

DON GRAY

SANGAMON COUNTY CLERK

200 SOUTH NINTH STREET – 1st FLOOR

SPRINGFIELD, IL 62701

PHONE: (217)753-6700/FAX: (217)535-3233

WEBSITE: countyclerk.sangamonil.gov



MINUTES

SANGAMON COUNTY BOARD

AUGUST 11, 2026

The Sangamon County Board met in Adjourned June Session on August 11, 2026 in the County Board Chambers. Chairman Van Meter called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Mr. Stumpf gave the Invocation and Mr. Fraase led the County Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Van Meter asked the County Clerk to call the roll. There were 26 Present – 2 Absent. Ms. Fulgenzi and Ms. Sheppard were excused.

PROCLAMATIONS

No proclamations.

PRESENTATION – TEEN HEALTH CARE EXPLORATION PROGRAM – AMANDA WINTER

St. John's College of Nursing offers an after-school Teen Healthcare Exploration Program for high school juniors and seniors in Sangamon County who are interested in healthcare, particularly nursing. The program meets once a month from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., with five sessions held between October and April. Students must provide their own transportation.

Participants gain hands-on experience through simulation and laboratory equipment, problem-based learning, guest speakers, and discussions with professionals from nursing, physical therapy, respiratory therapy, and other healthcare fields. The program also includes college-planning activities, hospital shadowing opportunities, research experiences, and tours of clinical areas such as the operating room. St. John's nursing students help run the program, allowing participants to learn directly about the nursing-school experience.

Students who attend at least three of the five sessions receive a certificate of completion, a white coat, and a tuition benefit for attending St. John's College of Nursing. Applications are completed through a Microsoft form distributed by Sangamon County high school guidance counselors.

From 2023 through 2026, 41 students earned a certificate or tuition benefit through the program. Of the 12 students who responded to a recent survey, six planned to attend a four-year college and four planned to attend a community college. Ten intended to study nursing, while the remaining respondents planned to study biology or cellular and molecular biology on a pre-medical track. Student feedback has been positive, with participants reporting that the program helped them choose a career direction and better understand the work of healthcare professionals.

PRESENTATION - U of I EXTENSION – COUNTY DIRECTOR TERRI CASEY

University of Illinois Extension County Director Terri Casey thanked the Sangamon County Board for its continued support and highlighted the organization's recent community impact. Extension has strengthened local food systems through the Sangamon County farm-to-table initiative, connecting farmers with schools, organizations, and consumers. It helped organize a farm-to-table lunch at Pleasant Plains Farmingdale Elementary, develop an online producer directory, and provide educational opportunities about locally grown food. Extension also helped establish the Sangamon County Department of Public Health Community Garden, a one-acre site with 66 affordable plots, accessible raised beds, irrigation, a greenhouse, pavilion, and space for donated produce. Despite a difficult growing season, the garden has produced approximately 500 pounds of food for community donation.

Extension continues to support residents through its Master Gardener program, beekeeping classes, community gardening education, and youth activities at Motherland Gardens and the Garvey-Tubman Cultural Arts and Research Center. Its 4-H programs help young people develop leadership, STEM, career-readiness, financial-management, and life skills through activities such as Welcome to the Real World and LEGO engineering. Ms. Casey also highlighted the formation of the Sangamon County Disaster Recovery Coalition, which brings together emergency management officials, nonprofits, churches, businesses, and volunteers to plan for long-term recovery following disasters. She concluded that Extension remains committed to improving food access, public health, youth development, and community preparedness throughout Sangamon County.

Mr. Cahnman asked for a moment of silence for Terry Nydegger who served as the New Berlin Chief of Police from November of 1998 until his death. He also served on the Sangamon County Rescue Squad for 48 years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Van Meter stated there were 8 people signed up for public comment and they are limited to four minutes.

Speaker 1: Justin King, a Western Sangamon County resident, farmer, and landowner criticized the County Board for denying Advanced Solutions permission to construct a 110-by-240-foot agricultural dealership and seed warehouse on five acres while approving a proposed 1.5-million-square-foot data center campus on 280 acres. He argued that the much larger data center poses serious risks involving water consumption, chemicals, pollution, heat emissions, and the permanent loss of productive farmland. He also questioned how continuous heat discharged from the facility's closed-loop cooling system could affect nearby farms and residents.

Mr. King maintained that opposition to data centers is growing nationwide and accused the county's approval process of favoring wealthy, well-connected developers over residents. Expressing concern about the continuing loss of agricultural land, he warned that removing farmland from production could increase reliance on foreign food sources. He thanked the board members who voted against the project and urged the board to honor its responsibility to constituents. He concluded that approving industrial development on farmland directly conflicts with the chairman's stated goal of making Sangamon County the "farm-to-table capital of the world."

Speaker 2: Kyle Charpie. He was not present

Speaker 3: Rosanne Pulido. She is a resident of Sangamon County Board District 28 and urged the Board to approve a measure allowing county board members to be recalled. She said her representative had been unreachable for approximately six months because the telephone number listed on the county's website repeatedly directed callers to a full voicemail box. After being unable to leave a message, she twice contacted the County Board office to complain, describing the situation as "taxation without representation."

Ms. Pulido contrasted this experience with her former county board member, Mark Ayers. Although they held different political views, she said Ayers took his responsibilities seriously, treated her concerns with respect, and was easy to contact. As a 70-year-old who continues to work to support herself, Ms. Pulido argued that an employee who performed as poorly as she believes her current representative has would lose their job. She added that other senior citizens in her area have encountered similar communication problems and should not have to overcome unnecessary obstacles to contact a paid elected official.

Ms. Pulido said her current representative contacted her only after learning that she planned to speak publicly about his lack of responsiveness. She also argued that county board members should be subject to recall for participating in nondisclosure agreements that conceal information about proposed economic-development projects. In her view, such agreements prevent transparency regarding projects that could threaten residents' homes, property, and communities. She concluded by again asking the Board to support the proposed recall resolution.

Speaker 4: Ken Pacha. He was not present.

Speaker 5: Jordan Shaw. She said that, although her previous public comments had been largely unprepared, their goal was to assure Sangamon County residents—particularly those living near Lowder and in the speaker's hometown of Virden—that people remain committed to opposing the CyrusOne data center project. She has agreed to volunteer during evening hours and explained that this may be one of her few opportunities to address the Board publicly about data centers in 2026.

She argued that public opposition to data centers and artificial intelligence is growing across the country, citing polling and protests in other communities. She stressed that elected officials have an obligation to listen carefully when residents express concerns about projects that could affect their health, property, and livelihoods. In her view, the County Board has ignored its constituents in favor of the possibility of jobs and economic benefits offered by CyrusOne.

She criticized the Board for approving the project despite months of testimony about potential effects on farms, livestock, public health, the environment, noise levels, and pollution. She also referenced concerns about a CyrusOne data center in Joliet as evidence that the company's projects can create serious problems. She accused the Board of showing a lack of empathy toward nearby residents and questioned how members could continue believing that the project would benefit the community.

Her remarks concluded with a warning directed at the board members who voted in favor of the data center. She suggested that, if those members continued to support the project after hearing months of opposition, voters might hold them accountable in the November election.

Speaker 6: Robert Popovich. He thanked the chairman and County Board members and said he had been working with Sam Cahnman on a proposed ballot referendum allowing the recall of county board members. He said Sangamon County residents have been receptive to the proposal, and he has personally collected more than 700 signatures from registered county voters. He emphasized the importance of cooperation and said the goal should be to make Sangamon County one of the best counties in Illinois.

He stated that supporters are continuing to work on the recall proposal and hope to place it on the ballot in 2027. Before concluding, the speaker also recognized Malone's Taffy, which was celebrating its 100th anniversary at the Illinois State Fair, and encouraged those attending the fair to try its homemade taffy.

Speaker 7: Teresa Haley. She was not present.

Speaker 8: Donna Massey. She was not present.

Speaker 9: Tara Bergschneider. She is a resident of Sangamon County Board District 7, where the CyrusOne data center is planned, and expressed concern about the secrecy and complexity surrounding the project. She said nondisclosure agreements and protective orders prevent residents from following development proposals from their earliest stages. She also cited the use of multiple shell companies and LLCs, along with changing identification numbers, addresses, and parcel registrations, as factors that make the project difficult for the public to investigate and understand.

She voiced support for the proposed recall measure, arguing that residents should retain the ability to hold elected officials accountable. She questioned whether board members had received all relevant information about the data center or had knowingly approved the project despite its potential consequences. She said she had spent months independently researching the issue, building on earlier research involving fiber-optic internet development.

She encouraged board members to review information provided by the Illinois Open Field Coalition Forward, a group conducting research and working with communities across Illinois. She warned that similar economic-development strategies are being introduced systematically in multiple locations and could threaten the future available to ordinary residents and their children. She concluded by urging the Board to take the situation seriously, conduct independent research, and reconsider its actions to protect Sangamon County's future.

Speaker 10: Sontae Massey. He was not present.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Madonia, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, for approval of the Minutes of the July 14, 2026 meeting. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED

MINUTES ADOPTED

CORRESPONDENCE

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

RESOLUTION 1

1. Resolution approving the Planning Year 2027 agreement with the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission for the Planning Year 2027 Unified Planning Work Program in the amount of \$39,500.

A motion was made by Mr. Mendenhall, seconded by Ms. Lathan to place Resolution 1 before the Board. Chairman Van Meter asked the Clerk to call the roll. Upon the roll call vote, there were 25 Yeas – 0 Nays. Resolution 1 was adopted.

MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2

2. A Resolution approving a purchase order to Mohawk Lifts, LLC for the purchase of a four-post lift and alignment machine for the Fleet Maintenance Department in the amount of \$88,000.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Miller to place Resolution 2 before the Board. Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolution 2. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 3

3. A Resolution approving an FY2027 purchase order to Rush Truck Center, Springfield for the purchase of a Tandem Axle Dump Truck with snow removal equipment in the amount of \$262,000.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Tjelmeland to place Resolution 3 before the Board. Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolution 3. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 4

4. 2026-017 Phyllis Anderson, 8854 Werner Road, New Berlin – Granting Variances. County Board Member Craig Hall, District #7.

A motion was made by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Mendenhall to place Resolution 4 before the Board. The Chairman asked if there were members of the audience who wished to speak in opposition or in support of the proposed rezoning and variances. Both opponents and proponents were present.

Zoning staff proceeded to give the procedural history of the case. The petitioner requested several variances to divide an existing property. The requests would allow two proposed parcels smaller than the normally required 40 acres—one approximately four acres and the other approximately 16 acres. An additional variance was requested to permit the depth of a lot to exceed two and one-half times its width.

Planning Commission staff recommended approval because the division would separate the existing residence from the surrounding cropland without changing the current land uses. Staff found that the applicable standards for the variances had been met and that no negative impacts were anticipated. The Zoning Board of Appeals agreed with the staff's recommendation.

Paul Rice of New Berlin spoke as the real estate agent for property owner Phyllis Anderson. He explained that Anderson and her late husband had owned the approximately 20-acre property since 1985 and operated an airstrip where her husband performed airplane-maintenance work. Her husband died about 10 years ago, and Anderson has since moved into a senior living facility and is no longer able to maintain the property.

The family is seeking approval to divide the property into two parcels: approximately four acres containing the residence and several outbuildings, and approximately 16 acres that include the former runway. Rice said the family accepted an offer for the four-acre residential parcel and believes the proposed division is in the best interests of both the family and the buyer. The 16-acre parcel will remain in the family and continue to be farmed, with no current plans to sell it.

Ms. Bergschneider urged the County Board not to approve zoning requests immediately on the same night they are introduced. She asked members to take additional time to investigate nearby electrical-grid requests, infrastructure improvements, and other development activity that could reveal a broader purpose behind a proposed zoning change.

Although she did not claim that the property under consideration was connected to a larger development, she noted that the identity of a possible buyer for the additional acreage had not been disclosed. She expressed concern that rezoning, subdividing, and transferring parcels can be part of a longer-term development process. She asked board members to perform proper due diligence, understand the purpose and potential consequences of every zoning request, and consider how their decisions could affect residents throughout the county.

Mr. Rice noted that the property is located on Warner Road, west of Farmingdale Road. There are already approximately six or seven residences in that area situated on parcels ranging from one to five acres. He explained that creating a smaller residential parcel is therefore not unusual for that particular section of the road.

Ms. Bergschneider agreed that the zoning request appeared routine and consistent with other properties in the area. However, she cautioned that earlier land transactions and development activities connected to Double Black Diamond, CyrusOne, QTS, and other projects had also initially appeared ordinary.

She reiterated the importance of proceeding carefully with zoning decisions. She urged board members to take sufficient time, conduct their own due diligence, and fully understand the potential implications of each proposal before voting to approve it.

A voice vote was unanimous to grant the zoning.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 5

5. 2026-018 The Lady and the Beard Properties, LLC, 1580 Jeffries Road, Springfield – Granting a Conditional Permitted Use with Conditions and Variance. County Board Member Annette Fulgenzi, District #17.

A motion was made by Mr. Rader, seconded by Mr. Mendenhall to place Resolution 5 before the Board. The Chairman asked if there were members of the audience who wished to speak in opposition or in support of the proposed rezoning and variances. A motion was made by Mr. Mendenhall to waive the staff report. A voice vote on the adoption of Resolution 5 was unanimous. Resolution 5 was adopted.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 6

6. 2026-019 Jack and Donna Brown, 1500-1700 Block of Geary Road, Cantrall – Granting a Rezoning and Variances. County Board Member Tom Fraase, District #1.

A motion was made by Mr. Fraase, seconded by Mr. Mendenhall to place Resolution 6 before the Board. The Chairman asked if there were members of the audience who wished to speak in opposition or in support of the proposed rezoning and variances. A motion was made by Mr. Mendenhall to waive the staff report. A voice vote on the adoption of Resolution 6 was unanimous. Resolution 6 was adopted.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 7

7. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for the Elections Department from Up North Printing for the purpose of printing Certification and Mail Out envelopes (with and without permit) for mail ballots in the amount of approximately \$35,035.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Small to place Resolution 7 before the Board. Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolution 7. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 8

8. Resolution approving a grant application for the Office of Emergency Management from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency-Office Homeland Security for the FY25 Emergency Management Performance Grant in the amount of \$100,446.63.

A motion was made by Mr. Rader, seconded by Mr. Davsko to place Resolution 8 before the Board. Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolution 8. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

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

RESOLUTION 9

9. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Information Systems from Ring Central for the purpose of a 5-year contract for County wide phone services in the amount of \$876,573.00.

A motion was made by Ms. Deppe, seconded by Ms. Clarke to place Resolution 9 before the Board. Mr. DelGiorno made a motion, to consolidate Resolutions 10 – 14 with Resolution 9. Chairman Van Meter asked the Clerk to read Resolutions 10 – 14.

RESOLUTIONS 10 - 14

10. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Public Health from Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County for the purpose of large item pick-up and disposal services in the amount of \$150,000.
11. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Public Health from Heartland Housed for the purpose of providing Narcan distribution services in the amount of \$150,000.
12. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Public Health from Morgan County for the purpose of providing Narcan distribution services in the amount of \$60,000.
13. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Public Health from Sista Girl and Friends for the purpose of providing Narcan distribution services in the amount of \$30,000.
14. Resolution approving an Intergovernmental Agreement between Sangamon County, Illinois and the City of Springfield, Illinois Regarding Tourism Content Sharing and Interactive Wayfinding Platform.

On the motion to consolidate, a voice vote was unanimous. Mr. Cahnman wanted clarification that the money for Resolutions 12 and 13 were from the Opioid settlement. Mr. Ridley confirmed that it was.

Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolutions 9 - 14. A voice vote was unanimous. Resolutions 9 – 14 were adopted.

MOTIONS CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 15

15. Resolution submitting a referendum to Sangamon County voters in the November 2026 General Election to provide for the power of recall of County Officers.

A motion was made by Mr. Cahnman, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno to place Resolution 15 before the Board.

Mr. Cahnman requested that two speakers, who were late arriving to the meeting, be allowed to speak. The Chairman said he would allow it.

Teresa Haley addressed the board. She urged the Sangamon County Board to support a measure permitting the recall of county board members. She connected current concerns in Springfield and Sangamon County to the community's long history of racial injustice, including the 1908 Springfield Race Riot, which helped lead to the founding of the NAACP. Ms. Haley said the county continues to face serious problems that have attracted attention beyond the local community.

Ms. Haley cited the Sonya Massey and Earl Moore cases as examples of incidents that have damaged Sangamon County's reputation. She argued that approving a recall process would help rebuild public trust by showing residents and taxpayers that county leaders hear their concerns and are prepared to act. She also called for greater unity throughout the community.

Ms. Haley maintained that anyone serving in a leadership position—including herself—should be accountable when serious problems occur under that person's watch. She said taxpayers should have the power to recall public officials rather than see the county continue applying temporary solutions to recurring problems. She concluded by encouraging Sangamon County to demonstrate leadership through proactive rather than reactive action.

Ken Pacha next addressed the board. He thanked the County Board for the opportunity to address the proposed recall measure and said it should be viewed as part of the broader effort to correct longstanding problems in Sangamon County. Referencing the death of Sonya Massey, he acknowledged actions such as the creation of the Mental Health Board but argued that additional reforms are necessary. He noted that 39 other states allow some form of recall for local officials, including city council members, county commissioners, and school board members, and maintained that the proposal is neither new nor revolutionary.

Mr. Pacha argued that residents should not have to depend upon a troubled public official voluntarily resigning. They cited former Sheriff Jack Campbell, saying the community had to wait for him to step down despite longstanding problems within the department. While acknowledging that not every departmental failure could be attributed solely to Campbell, he maintained that leaders must be held responsible for what occurs under their supervision. A recall would require substantial public effort and therefore would not be used casually.

According to Mr. Pacha, recall should not threaten officials who are performing their duties, nor should it become a tool for removing someone merely because of ordinary political disagreements. Instead, it would provide a remedy when an elected official has seriously departed from the expectations of the community and residents broadly support removal. He argued that voters elect candidates based on their promises to represent and listen to the public, and residents should not have to wait years for the next election when an official's conduct is causing serious or irreparable harm.

He urged board members not to characterize the proposal simply as Sam Cahnman's third attempt to secure approval. Rather, it should be considered another effort to establish meaningful accountability, restore confidence in county leadership, and improve how Sangamon County is

perceived. He described recall as a public “safety lever” that would prevent residents from being left at the mercy of an ineffective or harmful official and encouraged the Board to approve the measure.

Mr. Cahnman then opened the discussion on Resolution 15. He explained that the proposed recall measure arose from the killing of Sonya Massey by a Sangamon County sheriff’s deputy. Subsequent investigations raised concerns that former Sheriff Jack Campbell had overlooked numerous warning signs before the deputy was hired. Although public officials and community members called for Campbell’s resignation, the county had no mechanism to remove him if he refused to step down. This prompted supporters to pursue recall authority for county elected officials.

Addressing questions about the measure’s legality, he cited Illinois court decisions that, in his interpretation, establish that recall changes both an official’s term of office and the manner in which the official is selected. He argued that the local-government provisions of the Illinois Constitution therefore permit home-rule and non-home-rule counties to establish recall through a binding referendum. He noted that Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, and Wheeling have adopted local recall provisions and that Aurora residents recently submitted signatures seeking a similar referendum.

Mr. Cahnman said the Massey Commission and Sonya Massey’s father, James Wilburn, support recall. State Senator Doris Turner introduced legislation authorizing counties to establish recall through a referendum, but the bill was later narrowed to Sangamon County and stalled in the Illinois House after passing the Senate. Because the House was not expected to act before the August 17 deadline for placing a question on the November 3, 2026, ballot, supporters also attempted a citizen petition. They collected more than 3,000 signatures but fell short of the approximately 6,596 required by the August 3 filing deadline. Consequently, he said the County Board is now the only body capable of placing the question on the November ballot.

He acknowledged that county legal counsel has questioned whether the Board possesses the authority to establish recall. However, he compared the issue with a recent solar-farm zoning decision in which members were warned that denying relief could lead to litigation. He argued that the legal case for recall is stronger because court decisions and existing municipal recall provisions support the claimed authority, while no party with an obvious financial interest appears likely to challenge the referendum. If a challenge is filed, he said, the courts can ultimately decide the legal question.

He described recall as a “safety valve” for rare circumstances in which the public has lost confidence in an elected official who refuses to resign. He also cited a former state representative who remained a township highway commissioner despite calls for his resignation as another example of why recall authority is needed. He concluded by asking board members to approve the resolution and allow Sangamon County voters to decide whether they want the power to recall local elected officials.

Mr. Stumpf acknowledged the many issues Sangamon County has addressed since the death of Sonya Massey, including mental-health care, the Massey Commission, reforms involving the Sheriff’s Office, and improvements to the legal system. He said these efforts have produced positive results and recognized that residents hold differing opinions about Sam Cahnman’s proposed recall measure.

He then asked the state's attorney for a clear legal opinion. Because the Board regularly relies on professional guidance from the State's Attorney's Office, Regional Planning Commission, Health Department, and other county staff, he wanted to know whether Sangamon County, as a non-home-rule county, has the legal authority to approve the proposed recall referendum.

He emphasized that the state's attorney's advice would carry considerable weight in the voting decision. While supporting the county's broader reform efforts following Massey's death, Mr. Stumpf viewed the recall proposal as a separate legal question and requested a direct answer about whether approving it in its current form would violate Illinois law.

Mr. Benoit, Assistant Sangamon County State's Attorney, explained that, after learning the recall resolution would be considered, he reviewed his legal research from December 2024 regarding the County Board's authority. His earlier memorandum examined the relevant provisions of the Illinois Constitution and applicable court decisions. Based on that analysis, he concluded that Sangamon County does not have the legal authority to establish the proposed recall process, and he said his opinion has not changed.

He acknowledged that the appellate court decisions are not entirely consistent. According to the state's attorney, one decision appeared to support local recall authority, another rejected it, and a third fell somewhere between those positions. After analyzing the conflicting cases, however, he determined that the stronger legal conclusion was that the County Board lacks the necessary authority. He added that University of Illinois law professor Scott Szala independently reviewed the issue, agreed with that conclusion, and warned that proceeding could result in costly litigation.

Mr. Benoit emphasized that his opinion addressed the law rather than whether recall is good public policy. He noted that Illinois law expressly provides only for the recall of the governor and does not generally authorize the recall of other state or local officials. Although a few Illinois municipalities have adopted recall provisions that may not have been challenged, he said recall is not generally part of Illinois state policy. He concluded by reaffirming his opinion that the County Board cannot legally enact the proposed measure.

Mr. Madonia asked Sangamon County Clerk Don Gray what the State Board of Elections position is on this issue?

Clerk Gray said this was not the county's first examination of whether it could establish a recall process, noting that the issue had been analyzed since May 2024. He also referenced discussions among county clerks and their associations, as well as Senate Bill 1954 in the 104th General Assembly, which sought to address recall authority for Sangamon County.

He cited comments from Illinois State Board of Elections spokesperson Matt Dietrich during the county's earlier debate. Mr. Dietrich reportedly explained that state law might permit home-rule municipalities to establish recall elections but does not grant county governments the same authority for county elected officials. Mr. Gray argued that the introduction of Senate Bill 1954 supports this interpretation because the legislation represented an acknowledgment that recall authority for counties must first be expressly established in state law.

Clerk Gray further explained that the proposed referendum is written as a binding measure that would create a detailed recall-election process and require the Sangamon County Clerk's election office to administer it. In his view, binding referendums must be expressly authorized and codified by the state, as occurs with certain taxation and bonding questions. Without that statutory authority, a referendum would generally be advisory rather than enforceable.

Clerk Gray distinguished the current proposal from an advisory question asking whether Sangamon County should seek recall authority from the General Assembly. Instead, the resolution would direct the county clerk to implement a specific recall procedure immediately if voters approved it. Because that procedure does not presently appear in the Illinois Election Code, he questioned whether the election office could legally administer it and concluded that county officials may act only under authority expressly provided by Illinois law.

Ms. Lathan wondered if there had been enough signatures on the petition, if it would have gone on the ballot for November 2026 election. Clerk Gray said it would have been possible. Ms. Lathan then asked if whether approving the recall measure would allow either the state or county to develop the necessary policies and procedures afterward. She compared it with public-health emergency measures, in which a law or mandate may be approved first and the detailed administrative policies needed to implement it are created later.

She questioned whether the same approach could apply to the recall proposal—allowing the Board or voters to authorize recall initially, followed by the development of specific procedures for carrying it out.

The discussion focused on what would happen if voters approved the proposed recall referendum when no state-authorized procedures exist for implementing it. Mr. Gray clarified that the question was not whether the County Board could direct the Illinois State Board of Elections to create rules. Instead, the question was whether an approved recall measure would remain inactive at the county level until the appropriate governmental body developed the policies necessary to carry it out.

Ms. Lathan sought clarification about how an actual recall would proceed after the referendum passed, given the apparent absence of a governing procedure in state law. She also questioned why supporters were permitted to circulate petitions and collect signatures for the referendum if officials remained uncertain about whether the measure could be implemented or what steps would follow its approval.

The Chairman said the central problem with the proposed recall measure is uncertainty about what would happen after its adoption. In his view, the provision would simply be added to the county code without being tested until a future crisis in which residents sought to remove an elected official. At that point, emotions would be high, the public might rely on the county's recall provision as a remedy, and the targeted official would likely challenge it in court.

The Chairman argued that the resulting litigation would focus on whether Sangamon County had the legal authority to create a recall process. Although supporters have cited Illinois municipalities and appellate court decisions supporting local recall authority, the county's legal counsel and a University of

Illinois law professor concluded that Illinois law does not grant Sangamon County that power. He also noted that county officials sought express authority from the General Assembly, but the legislature did not enact the necessary legislation.

Separating the merits of recall from the legal issue, the Chairman said recall may be worthy of a broader policy debate but that adopting an unauthorized process would create false expectations. Residents facing a future crisis might believe the county had given them an effective means of removing an official, only to discover that the provision could not withstand a legal challenge. Rather than solving the problem, the measure could expose citizens and the county to expensive litigation.

He also distinguished between advisory and binding referendums. An advisory referendum may ask voters for their opinion on virtually any subject but does not create an enforceable policy. A binding referendum, by contrast, is intended to take legal effect. He concluded that petitions may be circulated and questions may be placed before voters, but a binding vote cannot create authority that neither the county nor its voters possess under the Illinois Constitution and state law.

Mr. DelGiorno suggested changing the proposed recall measure from a binding referendum to an advisory referendum. He recalled that the county has previously used advisory questions to demonstrate public support and encourage the Illinois General Assembly to act on an issue.

Because Senator Doris Turner's recall legislation had stalled in the Illinois House, he asked whether voter approval of an advisory referendum could strengthen the case for legislative action during the veto session. Such a vote would not itself create a county recall process, but it could show state lawmakers that Sangamon County voters support receiving the authority to establish one.

Mr. DelGiorno acknowledged the desire to support the Massey Commission's recommendations while recognizing the continuing disagreement over whether Illinois law permits Sangamon County to establish a binding recall process. He suggested stepping back from the disputed legal question and considering an advisory referendum instead.

He noted that a citizen petition effort could continue for a future consolidated election and that Senator Doris Turner's recall bill had already passed the Illinois Senate. An advisory vote demonstrating public support could give Turner additional leverage when seeking approval in the House.

Mr. DelGiorno asked whether Mr. Cahnman would accept a friendly amendment changing the proposed binding referendum to an advisory question. Mr. Cahnman responded that he would be open to the amendment.

Chairman VanMeter didn't see that solution as viable.

Mr. Hall questioned whether the recall resolution had been reviewed by the appropriate committee before being presented to the full County Board. It was explained that the proposal had been considered in 2024 but had not returned to committee during the current effort. Supporters brought it directly to the Board because the August 17 deadline for placing a question on the November 3 ballot would not allow enough time for another committee review.

Mr. Hall argued that the resolution should nevertheless have gone through the established committee process, particularly after the petition effort failed to collect enough signatures. Drawing on personal experience with proposals that had failed before the Board, he emphasized that Sangamon County operates under a committee system and that respecting that structure is important.

Mr. Cahnman responded that the Board has authority to approve matters without committee consideration, Chairman VanMeter stated that the response was out of order because Mr. Cahnman did not have the floor. Mr. Hall concluded that bypassing committee review was inconsistent with the Board's customary procedures and showed insufficient respect for both the Board and its process.

Mr. Cahnman made a motion to amend the original recall resolution by converting it into an advisory referendum. It was seconded by Ms. Feipel and Ms. Lathan. The proposed question would ask whether Sangamon County citizens should have the power to recall county elected officials. Supporters argued that an advisory referendum would avoid some of the legal concerns surrounding a binding recall measure while demonstrating public support that Senator Doris Turner could use to advance state legislation authorizing recall.

Several board members objected to considering the proposal without first sending it through the appropriate committee. They noted that the wording and legal form of the advisory question had not been fully reviewed. Mr. Cahnman explained that the resolution was introduced late because supporters had initially attempted to place the issue on the ballot through a citizen petition and did not know until the August filing deadline whether they had collected enough signatures. He argued that sending the proposal back to committee would prevent it from appearing on the November ballot. Others recommended committee review followed by consideration for the April election, saying that approach would provide time for county attorneys and election officials to prepare a legally sound proposal.

Supporters emphasized that the county should respond to the recommendations developed following the death of Sonya Massey. They argued that public employees and elected officials should be accountable when they fail to perform their duties professionally or no longer serve the community effectively. One member said that, even if the county currently lacks legal authority to create a binding recall process, it should pursue a lawful method of establishing safeguards for removing officials who seriously fail the public.

Other members questioned whether recall would be strong or timely enough and asked what conduct would justify removing an official. One member recalled a previous county coroner controversy and argued that waiting for a recall election could leave an unfit person in office too long, suggesting that a process with stronger and more immediate consequences might be preferable. Another member expressed concern that recall efforts could arise from personality conflicts, unpopular statements, or unproven accusations rather than serious misconduct.

Mr. Cahnman responded that the proposed ordinance contained a substantial threshold: a recall election could occur only after petitions were signed by voters equal to 8 percent of those who voted for governor in the county or affected board district. He estimated that a countywide effort would require approximately 7,000 signatures, making recall difficult to initiate without widespread loss of confidence

in an official. He argued that similar systems operate successfully in other states and urged the Board to approve the amendment.

A roll call vote on the amendment was held. There were 6 yes votes and 19 no's. The motion was defeated. Those voting YES were; Cahnman, DelGiorno, Feipel, Guyton, Lathan and McGuire. Those voting NO were; Clarke, Davsko, Deaner, Deppe, Douglas-Williams, Forsyth, Fraase, Hall, Krell, Madonia, Mendenhall, Miller, Rader, Scaife, Schackmann, Small, Stumpf, Tjelmeland and Truax.

MOTION CARRIED
RESOLUTION FAILED

Mr. Cahnman addressed the Board again on the original resolution. He responded to concerns raised by Mr. Gray and the chairman regarding the legality and potential consequences of establishing recall in Sangamon County. He argued that the chairman's fears of future litigation were overstated and pointed to Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, and Wheeling, where local governing bodies authorized binding recall referendums. According to Mr. Cahnman, Arlington Heights later held a recall election that resulted in the removal of a city council member without an apparent legal challenge.

He disputed reliance on comments from Matt Dietrich of the Illinois State Board of Elections, noting that Dietrich had previously worked as a journalist. He claimed Dietrich later regretted commenting on the county's legal authority and argued that Dietrich was not qualified to provide a legal opinion. The speaker also rejected the argument that recall authority must be expressly stated in the Illinois Election Code, maintaining that Illinois law includes both statutes and the state Constitution.

Citing the proposed resolution, Mr. Cahnman argued that Sections 4 and 7 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution permit Sangamon County to change county officers' terms and manner of selection through a countywide referendum. He further maintained that Section 11 of Article VII and the Illinois Election Code authorize the County Board to place such a referendum before voters by resolution. In his view, the adoption of recall provisions by three other Illinois municipalities demonstrates that this authority is already codified.

He also questioned the weight given to the opinion of a University of Illinois adjunct law professor, emphasizing that the professor had spent much of his career practicing at the Kirkland & Ellis law firm rather than working as a full-time academic. He said Senator Doris Turner's Senate Bill 1954 was not an acknowledgment that counties lack recall authority; rather, it was intended to resolve the existing disagreement by granting explicit statutory authorization.

He concluded that the Board should act boldly and allow any legal challenge to be resolved by the courts. He stressed that placing the question on the ballot would not require board members to endorse or oppose recall. Instead, it would allow Sangamon County voters to decide for themselves whether they want the power to recall county elected officials.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the question. The vote was 6 Yes votes and 19 No votes. The resolution was defeated. Those voting YES were; Cahnman, DelGiorno, Feipel, Guyton, Lathan and McGuire. Those voting NO were; Clarke, Davsko, Deaner, Deppe, Douglas-Williams, Forsyth,

Fraase, Hall, Krell, Madonia, Mendenhall, Miller, Rader, Scaife, Schackmann, Small, Stumpf, Tjelmeland and Truax.

MOTION CARRIED
RESOLUTION FAILED

RESOLUTION 16

16. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for the Circuit Clerk's Office from Bradfield's Inc. for the purpose of supplying Lexmark printers, parts and toner in the amount of \$35,000.

A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Deaner to place Resolution 16 before the Board. Mr. DelGiorno made a motion, to consolidate Resolutions 17 – 18 with Resolution 16. Chairman Van Meter asked the Clerk to read Resolutions 17 – 18.

RESOLUTIONS 17 - 18

17. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for the Circuit Clerk's Office from Conference Technologies Inc. for the purpose of a video arraignment system in the courts/county jail in the amount of \$43,139.91.
18. Resolution approving the procurement of goods and/or services for Court Services from various vendors (Vanderburgh House, Oxford House, etc.) for the purpose of deposits and one to three months' rent in the amount of \$31,000.

A voice vote was unanimous on the motion to consolidate. Mr. Cahnman had a question on Resolution 18. He asked about an item providing rent and security-deposit assistance for individuals ordered by the courts to receive substance-use treatment. County staff explained that the assistance is funded through a grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

The grant pays for individuals leaving residential treatment to stay in sober-living housing for approximately one to three months while they begin their transition back into the community. Staff clarified that this is not a new program; Sangamon County has received and used this funding for several years.

Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolutions 16 - 18. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTIONS CARRIED
RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 19

19. Resolution allowing Sangamon County to enter into a contract with Crawford Murphy and Tilly, in order to supplement the operations of the Building and Zoning Department in an amount not to exceed \$800,000.

A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno to place Resolution 19 before the Board.

Mr. DelGiorno, working with Mr. Stumpf, proposed an amendment intended to strengthen a resolution concerning Sangamon County’s payment of professional-service expenses associated with the CyrusOne data center project. The amendment would formally incorporate CyrusOne’s August 5, 2026, letter committing the company to reimburse the county for all professional fees incurred in reviewing construction plans, building plans, and other project materials for compliance with state law and county regulations.

The amendment would require all invoices submitted to the county to be reported to the Finance Committee chair or committee within two business days of receipt. The committee would likewise be notified within two business days whenever CyrusOne reimbursed the county.

If CyrusOne failed to provide full reimbursement within 14 days after receiving an emailed request, the county administrator would be authorized to halt further permit-review work by Crawford, Murphy & Tilly and stop other work related to the data center without obtaining an additional vote from the County Board or an oversight committee. No additional permits would be issued until CyrusOne reimbursed all county expenses within the timeframe established by the county administrator. The two board members jointly offered the amendment to ensure that county taxpayers would not bear the project’s professional-review costs. Mr. Stumpf seconded the amendment.

A voice vote was unanimous on the amendment. Mr. Madonia moved that the roll call vote for Resolution 1 stand as the roll call vote for Resolution 19. A voice vote was unanimous.

Ms. Scaife said in addition to Mr. Madonia’s mother being a nurse, her mother was also a nurse at St. John’s and an instructor. One of her very good students was Mr. Stumpf’s wife, Denise.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business.

A. Appointments

Appointment of Dianne Barghouti Hardwick, to the Springfield Airport Authority, for a term expiring August, 2031.

Appointment of Brian Kieninger, filling the unexpired term of Samuel Collins, to the Western Fire Protection District, for a term expiring May, 2029.

Appointment of Lara Quivey, filling the unexpired term of Tim Timoney, to the Deputy Merit Commission, for a term expiring February, 2027.

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

MOTION CARRIED
APPOINTMENTS ADOPTED

The nominations for approval in September were also submitted.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED
REPORTS FILED

RECESS

A motion was made by Mr. Stumpf, seconded by Mr. DelGiorno, to recess the meeting to September 1, 2026. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
MEETING RECESSED

Don Gray
Sangamon County Clerk