% of the tax bills, collected 88% of the tax payments and distributed 89% of the tax dollars to the taxing districts. They are already performing most of this work. If the collectors were to be eliminated, they could pick up that work without missing a beat. They would not need any more staff, resources or funding. He added that the township tax collectors of Sangamon County have done high quality work. He is doing this in support of the efforts of the Citizens Efficiency Commission. His office has worked very closely with the original commission and the follow-up commission that is trying to move some of these questions into the public domain. He has consistently said they can do this job and do not need more resources or staff to do it. Mr. O'Neill added that they eliminated this position in Chatham Township last year and are saving approximately \$5,000 per year. He urged everyone to vote for this.

Mr. Hall stated they are here tonight to find out the facts, and he does appreciate their effort. He is not going to argue whether this is a need or a want, but he has seen this work in the rural area of his district. Not everybody in his district knows each other, but they try to. He assumes it's also that way in Springfield neighborhoods. If it is not, it ought to be. In their area, their township tax collector knows what ages some people are and tells them what they are eligible and qualify for.

Mr. Hall stated that is a service they are kind of already getting, and he wonders if they could produce that out of this building. Is it worth \$3,000 to \$5,000? That is a great question. His concern is that he thinks the township government works. He has concerns there are people a few blocks over from them that would rather not have government bodies. He might be right, but these are kind of the training grounds where they actually see people hold office with small budget amounts and improve themselves to maybe move to another board. That is his opinion and he says that very thoughtfully to them.

Mike Murphy addressed the County Board regarding the second referenda question. He explained that this question has changed from what they originally sent out. They were trying to achieve a couple different things here. Currently there are nine pass through districts within the borders of Springfield that do not have facilities, equipment or manpower. Their only function is to set tax rates, and they all currently contract with the Springfield Fire Department. They feel there would be a substantial savings of administrative costs if these districts were consolidated. Currently it is a little over \$100,000. This money is being spent with attorneys, accountants, publishing the annual budgets, and the boards receive a very minimal amount of \$1,000 to \$1,500 to serve. These boards consist of three to five members. When combined you come up with \$100,000. They feel if these districts were consolidated there would be substantial savings in administrative costs that could be diverted to actual fire protection. One of the reasons they wanted this on the ballot was to get the feelings of the people of Sangamon County. During the last couple of sessions of the General Assembly there was legislation proposed to help make it easier to change the boundaries of fire districts. They were hoping, with a mandate from Sangamon County, this would help the efforts that were mentioned a couple blocks away.

Mr. Murphy stated another aspect they wanted to address is the anticipation in the future for needs for rural districts to consider more shared services and consolidations due to some of the challenges they were having mainly with the recruitment of volunteers. He knows there has been years that it has been tough. This is not a Sangamon County problem, but is a nationwide problem that a lot of volunteer fire districts are having, especially when it comes to the emergency medical treatment aspect of it. They anticipate a need for that, and are hoping they would rewrite the legislation on how to do this. There is a current method to do this that they feel is very cumbersome and difficult. There is other legislation they would like to see put into the fire code that is much easier and deals with how townships can change their borders.

Ed Taft, President of the Williamsville Fire Protection District and the Sangamon County Fire District Trustees Association, addressed the County Board. They are not opposed to the consolidation of districts; however, they think existing state law adequately covers the mechanism to do that, allowing voters in the district to start their own initiative to consolidate. Also, they think if the County Board and CEC Committee thinks there are individual districts that need to look at that, then he suggested they talk to those trustees individually and try to resolve their issues with that district. To paraphrase an old quote, "You don't want to destroy the village to save it".

Jim Sinclair addressed the County Board. He stated he is representing eight of the operating fire protection districts in Sangamon County. They all have very good fire departments. He is also here for the Sangamon County Fire Trustees Association, and is also the attorney for the Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts, which this county is an associate member of. On the pass through, or the paper district issues, this is not something that is isolated to Sangamon County. There are districts that do not have an operating fire department throughout the State of Illinois. They are mostly in the urban areas where you have a periphery. They actually have legislation in place, effective January 1, 2015, to do what Mr. Murphy is talking about doing. It allows for a district that chooses by referendum of its voters. He stressed that fire protection districts are created by the voters that live in those districts. They are a creature of referendum. The voters decide to have a fire protection district, not the state or county, just the voters. Their position has consistently been that is who should decide if there are going to be changes in the fire protection district structure. If you take the position that a paper or pass through district is expending too much money on administration, and those administration costs are in excess, and if the voters of those districts are aware of that and they feel that change should be made, then they have a mechanism that very simply allows that district to dissolve and annex to an operating district that is adjacent to it by referendum. That has been a law since January 2015. He pointed out that they met with the CEC in August 2014, and thought they were going to participate in that process. They would have made the CEC more aware of that procedure. It was his understanding they haven't called upon their fire subcommittee to meet since November of last year. And now these questions are before you.

Mr. Sinclair addressed the other question raised of consolidation of the operating fire districts. This was related to staffing, which is a legitimate point. This is a statewide issue and not just a Sangamon County issue. Trying to impose consolidation on top is not the appropriate way to solve that personnel problem. The Fire Protection District Act has mechanisms for fire protection districts to join together to provide services. In fact, most of the districts in this county are already doing this through a system called MABAS. They do take care of each other. Simply consolidating districts is not necessarily going to solve the personnel issue in the volunteer fire service. As Ed Taft said, fire protection districts are not against consolidation. His understanding of an advisory referendum that a governing body puts forward goes to the point made earlier on the first question. When you get the answer from your voters, what is it going to mean? Typically an advisory referendum is asked by a governing body and they are going to follow that up with action. In your case, the county has no authority to consolidate fire protection districts. So when you get an answer, it is not going to be available to you to take any action to change anything. If what you are taking is a poll, you have an 800 pound gorilla in this poll and it is called the City of Springfield. You are going to have a vote that is going to be dominated by a unit of government that isn't a fire protection district and doesn't have anything to do with fire protection districts.

Chief of the Sherman Fire Protection District and President of the Sangamon County Fire Chief's Association Todd Masterhan addressed the County Board. He asked how many in the room have actually seen the CEC report on fire and EMS recommendations. In the report they are talking about regionalization of fire protection. Also in their question they are saying to improve response times. The fire departments can't effectively cover some areas in the active fire protection districts they have now under the response time criteria they are given.

How do they expect them to cover these districts by eliminating stations and other things they would use to provide services to these large districts? When they are talking about response, they talk about time and distance. From the time the emergency occurs; to the time the 911 call is made; to the time the dispatch is put out to each fire district; to the time for the volunteers to assemble, if you have a volunteer fire district; and then for the time to leave the station to get to the call. They are always behind the eight ball in the volunteer fire service because of time and distance. Under these guidelines, they want to increase the response distances or the response times. With this question the County Board is being asked to address tonight, there is no way they can regionalize fire protection and lower response times at the same time. You could if you had the money to fund infrastructure to put additional stations and possibly full time firefighters in place. Once you start making districts like this, all of these smaller districts are going to lose their identity. Along with their identity goes their volunteers. His guys are on the Sherman Fire because they want to be and want to protect the Village of Sherman and the fire protection district. The same goes with Divernon, Chatham, Pawnee and all other active fire protection districts in the county. If they had to move his fire station from one place to another to cover their district to meet insurance requirements, then a lot of his volunteers would leave. Instead of going one mile to the station, they would have to go eight miles to the station. Who is going to get up at 2:00 a.m. in the morning to answer a call when they have to drive eight miles but used to drive a mile to the station? The Fire Chief's Association is not opposed to consolidation, but it should be done by the voters that live in those districts and also done in a controlled manner so all aspects of consolidation are taken care of before the actual consolidation happens.

Lind Fulgenzi stated she sits on the OEM 911 Committee and hears a report every month on the response of their volunteer firefighters throughout the county. If she didn't live in an area that is serviced by Springfield she sure would want to be close to one of these volunteer firefighters. Their response time is great. She does not know of anyone that objects to what these firefighters do and to their response time. She asked the CEC Committee if they have done any kind of study to show it would improve response times by regionalizing. In the past with things that happened in the state when they regionalized districts, services tended to go down because they were not close to the home bodies that the folks would like to have them. She has been very pleased with the information she has gotten from the local fire districts.

Mike Murphy stated they did do some studies on response times several years ago, and they varied. He recalled that the fire wasn't an issue, but there were some concerns on the medical side. There is a mutual aid agreement and some communities rely on that heavily. There were certain times when they did not have the EMT's there. In regards to regionalization, one of their biggest concerns is they want to have a mechanism in place. Mr. Murphy read part of Township Code 1025 on the ways to change township boundaries. "The County Board adopts a plan to change township boundaries, a referendum in each township, effective at a regular election, at least 60 days after the plan is adopted." That is so much cleaner and quicker than the current method, and that is what they want. They are not saying you have to consolidate or are not telling anyone to consolidate, but if there is a need to consolidate, they want it to be an easy method to go through and not a cumbersome method. They are not pointing fingers at Sherman, Illiopolis or any fire districts saying they need to consolidate today.

Bob Wesley with the CEC Committee stated the biggest concern they have is the looming lack of volunteers. It is not just in fire protection, but getting volunteers for pretty much anything is getting more and more difficult. Their original report did not find that response times were below standards, but that they met standards. Their concern is as the volunteer base erodes over time that is going to affect the response times as they looked at the future. He remembers meeting with the chiefs and saying "If you don't like this plan, what plan can we put forward?" They have not gotten any kind of response on that, but they know the volunteer base is eroding. They are asking the County Board to understand they are looking at the future. Right now response times can be met, but they concluded in the future they will not be. That is particularly on the EMT side, which is most of the business that fire protection districts do now.

Mrs. Scaife commented that in New Berlin, where she lives, they recently had a situation where their fire protection was changed to Chatham, which then changed the whole ISO rating. This caused a hardship on others in the township as far as their homeowner's insurance. She asked Mr. Sinclair to explain that so people realize how this would affect them. Mr. Sinclair explained that ISO is a fire insurance rating organization. They rate fire departments all across the country. Fire insurance companies can then use those ratings, but not all use the ISO ratings. State Farm is an example of a company that does not use it. That rating is then applied to the fire insurance premium that people pay. The ISO classification runs from 1 being the very best to 10 being unprotected. It can change your fire insurance rating. That can be a factor depending on where you get your protection. Mrs. Scaife stated she knew this but wanted others to hear it because it did cause a hardship for some families. Mr. Sinclair agreed that when the ISO ratings change it can affect prior insurance premiums. Mrs. Scaife agreed and stated that is a concern.

Mr. Thomas thanked everyone for coming tonight. He wholeheartedly agrees with Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Taft. He asked how all the questions on here are all rural area questions. There is nothing on the City of Springfield, the "800 pound gorilla", at all. He does not understand it when there is a mess out there and there is nothing on here but rural questions. He asked if they had 28 questions to begin with and how this determined to be the most important. Mr. Murphy stated he does not remember 28 being the number. When they were asked to come up with potential advisory referendums, they asked at the meetings some of the things they feel were most pertinent. They went through a procedure very similar to what they are going to do tonight. They ranked them, and this is what they came up with. They originally came up with three questions and the fourth one was added later. The City of Springfield is also being studied. Two meetings ago, they had the Mayor and Chief of Police along with Sheriff Barr and his chief deputy at their meeting, and they were discussing things that involve the city.

Mr. Thomas asked why they didn't inform the fire chiefs and where it stemmed from so quickly. Mr. Murphy explained it came through a meeting he and Karen Hasara had. They were talking about different ways the County Board could work with them. They offered the option to impose some advisory referendum questions to get a feel from the community. This happened rather quickly. They meet once a month, are non-paid volunteers, and had a couple months to do this.

The answer to the question of why the fire districts were not informed is because it was probably an oversight, and he will take blame for that. He just became chairman a couple months ago. He knows it was discussed at a Regional Leadership Council meeting that hopefully these communities would have had a representative at. Mr. Thomas asked why this would even be a topic when it is already covered by state law and they can't do anything for it anyway. Mr. Murphy explained that they have talked with lobbyists about some of the issues they have. They have been trying to get different legislation put through. Right or wrong, the CEC thought this might be a good method to show there is a need to rewrite the current laws on how to change things.

Mr. Mendenhall stated, as a retired assistant fire chief for the Mechanicsburg Fire Department, he can tell them all the concerns the CEC has addressed have been addressed for years by the Mechanicsburg Fire Department and all fire departments in Sangamon County. They have addressed how to recruit, train and keep volunteers, and how to increase response times. He believes there is ongoing communication now between various districts, of not only mutual aid agreements, but the possibility of consolidating those departments. He believes those talks are important and beneficial, but should stay within those local districts. With that being said, he does understand the ISO rating and some of the components of that, and how close they are to the water source. He is talking from the property/home owner's side. As a business owner, he gets an annual or at least a bi-annual review of his property insurance. One of the questions they ask is "how close are you to the water source?" He is lucky enough the hydrant is about 600 feet away, but not everyone is in that position. Consolidating or not consolidating is not going to change that. One thing that will change, if you look at the map that Mr. Masterhan held up, if you had to relocate or eliminate one station, is you would have to answer the question on the survey about how close you are to the closest fire house. You would have to answer that you used to be three miles, but now you are five miles away. That will cost you a couple hundred bucks a year. When you merge these departments together and they have different tax rates, you will assume the highest one. So not only are you going to possibly get dinged on your property insurance, but also on your tax bill. He believes local control is the best way to go.

Ed Taft commented it has always been the case that they have a hard time getting volunteers. He thinks creating a regional mega district will decrease the number of people that are willing to volunteer to help their community. Right now they have people who are members of the fire department that are there to help their friends, neighbors and family. He thinks if you get too large, then that sense of community is going to go away. You will have an even harder time attracting people to do something that takes a tremendous amount of dedication, time and training. You mentioned the chiefs have not responded to some information from last November. Chief Masterhan can address this better than he can, but it is his understanding they did try to present information to you. He does not know exactly what happened with that.

Mr. DelGiorno stated his first comment is sort of a philosophical question of what the use of an advisory question referendum really is for in the first place. To him, that should be used by the County Board, or any elective body, to get the pulse of the voters on an issue they can actually take action on after the vote is taken.

From everything they are telling them, this is to be used as a lobbying tool with the Statehouse as to why they need to have reforms and how they consolidate these various districts. He does not see that as being a legitimate purpose of the advisory referendum tool. One of the things they mentioned, with regard to the fire protection districts, is the nine pass through districts that have agreements with Springfield to provide their assistance, and are only used for the administrative aspects, which is where the costs come in. According to his reading of the Fire Protection District Code, it takes 1% of the voters in those districts to petition to put on the ballot, and that would be a binding referendum. He asked if this would behoove them, if they are going to ask voters their opinion on something then it be something that could be immediately done as a result of their vote. That would take a grassroots effort, for folks that live in those nine fire protection districts in the City of Springfield, to put that on the ballot. If that was one of the sub issues here they were trying to get at with Question 2, he thinks they potentially have merit, but are going about it the wrong way. He would like to have the CEC's reaction to that.

Mr. Murphy explained that one of their aspects was to potentially change the law. They understand there are ways to do it now. If they had a strong advisory referendum, especially on the nine pass through districts, they could develop grassroots. They are just saying there are easier ways to consolidate in other aspects of the law than what there is in the fire. They are not saying you cannot do it currently, but it is just not as easy as they could do other things. If they had an overwhelming mandate on those nine pass through districts, it might generate some interest and they could get that done. They are just saying during the last two sessions they introduced things to make it easier. He followed up with the question of why they are just picking on the rural areas. Even though the nine pass through districts are not in the city, they really are. They are like Woodside Township and places like that. Their original questions did address some of the City of Springfield's issues and not just the county's issues.

Mr. Sinclair pointed out some quick points. If this is a lobbying effort, then he thinks this is the wrong way to do it. They are asking the City of Springfield voters to vote on something that does not impact them to take it down the street to get a bill passed. One of the things to understand about fire protection districts, unlike townships, is they are not locally controlled by one county necessarily. Fire protection districts can be located in up to five different counties. So when you have a very simplistic approach being put forth by this passage from the township code, you can't simply take that and put it on fire protection districts. You have fire protection districts, Pawnee for example, that go into two other counties. It would not be valid for this County Board to try and consolidate it, even if they had that legislation. One thing he can say for certain is this is the sort of consolidation the fire protection districts will fight until the end of the world. They are created by referendum and should be changed by referendum or destroyed by referendum. It's the top down in position of consolidation that is the thing the fire service strenuously objects to. Bills do get put in all the time, and they work on those bills. They have worked on several bills dealing with consolidation, such as the Regional Fire Agency bill that was put forward by the firefighter's union a couple years ago. They worked hard on that, and got it to be something they could live with. They got the bill passed to make it much easier for districts that are wanting to join a stronger district to do so.

They are active in doing these things, but he can assure them they would want this to be consolidated, not by their voters, but by another unit of government. That is going to be a problem. He was not aware of the CEC's goal on this.

Mr. Murphy stated it was mentioned that the City of Springfield should not be involved because they do not have a dog in the fight. With the nine pass through districts, they feel like they should be because they are not collecting the proper amount of money they should be collecting through those pass through districts. Mr. Sinclair emphasized that this has been a big problem with the City of Springfield for a long time. What nobody understands, or doesn't want to understand, is Sangamon County is a property tax limitation county. That does not apply in the City of Springfield because it is home rule, but it does in all of these outlying areas. Those paper districts cannot raise their tax levy without a voter referendum to get approval to do it. That is the way PTEL works. If the issue is the City of Springfield is not getting enough money from the pass through districts, then the grassroots effort would have to be to go out and get approval for more tax levying authority. Chairman Van Meter stated he is not sure if that is the point or not, but he is sure all the board members here are very familiar with this because they live under PTEL.

Mr. Wesley stated they are correct in that fire protection districts cross county boundaries. There are 25 fire protection districts located wholly within Sangamon County, but there are 4 that cross county boundaries. He just wanted to put that in perspective. Secondly, as far as Springfield weighing in along with what Mr. Murphy had to say, they can know how each township and precinct votes. That information is presented routinely when elections are over. They can know what fire protection districts believe should happen within their districts. His third point is that he is not afraid of what the people might think, so they are asking them. The bottom line is it is not binding and no one is injured by this, but to do the kind of grassroots organizing they are talking about, it would be a lot of work and would take a lot of time and money. He is not saying it is not worth it, but they can learn whether or not there is the will among the people to do that with an advisory referendum.

Mr. Madonia asked a procedural question. He asked if it would disqualify the whole ballot if he just wanted to vote on two of the four questions to be on the ballot. Assistant State's Attorney Dwayne Gab stated it would. The rules passed before they went into a Committee of the Whole specified a procedure. That procedure is voting 1, 2, 3 & 4 for each of the questions. There is also a rule that says if your ballot is not complete it is an abstention. Mr. Madonia asked if there would end up being three referendums on here if they vote 1, 2, 3, and 4. Mr. Gab answered that is correct. Mr. Madonia stated he feels this should not be happening. He does not think Questions 2 and 3 should be on the ballot. This seems like an issue that has already been taken up, and Mr. Sinclair has stated his position. He will probably just abstain then. Dwayne Gab also explained there was a vote on the rules before they went into a Committee of the Whole. There will also be a vote after they get out of the Committee of the Whole as to whether the three picked will be passed as a resolution, so there are plenty of opportunities to vote no. The main motion made by Mr. Snell originally is that those three questions will be submitted to the County Board. If those three questions do not pass, then they will be back with a four question resolution that would be void as a matter of law. At that point considerations will be made about what to do with the resolution.

Mr. Ratts asked if the voters in his district, who live strictly in the city and are not part of a township, would see these questions on their ballot. Chairman Van Meter stated every voter in Sangamon County will.

Mr. Madonia asked another procedural question. He asked if they could re-vote if he made a motion to suspend the rules that were previously adopted. Dwayne Gab explained the whole County Board would have to do that motion. Mr. Madonia asked if it could be done by a roll call vote by County Clerk Gray. Mr. Gab stated they are in the Committee of the Whole and not full County Board. Mr. Madonia asked if he could wait until after they are out of committee. Mr. Gab explained that the main motion was to consider these things, so he thinks they are submitting three questions. The way to do it would be to vote down all three questions. Then they would have a new issue of what to do. Chairman Van Meter clarified it would be after the Committee of the Whole is dismissed. Mr. Gab agreed. Mr. Gab stated you will have the results after you decide whether or not to put three questions as advisory questions on the ballot. If that does not pass, then they are back to a void as a matter of law situation because they can't submit four advisory referenda.

Mr. DelGiorno asked Mr. Gab if the rules could be suspended with new rules to vote on each question individually. Mr. Gab stated he believes all the rules and procedures were initially addressed in the main motion done by Mr. Snell at the very beginning of this that led them to go into the Committee of the Whole. He believes any procedural amendments should be done in regards to that main motion; therefore, the County Board would have to address new procedures in relationship to failure to pass coming out of the full committee after it is submitted and denied. The answer would pretty much be the same answer he had for Mr. Madonia. The Committee of the Whole is acting under that main motion, and when they come out of the Committee of the Whole there will be a motion to submit it that way. At that time, you will have an opportunity to vote and decide whether or not to do it. There were rules set for the Committee of the Whole and they were set by the motion done when they went into the Committee of the Whole, and by in large, they should be followed. Mr. DelGiorno asked if they have the prerogative to change those rules as the County Board. Mr. Gab stated they do, but not as the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Murphy addressed Question #3 regarding elected fire protection district trustees as opposed to appointed. The CEC feels elected officials should set tax rates and budgets. There is a current method in place. They look at this a couple different ways. One is to raise awareness to the people on how their fire trustees are put in place. He does not think there is a lot of understanding on that in the community. They also feel like the current procedure is cumbersome and needs to be streamlined. They think it is a much better way to elect officials as opposed to appointing them when they are dealing with taxpayer's money.

Mr. Sinclair stated the Fire Protection District Act does not give them any authority, after an advisory question, to change the current law in the act about moving to an elected board of trustees. Regardless of the outcome, it is not going to change the law. Going to an elected board only requires a petition signed by 10% of the registered voters in a district to place the question of having an elected board for the fire protection district. If you look at your populations in those various districts, he suspects that is not a very high number.

It must then go on the ballot in that district. The County Clerk will then process that referendum within the district. If the vote is favorable, the board will be elected and the trustees will then have six-year terms. The appointed trustees currently have three year terms. There is a county issue here if you are concerned about fire protection districts within your county. If you have an elected fire board, the County Board will not make the appointments to the board of trustees of the district. Right now the County Board Chairman makes the appointment with the County Board's approval. That means every year you are appointing one to two members of a fire board. When they met with the CEC in August 2014, one of the things brought forward was the lack of training for fire protection district trustees. If you have an elected board of trustees you would not have any ability at all to deal with that issue if it is of concern to the county. On the other hand, if you appoint trustees, you have the ability to seek to have them trained. The state association does have a very active 12-hour training program for fire district trustees. They have annual training every year throughout the state, and are continually working to train trustees. If you move to an elected board, you need to understand what you would be getting. He clarified that he is not against elected boards. Several districts he represents in Sangamon County do have elected boards. It is the voter's choice within the district. It is very easy for the voters in a given district, if they want an elected board, to move that way. A vote in the entire county on this question is not going to give the County Board any authority to do anything.

Mr. Hall stated he had the privilege of working with his fire boards, and can't think of any fault or flaws they've had. His question is, if the wheel's not broken, why fix it? Having government come in to fix something is a little concerning. He told Mr. Sinclair that he has read many of his writings and have enjoyed them. Mr. Hall stated he had the privilege of serving on all three of the only water boards in Sangamon County. He was on Curran Gardner, Apple Creek and now between Chatham and New Berlin. This board allows him that privilege. The largest thing they have to do is provide water to people's homes. The second thing is a lot of these trucks in the unincorporated areas of Springfield have portable tanks behind the trucks that you can pump out of. Whether or not that is right or wrong, he does know that occurs. These are major things they are supposed to do. The thing he heard tonight is that the Citizen's Efficiency Commission went to the lobbyists first instead of the lawmakers. Mr. Murphy stated they have talked to both of them. Mr. Hall asked why. Mr. Murphy stated he believes the county has lobbyists on retainer as well. Mr. Hall stated he guesses they do.

Mr. Fraase asked Mr. Sinclair if the elected trustees would be required by law to go through the training. Mr. Sinclair stated there is no requirement for that.

Mr. Mendenhall stated he believes the public is aware that trustees can be elected or appointed. There are three districts within Sangamon County that have chosen to elect their trustees, so he thinks the public knowledge is out there. As chairman of the OEM 911 Committee, he made the recommendation to their committee to join the association so they can be brought up to speed on some of the requirements and on some of the things the trustees need to know. They joined the association so they could become more educated and are appointing the most qualified people, so they are kind of moving in that direction themselves.

President of the Curran Fire Protection District Dale Emerson addressed the County Board. They are one of the nine pass through fire districts. He commented on Question 3. The trustees are appointed by the Curran Township trustees and are not appointed by the County Board. He wanted to clarify to the County Board that this question would not be applicable to their fire district, and they do levy all taxes required by law and contract.

Mr. Murphy addressed the County Board on Question #4. The CEC feels the Regional Leadership Council is an important piece of the success of communities working together to solve similar problems they have. Many times local officials are part time or volunteers. They feel the continued support of the county, with their professional staffing, will help organize their programs. They strongly feel the RLC will be able to address many, if not all, the issues the CEC has been dealing with, if they continue to grow and become strong and a very viable organization. They feel they have great potential. They are the ones living in the communities and see the problems. They take no greater pride if they identify something and see a governmental agency change and adapt to that without them taking any action. They feel a strong RLC will allow those things to happen for many years to come. The CEC really recommends they support their continued involvement with the Regional Leadership Council.

Mr. Wesley added that he believes one of the best things the CEC did was recommend the creation of the Regional Leadership Council. What they found, along with a series of recommendations, is there were also a series of white papers published. One of which chronicled the kinds of cooperation that is happening between local governments already. It was a surprising amount. Based upon what they found there, they recommended the Regional Leadership Council to make this much more habitual and much more routine. They have a platform now where local governments can talk about common problems, and there are many common problems, and come to a joint resolution while keeping service that could save money. He thinks this is one of the best things they have recommended.

Mr. Ratts stated he thinks this was the best question of the night.

Mr. Wesley stated he heard from a good friend and colleague about another aspect to the Regional Leadership Council he believes they should know. The local governments are an inch deep and a mile wide and don't have time to get into notions of development because they are too busy just making things work. He believes, over time, a mature Regional Leadership Council can be a definite asset when it comes to community and economic and regional development. He thanked his friend and colleague for bringing that to mind today.

After a brief discussion with the CEC, Chairman Van Meter announced that the CEC would be willing to withdraw Questions 2 and 3. Assistant State's Attorney Dwayne Gab stated he thinks there could be a motion to just dissolve the Committee of the Whole, without a vote being taken, and go back to the full County Board. At that time, the motion could be changed to move to adopt two questions and strike the other two questions. That could then be voted on by the full County Board.

Chairman Van Meter stated that Sam Snell has that motion. Mr. Gab suggested they dissolve the Committee of the Whole for having decided the issues, based upon the CEC's decision to withdraw the request for those two questions. He does think public comment was important on these issues. It is good to have these things in a public forum.

Mr. Wesley explained what he thinks they agreed to in withdrawing these two questions, is that they are procedurally bound. They believe items 1 and 4 are important enough to be on the ballot and not be held up by a procedural issue. The CEC holds its recommendations as they stand, but are withdrawing these two items as possible referenda.

A motion was made by Mr. Snell, seconded by Mr. Montalbano and Mr. O'Neill, to close the Committee of the Whole and return to regular session. A voice vote was unanimous.

A motion was made by Mr. Snell, seconded by Mr. Smith, to amend Resolution 14 to submit the two questions selected by the Committee of the Whole. They would strike Questions 2 and 3. Mr. Hall asked if a member of this board is allowed to vote no on Questions 1 or 4, or if their ballot would be thrown out. Mr. Gab clarified that they are no longer doing a ballot vote. The motion is for Questions 1 and 4. If you do not want one of those two then you vote no. If the motion passes and the main resolution is for Questions 1 and 4, and you still don't want one of those two, then you vote no again, or you can always abstain.

Mr. Smith asked if they could not split the two questions and have two separate votes. Mr. Gab stated that is not the motion present before the County Board. Mr. Smith stated he would like to amend the motion to say they split it into two questions and not call a separate vote on Question 1 and Question 2. Chairman Van Meter suggested they proceed with their original motion to strike Questions 2 and 3 and make another motion with respect to Questions 1 and 4. Mr. Smith stated he thought they were preparing to vote on the remainder of the questions. Mr. Gab clarified that they are preparing to amend the resolution. Mr. Smith withdrew his amendment.

Chairman Van Meter stated the motion is to strike Questions 2 and 3 from Resolution 14. A voice vote was unanimous on the motion amend Resolution 14 to strike Questions 2 and 3. Now the resolution stands, as amended, and is proposing only Questions 1 and 4 for the ballot.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Hall, to split the vote into two votes, one vote for each question. Mr. Gab stated the problem is they only have one resolution on the agenda. Mr. Smith stated this would give each member of the board the opportunity to vote on two completely different questions. Mr. Hall expressed that these are two different issues. Mr. Gab stated he understands the desire, but the problem is if you vote separately then one could pass and one couldn't. Then you would not really be voting on the resolution. Chairman Van Meter suggested they take a vote to strike Question 1. You get to vote on whether you want Question 1 on or not. However that comes out, then there will be another amendment to strike Question 4. You get to vote whether you want to leave that one on or not. Mr. Gab agreed that is the way to do this procedurally. There would be a motion to amend to remove.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Scaife, to strike Question 1 from the ballot. Upon a roll call vote, there were 8 Yeas – 14 Nays. Those voting Yea were: Mrs. Deppe, Mrs. Douglas Williams, Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Fraase, Mr. Hall, Mrs. Scaife, Mrs. Small and Mr. Thomas. Mr. Bunch was not present to vote. Referenda Question 1 will remain on the ballot.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Montalbano, to strike Question 4 from the ballot. Upon a roll call vote, there were 2 Yeas – 20 Nays. Those voting Yea were: Mrs. Douglas Williams and Mrs. Small. Mr. Bunch was not present to vote. Referenda Question 4 will remain on the ballot.

A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of Resolution 14, as amended. Resolution 14 is adopted allowing Referenda Questions 1 and 4 to be placed on the ballot.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolutions

There were no new resolutions.

B. Appointments

Appointment of Dianne Barghouti Hardwick to the Springfield Airport Authority for a term to expire August, 2021.

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, for approval of the appointments. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
APPOINTMENTS ADOPTED

The nominations for appointment in September were also submitted. Mr. Hall stated that he will be voting no on the nomination to the Sewer Rebate Benefit Board. He really doesn't understand the function of this board. He does know how much this board costs and how much the members are getting.

C. F.O.P #55 Civilian Union Contract

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Montalbano, for the ratification of the Bargaining Unit Contract with the F.O.P. Civilian Unit in the Sheriff's Office. He thanked the bargaining unit, the F.O.P representatives and the committee for a long effort and mutual agreement. A voice vote was unanimous for ratification of the contract.

MOTION CARRIED
CONTRACT RATIFIED

**REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS, REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES,
REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES, COMMITTEE REPORT ON CLAIMS**

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. Smith, to place the reports on file with the County Clerk. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
REPORTS FILED

RECESS

A motion was made by Mr. Montalbano, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, to recess the meeting to September 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
MEETING RECESSED

Don Gray
Sangamon County Clerk