



Effingham County Board  
101 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 301, Effingham, IL  
217.342.4990

**Tax & Finance**  
**Committee of the Whole of the Effingham County Board**  
**3rd Floor Board Room, Effingham County Building**  
**Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

TAX & FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: Norbert Soltwedel Chairman, Sandi Rich Vice Chair, Chris Keller, Dave Campbell, Josh Douthit, Doug McCain, Jeremy Deters, Tim Ellis, Mike Buzzard

Committee Members Present: Chair N. Soltwedel, Vice Chair S. Rich, D. Campbell, J. Douthit, D. McCain, T. Ellis, M. Buzzard.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norbert Soltwedel

**1. Approve Minutes**

- Member T. Ellis made a motion to approve the minutes. Member M. Buzzard seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

**2. Unfinished Business**

**• Proposed Final FY25 Budget and Tax Levy**

A spreadsheet was provided with a breakdown of the proposed amounts of the tax levy. Member J. Douthit highlighted some of the areas in which an increase has been requested to the tax levy. The proposed increases would be in Social Security, Mentally Deficient, Mental Health, County Health & TB, Effingham Co Extension and Veterans Commission. The board discussed the requested increases for each fund and how the increased funds would be spent. It was noted the requested increase to the County Health fund was mainly for salary. Member S. Rich requested a breakdown of the what the additional funds would be spent on for the County Health Fund. It was determined the following funds would have a proposed increase to the tax levy. Social Security \$20,000.00; Mentally Deficient -377 \$20,000.00; Mental Health - 708 \$20,000.00; County Health \$60,000.00; Effingham County U of I Extension \$6,000.00; and Veterans Assistance \$65,500.00. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to increase the tax levy with the proposed increases to Social Security \$20,000.00; Mentally Deficient -377 \$20,000.00; Mental Health - 708 \$20,000.00; County Health \$60,000.00; Effingham County U of I Extension \$6,000.00; and Veterans Assistance

\$65,500.00. The total increase would be \$191,500.00. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Health Insurance Waiver Incentive**

There was discussion on the current Health Insurance Waiver Incentive. This is for employees who are eligible for the health insurance but choose to waive their option for health insurance coverage. There was a suggestion to eliminate this waiver incentive in order to apply these funds to the employee's monthly health insurance premiums. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to eliminate the Health Insurance Waiver Incentive to the employees who waive health insurance. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Medicare Incentive**

The monthly Medicare Incentive is paid out to employees who are eligible for Medicare. Currently there are seven employees who receive the monthly amount of \$350.00. After conferring with the Aaron Jones, States Attorney, and reviewing some of the restrictions on the insurance regulations it was determined to eliminate the Medicare Incentive. If an employer sponsors group health insurance and has 20 plus employees, the County can't offer any other financial or incentive to Medicare entitled individuals not to enroll into a group health plan. There was discussion if the seven employees were aware of this change. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to eliminate the Medicare Incentive offered to employees. Member M. Buzzard seconded. Member D. McCain had opposition. **Motion carried.**

- **Opioid Funding Request – Effingham County Sheriff's Office**

Paul Kuhns, Sheriff, spoke to the board about his application for funding from the Opioid Settlement Fund. He is requesting \$164,264.00 from this fund. The program he presented will address the opioid and drug abuse addiction with the jail inmates. This is a two year plan that will treat 6 inmates using local agencies to help with the treatment. Paul stated there is grant money available to assist with funding of the treatment plan and he is asking for commitment to this treatment plan. Several board members spoke highly of the proposed treatment plan. There was concern this request would utilize all the available Opioid Settlement Funds. There was a suggestion to use \$100,000.00 of the settlement fund for the Sheriff's dept treatment plan and the remainder of the cost possibly could come from grant money for the two year treatment plan. It was noted that \$50,000.00 a year would be allocated from the settlement fund. Member S. Rich made a motion to recommend to the full board to allocate \$100,000.00 from the Opioid Settlement Fund with a two year commitment to the Sheriff's dept treatment plan. Member D. McCain seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **ARPA Earmarked Funds**

- **Effingham County Regional Airport**

Greg Koester informed the board the bid opening will take place on November 8, 2024. The estimated ARPA amount for this project is \$733,000.00.

- **Effingham County Highway Department**

Greg Koester noted the current bridge projects will use the remainder of the ARPA funding.

- **Mason Township Park District**

The final invoice was submitted by the Mason Township Park district for their ARPA funding. It was noted that \$60.91 would be unspent. Member J. Douthit made a motion

to recommend to the full board to recover \$60.91 from Mason Township Park District and return back to the ARPA fund. Member D. Campbell seconded. Unanimous.

***Motion carried.***

○ **Historic Courthouse Courtyard and Gazebo**

Member J. Douthit noted the City of Effingham has tentatively agreed to fund \$50,000.00 toward the Historic Courthouse Courtyard and Gazebo project. This is contingent on the Effingham County board funding the remaining amount which is \$54,895.00. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board the allocation of \$54,895.00 of ARPA funding for the courtyard and gazebo project. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

**3. New Business**

● **ARPA Funding – Historic Courtyard and Gazebo Project**

Discussion and motion were made in the prior agenda item.

● **Intergovernmental Agreement – County of Effingham and City of Effingham for Historic Courtyard and Gazebo Project**

This intergovernmental agreement for the courtyard and gazebo project was requested by the City of Effingham. This agreement between the City of Effingham and County of Effingham was reviewed by Aaron Jones, States Attorney and states funding of \$50,000.00 from the City of Effingham for the project. There are plans to give recognition with a plaque of this joint effort. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to enter into this Intergovernmental Agreement between County of Effingham and City of Effingham for the Historic Courtyard and Gazebo project. Member D. McCain seconded. Member S. Rich abstained from the vote. ***Motion carried.***

● **F&C Concrete Agreement for Historic Courtyard and Gazebo Project**

There will be no action on this agenda item. The final contract is not available at this meeting. This agreement will be on the October County Board meeting agenda without committee recommendation.

● **ARPA – Childcare Research Committee GAP Scholarship**

Courtney Yockey with the Childcare Research committee was present at the meeting to inform the board of three applicants. One applicant is a renewal and eligible for 12 months and will be retroactive to prevent gap time in scholarship. He stated there are two new applicants in which one is eligible and one is not eligible. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board approval of the renewal of the applicant which is retroactive to September 2024 and the allocation of \$3,600.00 from the ARPA funding. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.*** Member T. Ellis made a motion to recommend to the full board approval of the new applicant pending approval from CCAP. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

● **Effingham Regional Growth Alliance**

Courtney Yockey with the Effingham Regional Growth Alliance requested 2024 membership dues from Effingham County. The amount is \$15,000.00. Courtney highlighted the benefits of having a membership with the Effingham Regional Growth Alliance. It was noted this amount is in the budget. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board approval of the Effingham Regional Growth Alliance 2024

membership in the amount of \$15,000.00. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Effingham County Sheriff's Office Abandoned Property**

Travis Buhnerkempe, Chief Deputy Sheriff, requested the Sheriff's dept be able to dispose of some bicycles in their possession. According to State Statute, the bicycles with a value of under \$100 could be donated to a charitable organization but must be approved by governing body. Member S. Rich made a motion to recommend to the full board the approval of the donation of the bicycles to FISH. Member M. Buzzard seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Superior Window Company Invoices Payment**

It was noted the invoice for the Superior Window Company must be approved for payment. This is for the new windows in the Effingham County Building and the total payment is \$98,421.00. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board the disbursement of \$98,421.00 to Superior Window Company. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

#### 4. **Appointments**

- None

#### 5. **General Information/Public Comments**

- Courtney Yockey informed the board of the monthly webinar.
- Member J. Douthit noted the public meeting for the Opioid Settlement funds will be on October 24, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

#### 6. **Closed Session**

Convene in closed session pursuant to Illinois Statutes Section 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) in order to discuss employment matters.

- Member T. Ellis made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to Illinois State Statue Section 5 ILCS 120/2 ( C ) (1) to discuss employment matters. Member S. Rich seconded. **Motion carried** on a roll call vote of 7 ayes; 0 nays; 1 absent; 0 abstain
- The regular meeting of the Effingham County Board reconvened. Chairman N. Soltwedel stated there was no action taken in the matters of employment.

#### 7. **Adjourn**

- Member D. Campbell made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Member D. McCain seconded. Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Kollmann  
Effingham County Clerk