

## **DON GRAY**

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## **MINUTES**

### **SANGAMON COUNTY BOARD**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

The Sangamon County Board met in Reconvened Adjourned September Session on February 11, 2025 in the Sangamon South Auditorium. Chairman Van Meter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Douglas-Williams gave the Invocation and Mr. Stumpf led the County Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **ROLL CALL**

Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to call the roll. Upon the roll call, there were 23 Present – 5 Absent. Ms. Deaner, Ms. Deppe, Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Hall and Mr. Krell were excused.

### **APPOINTMENT OF NEW COUNTY BOARD MEMBER – DISTRICT #21**

Chairman Van Meter recommended Reggie Guyton to the board as a replacement for their departed colleague, Clyde Bunch. A voice vote was unanimous. County Clerk Gray administered the oath to Mr. Guyton.

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

Chairman Van Meter introduced Senator Doris Turner and welcomed her to the podium. She stated she was excited to be here on the evening County Board member Guyton was being sworn in. She feels that the person they are here to talk about would be very pleased that Mr. Guyton is his replacement. She stated Clyde was all about the community, was the longest serving County Board Member in the state of Illinois, and the third longest serving elected member in the United States.

She added that he was very involved in the electoral process, but more importantly, was involved in the community. She said he did a lot of phenomenal things from this chamber. He was involved with the Juvenile Detention Center, Helping Hands, and numerous other capital projects around the County – his fingerprints were all over Sangamon County. However, he was most proud of, and thought the world of, his family and community. He was a phenomenal family man and took care of his wife Ruth and was with her when she drew her last breath. She added that everyone knows he didn't take two steps without his great granddaughter Bella. She wanted everyone to know

that as you go along your journey, just remember that the political stuff they do is important but the community is the reason why they are there doing it.

The reason she is here is to present two resolutions for Clyde. She actually met Clyde in the summer of 1971. She and her family moved from the north end of Springfield into Clyde's neighborhood. Approximately six weeks after they moved there, her brother was kidnapped and murdered. Clyde didn't know them at all but he was at their house every single day seeing if they needed anything and making sure the police were doing all they could. That's how she met Clyde – taking care of his community. He also registered her to vote when she was 18 and explained to her the importance of participating in the electoral process. She has never missed voting in an election since then. She added that they all miss him and they may not have always agreed with him or with the way he did things, but at the end of the day they respected what he was doing.

She then read a Proclamation from Governor Pritzker. (Copy included) She had another proclamation from the Illinois Senate (copy included) but declined to read due to it stating what she had already said.

### **MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Madonia, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, for approval of the Minutes of January 13, 2025. A voice vote was unanimous for the adoption of the Minutes of January 13, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED  
MINUTES ADOPTED

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

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

### **RESOLUTION 1**

1. Resolution approving the FY25 purchase order for bulk rock salt from the State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Mendenhall, 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

### **RESOLUTIONS 2 - 7**

2. Resolution removing the seasonal weight limits on Sangamon County highways.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Mendehnnall, to place Resolution 2 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. DelGiorno, seconded by Mr. Madonia, to consolidate Resolutions 2 – 7. Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to read Resolutions 3 – 7.

3. Resolution appropriating Motor Fuel Tax Funds for the County Engineer's salary and expenses.
4. Resolution approving an Agreement between Sangamon County and the Illinois Department of Transportation to transfer Surface Transportation Program Funds for State Funds.
5. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for the Coroner's Office from NMS Labs for the purpose of toxicology testing in the amount of \$70,000.
6. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for the Coroner's Office from Memorial Medical Center for the purpose of lab fees in the amount of \$40,000.
7. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for County Administration from the Springfield-Sangamon Growth Alliance for the purpose of membership dues in the amount of \$500,000.

Mr. Cahnman had a question about Resolution 7. He wondered if the City of Springfield was also giving the Springfield-Sangamon Growth Alliance \$500,000. The Chairman did not know but did state they gave \$250,000 last year.

A voice vote was unanimous on the consolidation. A motion was made by Mr. Madonia that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolutions 2 – 7, as consolidated. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED  
RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

Chairman Van Meter addressed Mr. Cahnman's question adding they have requested that the Springfield-Sangamon Growth Alliance calculate the anticipated additional tax revenue the County will be generating from the new construction that is underway.

#### **WAIVER OF TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD**

A motion was made by Mr. Madonia, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, to waive the ten-day filing period. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED  
TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD WAIVED

## **RESOLUTIONS 8 - 15**

8. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Building & Grounds from Tyco Fire & Security (Johnson Controls) for the purpose of extending the fire alarm contract to the Courthouse and Public Health buildings in the amount of \$62,165.

A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Constant, to place Resolution 8 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. DelGiorno, seconded by Mr. Madonia to consolidate Resolutions 8 – 15. Chairman Van Meter asked County Clerk Gray to read Resolutions 9 – 15.

9. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Building & Grounds from Building Maintenance Services for the purpose of extending the janitorial contract in the amount of \$342,000.
10. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Building & Grounds from Area Distributors and other various vendors for the purpose of acquiring janitorial supplies in the amount of \$70,000.
11. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Building & Grounds from Sexton's Landscape Concepts for the purpose of snow removal for the 2024-2025 winter season in the amount of \$75,000.
12. Resolution approving an Intergovernmental Agreement for the sale of secured bed space in the Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center.
13. Resolution approving a grant application for Court Services from the State of Illinois Department of Human Services for the Juvenile Redeploy Illinois Program in the amount of \$370,000.
14. Resolution approving a grant application for Court Services from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority for the Family Violence Coordinating Council Program in the amount of \$48,377.
15. Resolution approving a grant application for Community Resources from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for the Community Service Block Grant Program in the amount of \$539,821.

Mr. Cahnman had a question about the snow removal in Resolution 11. He inquired about the County having their own crews for snow removal. Mr. Deaner stated the Building and Grounds staff handles the shoveling and salting of all sidewalks on County properties but an outside vendor is in charge of the bulk snow removal in the parking lots and public areas.

A voice vote was unanimous on the consolidation. A motion was made by Mr. Madonia that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolutions 8 – 15, as consolidated.

A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

### **RESOLUTION 16**

16. Resolution for agreement with Digitesse for the Massey Commission involving event management, communications, engagements, research and other tasks at an amount not to exceed \$76,800.

A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf, seconded by Mr. Tjelmelland, to place Resolution 16 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno to table the resolution. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION TABLED

### **RESOLUTION 17**

17. Resolution approving the Estate of Sonya Massey mediated settlement agreement.

A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf seconded by Mr. Madonia, to place Resolution 17 on the floor.

Joel Benoit, Chief of the Civil Division of the State's Attorney's Office, addressed the County Board about the County's civil claims process. He explained when a claim is first received in the State's Attorney's Office, they first determine whether or not it should be handled in-house or if outside counsel should be retained. If the claim were significant, he would first notify the County Administration and personnel to preserve any evidence regarding the claim. If outside counsel is retained, he would seek their advice regarding the best manner to respond to the claim.

He added that generally, at the first Civil Liabilities meeting after he receives any claim, he will discuss the claim with the Committee. The Civil Liabilities Committee is responsible for overseeing liability claims and legal matters concerning the County. They can approve resolution of claims at a dollar value up to \$50,000 on its own authority without going to the County Board. Each month, he goes back to the Civil Liabilities Committee to report on the status claims. His report will include significant developments in cases, defense expenses to-date, and he'll offer opinions on a likely course of litigation. He said when outside counsel is retained, they are often brought in and invited to speak to the Committee.

He stated if it appears possible to resolve a claim for a payment the Committee deems reasonable, he or outside counsel would try to reach a settlement agreement in principal with the claimants. If the settlement agreement is reached, it is then brought to the County Board for approval. He said this is where they are tonight in the claims of the estate of Sonya Massey. Through their lawyers, the estate, and the lawyers representing the Sheriff's Office and County agreed to attempt to reach a resolution of the estate's claims through mediation. For those not familiar with the mediation process, it is a process where a third or neutral party has experience in helping parties

settle lawsuits. In this case, it was a retired judge that helped the parties analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the claims and the defenses so they might come to an agreement on a reasonable settlement. Mediators can't force parties to settle, they just facilitate settlements.

He said that on Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, he and outside counsel met with the Civil Liabilities Committee to obtain its views on a reasonable settlement. The mediation took place in Chicago on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9 a.m. and went until 5:30 p.m. All parties had experienced counsel. Each side was placed in a different conference room and the mediator met with each side separately, all day. The mediator discussed jury awards in somewhat similar cases to try to help the parties set a value on the case. The mediator discussed how juries in different jurisdictions view cases differently. The mediator talks about the strengths and weaknesses of the claims and defenses. The mediator talks about attorney fees, the wear and tear litigation places on the parties, and the certainty offered by settlements. He added that, through the mediator, offers and counter offers went back and forth all day long. At the end of the mediation, parties agreed upon a ten million dollar settlement, which is contingent on County Board approval. After considering all the relevant facts, the State's Attorney's Office recommends the County approve the mediated settlement agreement.

County Administrator Brian McFadden addressed the County Board on how the County plans to pay for the settlement. There are a large number of policies and procedures that govern how they approach the County finances, and those have been governed by best practices they have adopted over the years. They have created reserves and contingency funds for something such as this. They have adopted the policy of the Government Finance Officers Association which recommend you keep a certain level of reserves in place for emergencies. That policy recommends somewhere around three months of operating expenses should be held back in reserves just in case of an emergency, settlement, or one-time payment or judgement. For the County, that represents between 15 to 20 million in reserves. He added it doesn't mean they always have that in reserves, it depends on what they are dealing with at that time. Currently they are dealing with a lot of Capital expenditures.

They create those reserves through contingency funds. Every year, when the budget is adopted there are contingency funds in place. They are to fund capital expenditures, judgements like this, payroll contingencies, and add up to hundreds of thousands of dollars in every budget. He said sometimes they are used and sometimes they aren't. They have a Collective Bargaining Agreement that's expired, and there is retro pay that's involved, so they use the payroll contingency to pay those. There are also one-time Capital expenditures such as the ice-maker that went out in the jail recently. Often the contingencies aren't all spent, they then drop-down into the fund balance, which then accumulates and creates the reserves. This is how those reserves are created to pay for this particular settlement. They will not be raising taxes, issuing additional debt or cutting services. They can handle this through what is in place in those reserves.

Mr. Cahnman asked what amount is currently in reserves. Mr. McFadden said he couldn't give him an exact number. He said there are a number of reserves in place. He said the General Fund 14 currently has \$1.6 million. The Insurance and Liability Fund 14 is used to pay for judgements, settlements and legal fees. It also pays for insurance policies, liability, property insurance, and claims and premiums are also paid out of there as well. That fund is seeded in many different ways. In the past, they issued bonds to seed that fund and create a fund balance. The \$1.6 million balance represents a remaining balance from a bond issuance.

Mr. Cahnman clarified that the \$1.6 million is in the settlement fund but will they put more money in that fund from various reserves? Mr. McFadden answered yes they would. Mr. Cahnman questioned if it was multiple funds that have reserves. Mr. McFadden stated there are a hundred funds that make up County government. Some, like the General Fund, could be used for various things. Mr. Cahnman questioned when Mr. McFadden says, "Various funds have reserves each fiscal year and they're planning on spending X number of dollars out of a particular fund." If the fund has more than X number of dollars in excess, then that excess is considered the reserve. Mr. McFadden clarified if expenditures exceed revenues then you are drawing from reserves. If revenues exceed expenditures, then you are adding to the reserves. This process is constant throughout the fiscal year. Some years are going to add to the fund balance, another word for reserve. Some years they're going to draw down from the fund balance. They have a Capital Fund that has reserves built up over years because they knew they were going to be dealing with a large number of capital projects. Those reserves are built up and are drawn down when they are expended on projects.

Mr. Ayers wanted to know when the last time was they replenished the bonds. Mr. McFadden responded it was 2013. Mr. Ayers then wanted to know what the process looks like when they replenish those bonds. Mr. McFadden stated you don't just decide you want \$20 million and then borrow \$20 million. He said local governments are allowed to create Tort Funds. If they issue bonds for use of those Tort Funds, they have to go through an actuarial study, which they did back in 2013 to calculate what would be needed. When they went through the process in 2013, they said they would need \$8 million over an eight-year period. They have exceeded that eight-year period and still have the \$8 million in place, so they did better than the actuaries thought they could do. They have to go through that process before they can issue bonds. Mr. Ayers asked if they would have to replenish at some point. Mr. McFadden said yes, but that doesn't mean they would have to issue bonds.

Mr. McFadden said he wanted to make it "crystal clear" that they are not issuing more debt to pay for this. They are not raising taxes and not cutting services. Mr. Ayers then asked if this was the first time they have used the reserves to pay a settlement? Mr. McFadden said he couldn't give a yes or no tonight. Mr. Ayers wondered if they might have to do this again? Mr. McFadden said there could be.

Mr. Guyton wondered how often the actuarial process happens. Mr. McFadden said it happens as needed. Mr. Guyton asked with the settlement on the table, is it safe to say they would probably need to go through this process again in the next few years? Mr. McFadden said he would say not because of this but because of the normal way. He said traditionally that fund has been seeded with a combination of bond proceeds and reserves from other funds. It's funded with two different revenue sources including bond proceeds, plus it has a levy that is associated with it. Traditionally, the levy first goes to pay for premiums. Depending on what's left over after that, it can be used to make payments on judgments, settlements, claims, and legal fees as well. It depends on what's going on within those two revenue sources.

Mr. Cahnman questioned whether they had any liability insurance. Chairman Van Meter clarified that they are self-insured. The cost of liability insurance is astronomical and this was the better route. Mr. Cahnman then asked if this is the largest settlement or judgment ever paid out by Sangamon County. Mr. McFadden stated he thinks it is.

Mr. Cahnman asked about fees for outside legal counsel. Mr. Benoit said he didn't know but there was a federal lawsuit filed with no response to that litigation. On the front end, legal fees on the County's side were very low compared to what they could have been. Mr. Cahnman questioned if the Sonya Massey estate filed a suit against the County in federal court. Mr. Benoit said there was one filed, but all claims of the estate will be resolved with this settlement. He added that he presents the fees be paid out through the Civil Liabilities Committee every month. He keeps them up-to-date and can make that information available to anyone.

Mr. Cahnman added he has read other settlements and wrongful death cases where law enforcement officers have killed citizens, and it appears that it's on the level of similar settlements. He said that obviously nothing could bring back Sonya Massey. He thinks it's really tragic that there are so many of these cases nationwide that they have now, and they can look at them and say this is on the level with other payments. Mr. Cahnman thanked the Civil Liabilities Committee and Chairman Craig Hall for the excellent work the Committee did in bringing this case to resolution. He appreciates Mr. Hall's work on this case and overall.

Mr. DelGiorno stated he had a question regarding the Resolution. He understands it would be giving authority to Brian McFadden and the State's Attorney to finalize terms of the settlement. He questioned whether there was any reason to not have that settlement language go through Civil Liabilities or any other elected body or portion of this Board as opposed to just delegating that authority.

Mr. Benoit responded by saying he feels it's just a matter of time. He said mediation just happened and is contingent on this agreement. He added that he thinks the attorneys on the other side and their attorneys deal with these types of settlement agreements day in and day out. He said they trust their attorneys. He added that the only reason to not go back to Civil Liabilities is it would delay the process in getting it done. Mr. DelGiorno wondered if they anticipated anything in this agreement in the future, and if this is a full release of all claims. Mr. Benoit said at the end of the day everyone wrote down the skeleton outline of the settlement, everyone signed it, and now they're just here as good faith that they're going to take this to the County Board and get it moving, and if approved, get it paid soon.

Mr. Cahnman added that it's just money and they aren't obligated to make any reforms under this settlement. He added that the Resolution says they are authorizing Mr. McFadden to execute documents which were approved by Sangamon County's legal counsel to effectuate the settlement. Mr. Cahnman asked for copies of the finalized agreement to be provided to the County Board members when they are effectuated.

Mr. Ayers stated he is certainly voting for this but they deserve more. He is requesting Joel to send out the attorney's fees for the Jaimeson Cody case that's been going on for almost four years. He's amazed at how quickly the Sonya Massey case came to a conclusion compared to others. He thinks the amount of fees in that case have to be exuberant. He believes after talking with the family, the magistrate said the County is liable to pay a dollar amount. Mr. Benoit questioned as to what attorney he was talking about. Mr. Ayers said it was the attorney for the Jaimeson Cody family. Mr. Benoit said that was not true. He added that everything you hear is not necessarily true. He continued by saying there is no magistrate that has said they are liable.



A motion was made by Mr. Madonia that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stands as the roll call vote for Resolution 17. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

### **RESOLUTION 18**

18. Resolution in support of Senate Bill 1954 authorizing County-level recall of Countywide officials.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Madonia, to place Resolution 18 on the floor.

Mr. Cahnman made a motion seconded by Mr. DelGiorno to adopt an amendment to Resolution 18 in support of Senate Bill 1954. He appreciates whomever created Resolution 18 and he appreciates Senator Turner for introducing Senate Bill 1954 creating a mechanism to enact recall. He believes the problem with the Resolution is that the Resolution and the "WHEREAS" clauses state that the proponents of recall were trying to mislead the public in saying that it was clear the County didn't have the legal authority to adopt recall even though there are Appellate Court opinions that say non-home rule units do have the power to adopt recall. He added that it is clear there was a legal dispute, and some members of the County Board thought they did have the authority and some thought they did not. The great thing about this bill is it clears it up and it also makes it clear if it passes, they would have the authority. He said the amendment simply changes the "WHEREAS's" replacing saying, "It is for sure they didn't have the authority" to saying, "It was a dispute", and takes out the part about the proponents misleading the public. It creates unity among the Board where everyone agrees there was a dispute. He said Senator Turner is now helping to resolve this legal dispute by introducing Senate Bill 1954. For those reasons, he urges adoption of the amendment to Resolution 18.

On the question to amend Resolution 18, upon a roll call vote, there were 6 Yeas – 17 Nays. Those voting Yea were: Ayers, Cahnman, DelGiorno, Guyton, Lathan, and McGuire. Those voting Nay were: Constant, Davsko, Douglas Williams, Fraase, Fulgenzi, Madonia, Mendenhall, Miller, Rader, Scaife, Schackmann, Sheppard, Small, Stumpf, Thomas, Tjelmeland, and Truax. The motion to amend Resolution 18 failed.

Ms. Lathan commented that she's happy this resolution is moving forward in terms of recall and creating space and opportunity for more accountability. For the record, she'd like to comment that she thinks this should be inclusive of not only County-wide elected officials but for County Board members as well. She does not think they are exempt and they should be held accountable as well. She added for those that supported the recall, the intent was not to mislead and be purposeful in that mislead using inaccurate information. She wants them to know there was an attempt to move forward in making sure elected officials were held accountable. She wanted those comments on record and to move forward.

Mr. Ayers stated in Election Oversight they had a pretty interesting debate about the amendment. He supports the bill that their amazing Senator has filed for recall. There is no question about his support for that. He said it is unfortunate how they have to get there is to go on record and

admit he's a liar to the public, which is what has been inserted in the "WHEREAS" clause. He thinks that is pretty shady. He's upset that they have members here who know that's true and that was a shady thing to include. They had a viable working alternative to take that out, to reword it and fix it where they'd have unanimous support, but they didn't go that route. He said this is how good public policy is made. Good public policy is made with a little amendment here or a tweak to something. This could have been a slam-dunk and now they have messed that up. He doesn't know why they are choosing to do that. He has watched every Massey Commission meeting there has been thus far. He said if anyone watched the marathon meeting last night, they would capture the general feeling of anger, chaos, depression and angst about why this community fails to heal. It's for stuff like this. For them forcing on the record that they are liars and they are misleading the public. He says that is ridiculous and they didn't have to do that. They saw a copy of the language days ago and they could have fixed it and they didn't, and that's why everyone is so angry. To take a vote where they're basically, saying, "Yeah, he's a liar" is ridiculous. He said he does support the bill and Senator Turner and moving it forward. Whenever it does move forward in the General Assembly he'll be taking off work at his day job and lobbying as hard as he can. He will go on record saying that he will vote Present on this. He added that he can't believe what they've done tonight with this maneuver. He says it was a shady and ridiculous attempt, and they didn't have to do that.

Mr. Guyton wanted to thank Senator Turner for putting this bill through and proposing it. He thinks it is very important and a step in building communication that feels equitable across communities. They have an obligation as officials to hold themselves accountable and to be held accountable. With that being said, he does understand where Mr. Ayers is coming from. He says it does leave a bad taste in people's mouths, not even because of the people who have worked on it, but from a community standpoint, there is language that says there has been distrust or underhanded ways this has been presented. He said if they are out in the community or having conversations with many of the people who live in the district or in the area or in the location where Sonya was killed, there are a lot of hurt feelings. There is a lot of uncertainty and a lot of healing to be done. He can say, without a doubt, that this language does not promote healing or binding the wounds this community has suffered. If anything, it aggravates them. He asked how they could say they're trying to build trust and a relationship but then in the same breath and Resolution say there have been members that have actively done wrong and tried to mislead them. He feels this is harmful for the relationships they are trying to build. He added if they tuned into the Massey Commission meeting last night they would see there are a lot off hurt feelings, distrust and anger. He will be voting yes for the resolution, but wants his comments put on record as well because they have an obligation to think about how they're relating to the community and the constituents.

Ms. Douglas-Williams addressed the County Board. She says from the bottom of her heart she is sorry for the family and she knows that they, as a County Board really feel that way. There are some things that can be done and some things that can't, and like her mom always told them growing up, "Be careful what you say because once it's out there you can't take it back", and that goes with every on of them. She added that every one of them has said something they cannot remove from each other's minds. From this day forward, if they really want to heal then they need to put all of that aside and move on for a better day. She said she also disagrees with Ms. Lathan's thinking that all County Board members should be included in this. They all need to realize, sit and think, and do their homework. She agrees that they are elected officials 110%, but they don't have the power to hire and fire anyone in the Sheriff's Department or in Don Gray's department. They don't have that power. She believes if they really want to move on, they should quit nitpicking and let it go.

They don't have to hash and rehash over and over. That is when it gets dangerous and words get so nasty. She doesn't think it's fair. She came on the County Board because in her lifetime she has wanted to help people, not to sit up there and squabble and go through a bunch of changes because it didn't go a certain way. She came on the County Board to help people and that's what they need to remember. That is their job. She added they may not do it the way someone else likes it, but to not put each other down because you're not doing what someone else wants you to do. She stated she has a mind of her own and she expresses what she feels, which may not be what they feel, but don't take that away from her – that is her freedom. She finished by saying they need to move on and do the job for the people, to the people and back for the people.

The Chairman had Clerk Gray take a roll call vote. There were 19 Yeas – 0 Nays – 4 Present. Those voting Yea were: Constant, Davsko, Douglas Williams, Fraase, Fulgenzi, Guyton, Lathan, Madonia, Mendenhall, Miller, Rader, Scaife, Schackmann, Sheppard, Small, Stumpf, Thomas, Tjelmeland, and Truax. Those voting Present were: Ayers, Cahnman, DelGiorno, and McGuire.

Mr. Cahnman wanted to explain his Present vote. He stated he does support the concept of Senate Bill 1954, he appreciated Senator Turner producing it, and he agrees with his colleague Gina Lathan that it should include County Board members. He said he cannot vote yes on the Resolution saying he and other proponents were misleading the public as to what the law was, which is the furthest from the truth.

MOTIONS CARRIED  
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

### **RESOLUTION 19**

19. Veteran's Assistance office space options.

A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Ms. Douglas Williams, to place Resolution 19 on the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Madonia, to send the Resolution back to Committee. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED  
RESOLUTION SENT BACK TO COMMITTEE

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Resolutions

There were no new resolutions.

## B. Appointments

Appointment of Eric Hansen to the Regional Planning Commission for a term expiring February, 2029.

Appointment of Larry Hamlin to the Regional Planning Commission for a term expiring February, 2029.

Appointment of Barbara Rochelle to the Community Service Block Grant Advisory Board for a term expiring February, 2028.

Appointment of Carole Keating to the Community Service Block Grant Advisory Board for a term expiring February, 2028.

Appointment of Rev. Silas Johnson to the Community Service Block Grant Advisory Board for a term expiring February, 2028.

Appointment of Mia Ray as the Director of the Office of Emergency Management.

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

MOTION CARRIED

APPOINTMENTS ADOPTED

## C. Emergency/Procurement Notifications

-Election Office – 2025 Ballot Printing – Election Systems & Software - \$51,000

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Shawn Miller, Chairman of the VAC of Sangamon County addressed the County Board. He states there is a paradigm shift in the Veterans Assistance Commission. There is an Act that went through the Illinois General Assembly and was unanimously approved by both parties. He has been fighting for this since November of 2023 and they have nothing back. They have been told, It is just and necessary.” He asked who is best to put just and necessary on the table. He said it’s the military organizations that support the VAC. He asked if they’re going to tell their constituents every single day that they don’t support Veterans because that’s what they’re doing every single day. They are stealing and taking from them. Right now, Sangamon County has about 13,000 military members, which is more than Peoria and Champaign County.

He stated they have to do better for their Veterans. He is pleading to them to put the Resolution in place. All of them today can vote to put forth the Resolution to abide by the Military Veterans Assistance Act. All they have to do is put up a resolution and vote for it. He questions what it will look like when he goes to the constituents and tells them they are not voting for Veterans.

He said they aren’t asking for a ton of money. They are asking for .02% of the EAV. Their budget for this year is under the .02% of the EAV, and they still can’t get it approved. He states this is ridiculous. He is mad, upset, and passionate. He is a war Veteran and is 100% disabled. He has a long

list of what he's done in wartime. He is asking them to stand up and vote for the Resolution to enact the Military Veterans Assistance Act or it is going to court and will cost them lots of money because they will go for the full amount. At that point, it will be just and necessary to pay for all of their bills.

Jessica Pugsley was signed up next to speak but was not in attendance.

Cynthia Cody, 20 Wildwood Road, Springfield, addressed the County Board. She said each time she comes here it's harder and it hurts more. Last time she was here, she was given three minutes to speak. She hopes she'll be able to finish before she is cut off. She is happy the County settled with the Massey family in a timely matter. She said Sonya and her son Jaime were both killed at the hands of Sangamon County officers. There is no difference between Sonya and Jaime, except the Massey shooting was caught on bodycam, but seven minutes of our son's torture and murder is missing from the video.

Ms. Cody said Ms. Massey's case was immediately investigated by the County and DOJ, but no such investigation has ever been done on their son's death. She continued by saying Ms. Massey's case is now settled, but County attorney's continue to solve Jaime's by not following court orders and refusing to respond to legitimate settlement offers. She added that seven months after the death of Sonya Massey, her case was settled. Her son Jaime's case has been going on for four years. It has been torture. Every day they get up expecting him to be there and they have nothing.

Ms. Massey was shot by a bad hire who is now being prosecuted for murder, and her son was suffocated by three officers who remain undisciplined. Nothing has happened to them to this day. Their son died of restraint asphyxia. He was suffocated by officers Scott Meyer, Kyle Meyer and Earl Grigsby, who with their combined weight weighed over 800 pounds. Those officers should have known all that weight on someone, who is face down on the ground, would kill him. She added they also tased him five times. There were two witnesses who said they heard Jaime say, "I can't breathe." They did not pay attention and let him die. In the depositions, none of the officers claimed to know what restraint asphyxia was and had received no training for it. She thinks that will change now with the new Sheriff.

She didn't understand why the officers put their combined body weight on her son while he was face down on the concrete floor with his hands underneath him but also tased him five times on the back of his legs. She knows compressing someone's lungs may kill them, and she believes the law is clear on that as well. She has an opinion from Judge Myerscough on another case that she will submit for the record along with her written comments.

She states that in Judge Myerscough's opinion, finding the decedent's attempts to squirm and arch, to buck upward means they're not fighting but being restrained. They're trying to breathe and live. This opinion is from Carlock vs. Sangamon County Sheriff which tells her they all knew this back in 2007. She said that was a type of force that should not be used but it changed nothing.

A couple years ago, they heard through the grapevine that the County was advised by their attorneys to stall Jaime's case. She wonders why they would want to stall the case. He was killed. It was a homicide. Four years later, they have been bombarded by the County with 32 motions for extensions. She says there are violations of court orders, seven minutes of video is missing, and the deposition testimony of two of the officers who killed their son say they don't remember killing him.

She wonders how could they forget that. She says none of those officers were disciplined for their son's homicide.

She says they all know this is not the first time this type of thing has happened in the Jail. They've known since 2008 that the officers should be trained on what restraint asphyxia is and measures to prevent it. What she's learned in the past four years is nothing has been done to train these officers to prevent this kind of tragedy from reoccurring over and over. Her son's death is not just one rogue officer acting outside of his authority. She added there were three officers that had to know they were suffocating him and didn't stop. She said they know there have been others like Paul Carlock and Pat Burns.

It is completely unbelievable to her to know these videos of critical moments are missing or destroyed. She added that in the mediation, the attorneys for the County walked out. They didn't want to mediate or rack up their bills. She said they refused to negotiate even though the judge informed them the County is liable for it, it's just a matter of the damages. Since then, she says they've had to file three motions to get their attorneys to abide by court orders and rules.

She adds that the County Board knew in the 14 years leading up to her son's death that restraint asphyxia causes death. They had 14 years to train their officers not to use these techniques and failed to do so, and as a result, their son is dead now. She questions why their family has been forced to suffer for four years while her son's case has stalled, which only increases their pain and suffering. She said her husband Dan is not here because he's not well. He's had a heart attack, three strokes, and is on the verge of another one. She wonders whether they want them to die and go away, because it is going to happen.

She wonders why they are letting this drag on and their attorneys to blatantly stall this case. They are the client and they are your attorneys. She says they can tell them what to do. They are supposed to represent the citizens of Sangamon County. They hired a firm, that employs Andrew Ramage, who is the same attorney that drug out the Carlock case for seven years, to represent them in their son's case

She said they are doing this for the children, and God only knows they might not be able to finish it. She and her husband have been lifelong residents of Sangamon County. He retired from the Fire Department after 25 years and she retired from the City Clerk's office after 25 years. They have devoted their lives to this County. What is it giving them back? Grief. She says they truly don't understand why they have been treated this way for four years. Their family deserves closure, not having it drug out, which causes them more pain, grief and suffering. She said they don't deserve to be stonewalled. They would like the DOJ to expand their investigation into the Sangamon County Jail officers. She added it has become clear, that not only the officers on the street, but also all the Sangamon County jail officers, need proper training.

There is no amount of money that compensate a family for the loss of someone like Jaime or Sonya. She finished by saying she was done fighting. She thanked them for their time.

Ashti Dawson spoke to the County Board next. She addressed her fellow Veterans, their families, and those in the community who support Veterans and wanted to express her heartfelt thank you for their continued commitment to the Veterans Assistance Commission of Sangamon

County. Their support is shown in so many meaningful ways, whether it's attending events hosted by their Veteran organizations, stepping into leadership roles to strengthen those organizations, or honoring our fallen comrades when their time on this Earth has come to an end. Their support shines through their membership with their post, their volunteer work for fellow Veterans, their trust in their VAC staff to assist with benefits, and their generous in-kind donations. They are truly appreciated and understand firsthand what it means to be supportive. They know what true support looks like and how it feels. She asked them to please continue to voice their support of their post and the Veterans that rely on it. American Legion Post 32, Post 274, Post 277, Post 278, Post 279, Post 809, AMVETS Post 94, Catholic War Veterans Post 1916, Italian American War Veterans, Marine Corps League, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Navy Club Ship Post 32, VFW Post 755, Post 10302, Post 4763, and Post 11463. This is the Veterans Assistance Commission of Sangamon County.

Ms. Dawson continued by saying one year ago she was honored to be selected as Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission. She said since then, the VAC Commission and VAC Executive Board and she have worked tirelessly to improve and strengthen the essential services provided by the VAC, ensuring that their Veterans and their families in Sangamon County receive the support they rightfully deserve. She adds that these improvements and enhancements have hit a wall several times.

She explained that the Military Veterans Assistance Act states that the Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission of the County shall, under the direction of the Commission, have charge of and maintain an office in the County Building or central location within the County to use solely by the Commission for providing just, necessary and needed services mandated by law. She said that to date, they have not been provided with a HIPPA compliant office space. She adds that this situation stems from the belief held by the County that HIPPA does not apply to them. She said in simple terms County officials were never responsible for the VAC nor representatives of any Veteran organization within the VAC have assumed the authority to make decisions regarding their operations.

Chairman Van Meter let Ms. Dawson know that her three minutes were up and asked her to kindly wrap it up. Ms. Dawson was confused by the changing of the rules with regard to speaking times. Chairman Van Meter explained it's supposed to be three minutes but additional time was extended to Ms. Cody because she was so emotional.

Mr. Ayers commented that Mr. Pacha had signed up to speak at this evenings meeting. Chairman Van Meter responded that he signed up after the deadline, which is 4:30 p.m. the evening before the scheduled County Board meeting.

Mr. Cahnman moved for unanimous consent to allow the member of the public to speak. Mr. Madonia and others objected. Mr. Pacha was not allowed to speak. Mr. Pacha expressed his objections to not being allowed to speak.

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

Mr. Madonia made a motion after conferring with the Chairman of the Election Oversight Committee and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, that beginning on March 11, 2025 the Election Oversight meeting will begin at 4:00 pm and the Finance Committee will begin at 4:30 pm.

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

MOTIONS CARRIED  
REPORTS FILED

**RECESS**

A motion was made by Mr. Madonia, seconded by Mr. Tjelmeland, to recess the meeting to March 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED  
MEETING RECESSED

***Don Gray***  
***Sangamon County Clerk***