



Effingham County Board  
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217.342.4990

## EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD REGULAR MEETING May 19, 2025 – 4:00 p.m.

### MINUTES

EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS: Joshua Douthit-District B, Chair, David Campbell-District D, Vice Chair, Norbert Soltwedel-District A, Tim Ellis-District C, Christopher Keller-District E, Mike Buzzard-District F, Doug McCain-District G, Sandra Rich-District H, Jeremy Deters-District I.

#### 1. ROLL CALL, PLEDGE, PRAYER

The County Board of Effingham County, Illinois met pursuant to a regular meeting on Monday, May 19, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, County Building, City of Effingham, and State of Illinois.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Joshua Douthit. Roll call was taken with the following

**Board Members present:** Joshua Douthit, David Campbell, Norbert Soltwedel, Tim Ellis, Christopher Keller, Mike Buzzard, Doug McCain, Sandra Rich, Jeremy Deters. Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman J. Douthit gave the prayer.

#### 2. RECOGNIZE PERSONS WHO WISH TO SPEAK ON AGENDA/NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- None

#### 3. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

##### APPROVE MINUTES

##### ACCEPT OFFICER'S MONTHLY REPORTS

##### APPROVE BILLS – COUNTY BOARD PER DIEM & EXPENSES

##### COMMITTEE AGENDA CONSIDERATIONS

##### Health and Insurance Committee

- None

##### Legislative/Personnel Committee

- Approve Resolution – Abating City of Altamont FY2025 GIS Fee Per Intergovernmental Agreement
- Approve Resolution – Abating City of Effingham FY2025 GIS Fee Per Intergovernmental Agreement
- Approve Resolution – Opposing HB2827: Defending Parental Rights and Education Freedoms
- Approve Appointments

- Agricultural Area Board ▪ Cletus Bloemer (6/1/2025-5/31/2028)
- Todd Wachtel (6/1/2025-5/31/2028) Veterinarian
- Dr. Nancy Huels, DVM MS (6/1/2025-5/31/2027)
- Board of Review ▪ Charles Braasch (6/1/2025-5/31/2027)

#### **Road and Bridge Committee**

- Approve Resolution Appropriating Funds for the Payment of the County Engineer's Salary, BLR 09221
- Approve Resolution to Award MFT Material Bids

#### **Building and Grounds Committee**

- Approve Use of Historic Courtyard and Parking Lot for Downtown Movie Night on June 20 and June 21, 2025

#### **Transportation Committee**

- None

#### **Tax and Finance Committee**

- Approve \$2,750.00 Distribution in Hotel/Motel Funding for Lake Sara Fireworks
- Approve \$1,500.00 Distribution in Hotel/Motel Funding for Village of Dieterich Fireworks
- Approve \$750.00 Distribution in Hotel/Motel Funding for VW FunFest and Downtown Movie Night

#### **Ambulance Oversight Committee**

- None

#### **Public Safety Committee**

- None

#### **CONSENT AGENDA CONSIDERATIONS**

- Member S. Rich pulled agenda item "Approve Resolution – Abating City of Effingham FY2025 GIS Fee Per Intergovernmental Agreement." Chairman J. Douthit placed item as #4A
- Member S. Rich pulled agenda item "Approve Resolution – Opposing HB2827: Defending Parental Rights and Education Freedoms." Chairman J. Douthit placed item as #4B

#### **CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

- Member J. Deters motion to approve the consent agenda except items pulled from the consent agenda considerations. Member C. Keller seconded. **Motion carried** on a roll call vote 8 ayes; 0 nays; 0 absent; 0 abstain

#### **4. EXTRACTED CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

- **#4-A - APPROVE RESOLUTION – ABATING CITY OF EFFINGHAM FY2025 GIS FEE PER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT**

Member S. Rich pulled this agenda item to abstain from the vote. Member J. Deters motion to approve the Resolution – Abating City of Effingham FY2025 GIS Fee Per Intergovernmental Agreement. Member T. Ellis seconded. Member S. Rich abstained from the vote. **Motion carried.**

- **#4-B - APPROVE RESOLUTION – OPPOSING HB2827: DEFENDING PARENTAL RIGHTS AND EDUCATION FREEDOMS**

Member S. Rich pulled this agenda item for further discussion. She is in favor of the resolution but requested the wording in Section #4 be changed from infringes on to violates. Member S. Rich made a motion to approve the Resolution – Opposing HB2827: Defending Parental Rights and Education Freedoms with wording change in Section #4 from infringes on to violates. Member C. Keller seconded. Then Member N. Soltwedel voiced his concern about the children

not receiving an adequate education thru home schooling and truancy. Norbert is concerned about the wording on the resolution that is included in the seventh whereas and that there is no recourse or enforcement with this verbiage. He has spoken with DCFS and Regional Superintendent of Schools office about truancy. Two representatives with the Regional Superintendent of Schools gave some details and information about truancy procedures and home schooling. They stated their concerns and the need for proper procedures for home schooling. Norbert proposed the agenda item be tabled for further discussion to address the issues. Member J. Douthit stated this resolution is to send a message to state legislators that the current process is not working. Member N. Soltwedel suggested to remove the seventh whereas. Member N. Soltwedel made a motion to amend the original motion for approval of the resolution and to change the wording from infringes on to violates. Member S. Rich seconded. **Motion carried** on a roll call vote 6 ayes; 2 nays; 0 absent; 0 abstain. Member S. Rich made a motion to approve the Resolution – Opposing HB2827: Defending Parental Rights and Education Freedoms with the wording change of infringes on to violates and to strike paragraph #7. Member C. Keller seconded. **Motion carried** on a roll call vote 5 ayes; 3 nays; 0 absent; 0 abstain.

**5. APPROVE BID AWARD FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR RENOVATIONS OF SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN COUNTY BUILDING WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Travis Buhnerkempe, Chief Deputy Sheriff Dept, noted three responses for bid of proposal were turned in for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor renovations to the Sheriff Office. This will be a grant funded project. The bidders were Grunloh Building for \$63,685.00, ARKA Builders for \$41,050.00 and Grunloh Construction for \$38,200.00. It is the recommendation to award the bid to Grunloh Construction which is the low bidder. Member T. Ellis motion to approve the bid to Grunloh Construction in the amount of \$38,200.00 for the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Renovations of the Sheriff's office. Member N. Soltwedel seconded. Motion carried on a roll call vote 8 ayes; 0 nays; 0 absent; 0 abstain.

**6. APPROVE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND AND SOLAR COMMITTEE WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

A committee will need to be established to facilitate any wind or solar applications. The committee will meet as needed. The committee will consist of Sandi Rich, Chair; Tim Ellis Vice-Chair and Mike Buzzard, committee member. Member J. Deters made a motion to approve the development of the Wind and Solar Committee. Member D. McCain seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

**7. APPROVE UPDATED COUNTY BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is a formality to update the committee assignments. Member T. Ellis made a motion to update the County Board member committee assignments to include the Wind and Solar committee. Member D. McCain seconded. Unanimous. **Motion carried.**

**8. APPROVE ORDINANCE GOVERNING SOLAR ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Chairman J. Douthit noted the solar ordinance had been discussed at length. It was decided to bring the ordinance to the full board for approval for adoption of the Ordinance for Solar Energy. All final changes have been noted. This reflects the ordinance with UCCI and has best language to protect the citizens and infrastructure. Member S. Rich made a motion to approve the Ordinance Governing Solar Energy Conversion Systems in the Unincorporated Areas of Effingham Illinois. Member C. Keller seconded. Member D. McCain requested to abstain. Member N. Soltwedel had

reviewed the proposed ordinance and listed some items to be considered. Some of the items included batteries, disconnect of power at the gate, height of the fencing, soil sterilant, number of days of abandonment, cost of decommissioning and increased cost of megawatt. Member N. Soltwedel made a motion to table the solar ordinance. Member J. Deters seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

**9. APPROVE ORDINANCE GOVERNING WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Member J. Deters made a motion to refer the wind ordinance back to Legislative committee. Member S. Rich seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***

**10. APPROVE APPOINTMENT WITHOUT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION  
AGRICULTURAL AREA BOARD – BRIAN BOHNHOFF (06/01/2025 – 05/31/2028)**

The appointment and party affiliation of Brian Bohnhoff was confirmed. Member N. Soltwedel made a motion to approve the appointment of Brian Bohnhoff to the Agricultural Area Board. Member M. Buzzard seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried***

**11. ELECTED OFFICIAL REPORTS**

- Molly Williamson, Chief Managing Officer Probation Office, was present at the meeting and gave a brief introduction. She was appointed to this position upon the retirement of Cheryl Meyers.

**12. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Dave Campbell stated there is no update on the grant for the economic development committee.
- Norbert Soltwedel attended the UCCI meeting and informed the board of some proposed tax increases for services.
- Doug McCain stated the cost for the Altamont blacktop has come in under bid.
- Jeremy Deters gave an update from the transportation committee. The new buses have arrived. He also gave a plea to municipalities and townships for additional donations to transportation services.
- Tim Ellis from the airport commission stated the ground breaking for the airport T-hanger and runway extension is getting closer.

**13. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Cora Weber, home educator, thanked the board their support and for passing the resolution opposing HB2827. She stated a little over 500 families in Effingham County home school their children.
- Kathy Schroeder expressed her appreciation for the work with the wind/solar ordinances. She requested a quick explanation of what the status is for the ordinances. Chairman J. Douthit updated her.

**14. CLOSED SESSION**

- None

**15. ADJOURN**

- Member J. Deters motioned to adjourn this meeting. Member C. Keller seconded. Unanimous. ***Motion carried.***