



Effingham County Board
101 N. 4th 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, November 14, 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, J. Deters, T. Ellis, M. Buzzard.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norbert Soltwedel

1. Approve Minutes

- Member J. Deters made a motion to approve the October 2024 Tax and Finance minutes and the Special Tax and Finance minutes from October 15, 2024. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

2. Unfinished Business

• ARPA Earmarked Funds

○ **Effingham Childcare Research - Gap Scholarship**

It was noted two applicants applied for the scholarship. However, both applicants are not eligible. Currently there are no pending applicants. There was discussion on the need to make an adjustment in the ARPA funding. The Childcare Research committee would like to have the remaining funding available if there was a possible applicant before the end of the year. The ARPA funding must be allocated with an agreement before December 31, 2024 and it was decided any unused funds will be returned to the ARPA fund.

○ **Effingham County Regional Airport**

Member J. Douthit stated there was an earmark of \$900,000.00 of ARPA funds for the Effingham County Regional Airport project. A total amount of \$604,791.00 will be

allocated for the Airport project and \$295,209.00 will be returned back to the ARPA fund. The airport is requesting the funds be used on the hangar, hangar improvements and runway concrete. Greg Koester stated he was comfortable with the bids. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to allocate \$604,791.00 of ARPA funding for the airport hangar/concrete project. Member J. Deters. seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.** Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to recover \$295,209.00 back the ARPA fund. Member D. Campbell seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Effingham County Highway Department**

Greg Koester, County Engineer, stated the remaining ARPA funds of \$126,856.00 will be spent by the townships. There will be no unused ARPA funding to recover.

- **Historic Courthouse Courtyard and Gazebo**

Member J. Douthit updated the board on the progress of the Courtyard and Gazebo project. He noted a couple of invoices will be addressed in the new business of this meeting. The funds are allocated and agreements are in place.

- **Courtyard Trees**

It was noted a tree was removed from the courthouse courtyard some time ago. An invoice was never submitted and several attempts have been made to contact the business about the invoice. The total bill was \$512.33. If an invoice is submitted at a later date, payment will be made from a different fund. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to recover \$512.33 back the ARPA fund. Member D. McCain seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **FY25 Proposed Budget**

There was a change in the proposed budget for the Highway Department for the health incentive reimbursement in the amount of \$5,000.00. The health incentive is not needed for the FY25 budget. No action is needed. This was for informational purposes.

- **FY24 Proposed Levy**

Jessica Wells, Director of Effingham County Extension, was present at the meeting to discuss the FY24 tax levy. They requested a \$6,000.00 increase to the Effingham Co. Coop Extension fund. She provided a spreadsheet with a breakdown of the expenses. There was discussion on staffing, how much other counties contribute thru their tax levy, if the requested amount is sufficient and the how much the state matches in funding.

Chairman N. Soltwedel stated the proposed FY24 tax levy is in the board packet and he noted the proposed increases to the FY24 tax levy for the different funds. The total amount of the proposed increases will be \$191,500.00. The tax levy will be finalized at the special board meeting later this month.

3. **New Business**

- **ARPA - Village of Montrose Request**

Member J. Deters informed the board of a request from the Village of Montrose for some upgrades and infrastructure improvements to the Village Hall. Steve Browning, Mayor, was present and submitted a list with pricing on the improvements needed. It was noted the ARPA funds must be spent by December 31st and invoices must be submitted. Member J. Deters made a motion to recommend to the full board to allocate ARPA funding up to \$17,692.74 for the Village of Montrose. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **FY25 Liability Coverage**

A proposal for the Property and General Liability Insurance was submitted. This is a renewal with an effective date of December 1, 2024. There were several options submitted and the board selected the alternate proposal in the amount is \$628,066.00 with a 6.68% increase. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to approve the CIRMA renewal for liability insurance with option #3 and in the amount of \$628,066.00. Member J. Deters seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **F&C Concrete Invoice**

There were two invoices submitted by F&C Concrete on work completed for the courtyard gazebo project. It was noted one invoice will satisfy the initial amount for the grant so that was billed separate. Member D. McCain made a motion to recommend to the full board for the approval of the disbursement of \$106,470.00 to F&C Concrete. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.** The second invoice was billed for \$50,000.00. This matches the contribution from the City of Effingham which is in part of the intergovernmental agreement on the gazebo project. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board the approval of the disbursement of \$50,000.00 to F&C Concrete. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **TREC Trail Maintenance Invoice**

The invoice submitted by the Effingham County Highway Dept. is reimbursement for work completed on the TREC trail. The invoice amount of \$2820.88 is paid from TREC Trail. Member D. Campbell made a motion to recommend to the full board the approval of the disbursement of \$2,820.00 to Effingham County Highway for TREC trail maintenance. Member J. Deters seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Intergovernmental Agreement – Effingham County & DCFS**

Paul Kuhns, Sheriff, submitted a copy of the intergovernmental agreement between Effingham County and Department of Children and Family Services. DCFS has started a statewide program requesting an officer to be with their investigators on home visits. DCFS is willing to pay all costs associated with the officer which includes salary, payroll taxes, retirement, vehicle expenses, uniform, equipment, etc. A breakdown of the expenses was submitted. The proposed agreement was reviewed and approved by Aaron Jones, States Attorney and DCFS. Paul has requested to increase the number of deputies allowed by the Sheriff's dept by one deputy. It was noted the deputy will be controlled by the Effingham Co. Sheriff's dept. and will be able to perform normal department duties. Member D. Campbell made a motion to recommend to the full board to enter into the Intergovernmental Agreement with DCFS and to increase the number of deputies in the Sheriff's Dept. by one deputy. Member M. Buzzard seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Sarah Bush Lincoln Employee Assistance Program**

A report and the annual agreement on the Sarah Bush Lincoln employee assistance program were submitted to the board. The annual cost for this program is \$5,700.00 and the effective date will be December 1, 2024. It was noted the program was used by several employees. Member J. Deters made a motion to recommend to the full board to approve the Sarah Bush Lincoln Employee Assistance program. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **FY25 Salary Schedule**

The FY25 salary schedule reflects a 3% increase. Also, a template was provided by Aaron Jones, States Attorney, for the salary schedule. Aaron noted some minor language changes and clarifications to be more consist with county policy. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to approve the FY25 Salary Schedule. Member D. Campbell seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **Employee Christmas**

There was discussion on the employee Christmas party. The expenses for the party are reflected in the FY25 budget. Last year the party included a Christmas luncheon for the employees during working hours and a \$25.00 gift card was given to each county employee. The feedback from the luncheon was positive. Member J. Douthit made a motion to recommend to the full board to approve a \$25.00 gift card to the employees and plan employee luncheon. Member D. Campbell seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

- **FY25 Meeting Schedule**

The FY25 Tax and Finance meeting schedule was submitted. Member J. Deters made a motion to recommend to the full board to approve the tax and finance meeting schedule for FY25. Member D. McCain seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

4. **Appointments**

- None

5. **General Information/Public Comments**

- Member J. Douthit informed the board the Effingham County Coroner's office had a car/deer accident. The vehicle involved was the Toyota Highlander. There will be a shortfall of \$15,056.57 after the insurance payout. He suggested to pay for the new vehicle out of contingencies and this will be on the regular county board meeting agenda without committee recommendation.
- Paul Kuhns, Sheriff, noted his department will also need a new squad car. Recently a squad car was involved in an accident and the vehicle was totaled. The insurance reimbursement will not cover the full cost of a new car.
- Member T. Ellis noted the remaining ARPA funds available is now \$340,092.06.

6. **Closed Session**

- None

7. **Adjourn**

- Member D. McCain made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Member T. Ellis seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried**

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Kollmann
Effingham County Clerk