

**MACON COUNTY BOARD  
OPERATIONS & PERSONNEL  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Macon County Office Building  
141 S. Main St. – Room 514  
Decatur, IL 62523**

**August 23, 2021**

**5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Debra Kraft, Chair  
Bill Oliver  
Pat Dawson  
Dave Drobisch

**COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT**

Carol Reed, Auditor  
Mary Eaton, Recorder  
Josh Tanner, County Clerk  
Rocki Wilkerson, Workforce  
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Grant Noland  
Kristen Larner

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kraft at the Macon County Office Building.

**MINUTES**

Motion to approve minutes of prior meeting (7/19/2021) made by Ms. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Oliver, and the motion carried 4-0.

**APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND CLAIMS**

Motion to approve payroll as presented made by Ms. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Oliver and the motion carried 4-0.

There were no claims available for approval. They will be included with next month's.

**REPORTS**

***Auditor's Office***

Ms. Reed reported that they are currently filling out applications for the liability insurance for next year. CIRMA is the group we are with. It is probably going to go up, we just don't know how much yet. More will be known in another month or so.

***County Clerk –***

Mr. Tanner reported that they had received on Thursday, the population numbers from the official Decennial Census. So, we have until November to get the Board reapportioned. The Board

members definitely have to decide how many districts there will be, how many Board members there will be, and whether the Chairman will be elected at large. Those are the things that definitely have to be decided.

The population numbers for the Board districts as they exist will not conform. So, some changes will have to be made. A meeting like this is probably not the best way to discuss the changes that will be needed. The smallest district, #2, is short about 740 voters and the largest district, #7, is over by about 1,010. No district is off from the average by more than 10%, but the difference between the biggest and the smallest districts is greater than 10%. Therein, lies the problem.

Likewise, the number of precincts has been reduced over the years. That trend has been continued, but that makes moving the board districts around – you have a smaller pie that you are cutting into the same number of pieces – so it is getting more and more difficult to make that happen.

Chair Kraft commented that when she was at the UCCI meeting earlier today, they pretty much said that if we have not already decided on the number of board members, we are just too late because that has to be submitted by October 1<sup>st</sup>. They said to determine that is by our population, but we cannot just randomly decide how many board members we want. She asked if that was correct. Mr. Tanner said there are some provisions about that, but he did not believe that population – it is not a function of this population, you have to have say 5 or with this population . . . There are some lower limits that are basically functions of the total population. But, you can decide. You are not going to go down that low anyway. He said the bottom was 5 or 7. Ms. Kraft said that there was one County Board member who thought it should be dropped down. It's been conversations, but she said she wanted to stress that they could not just randomly . . . Mr. Tanner confirmed, saying there is a lower threshold that you can choose to do something. There is nothing that precludes you from doing an even number of members, although not too many counties to that. Ms. Kraft said that Sangamon & Champaign are opting to stay the same. The only county that spoke up was Fulton County. The other counties seem to be leaving theirs the same. Mr. Tanner said that is up to the Board's discretion. Ms. Kraft agreed. She said she was just sharing what they had heard at the meeting. Ms. Dawson said that within that, there are certain things that have to be satisfied. Mr. Tanner agreed saying that if they stay with 7, they would have to change the districts regardless because the amount between the smallest and largest is too great. You will have to change some of the composition of the board districts. He suggested they come up with a small working group, like 2 or 4, because there are lots of variables involved in moving these around. They have to be contiguous. The population has to work out correctly. He said he has found that by just looking at them, is that when you start moving one thing, its like pulling on a thread on your sweater – it just stats unraveling. Ms. Dawson asked at what juncture, this conversation should take place; at a board meeting or... Chair Kraft said very quickly. Mr. Tanner said he would not do it at a public meeting because the forum is just not suited for that level of detail. Ms. Dawson asked how this conversation comes about. Mr. Tanner explained that with the law change, there is some question to that. He said Mr. Baggett may have a better answer to that. Essentially, the law change reads that the Chairman will

produce a map and give it to the board. Prior to that law change, and that is only for this reapportionment, the board would just do it and they didn't really specify whether a committee did it or a sub-committee, it wasn't specified. The County Board rules dictate that reapportionment comes from the O&P Committee which is why he said he was giving them the information. Ms. Kraft said it was shared today at the UCCI meeting by Attorney Jason Brocaw that it is in State Statute that the reapportionment committee is made up of the County Clerk, State's Attorney, Chairman of the Democratic party and the Chairman of the Republican party. Mr. Tanner said that because they moved the deadline back, and again, this is probably a State's Attorney question because when they wrote the law, they were not very specific, but when they rewrote the law, the presumption was that the deadline was extended. The normal deadline for reapportionment would have already passed. They moved the deadline further down the road which resets who controls this. So, if, at some point, the County Board does not pass something, then, yes, it would go to a reapportionment committee. But, with the new deadline, you are not there yet, which is why November is the meeting you have to act upon. Because if not, the reapportionment committee has to do something. Chair Kraft said it was stressed several times that we have to have the information to Springfield by October 1. Mr. Tanner suggested talking with Mr. Baggett about it because that is not how he read it, but he said he is not an attorney. Regardless, you still need to do something and not dally too much. The numbers do show that you have to do something. County Board #7 is the largest. County Board #2 is the smallest. County Board #2 is the most problematic. All of its adjoining County Board districts are already short County Board members. That makes it difficult to add to County Board #2 without invariably creating another problem in other County Board districts. It would probably behoove both caucuses to determine which members intend to run again. That way, you are not packing members into other districts. That also adds another complexity to it. You have 3 members in each district, but when you change it, you could be bringing in a 4<sup>th</sup> member. If the caucuses have an idea of who intends to run again, it might give more options on what precincts can be moved around. Ms. Dawson said she is still trying to determine who determines this. Mr. Tanner said that at this point, his understanding is that the full board still has the authority to determine this. How the full board gets to a decision is really up to the board. Some type of ad hoc subcommittee should be appointed. The problem is that if all of the O&P Committee meets, then you have an open meetings problem. It has to be a small group of people that are not all on the same committee. Mr. Tanner said if they wait for the full board to make a decision, you will be at September 9<sup>th</sup> and that is probably longer than you would want to wait. Mr. Oliver asked if the number of precincts had to correspond with the number of districts. Mr. Tanner said no, it is the population. So, precincts are determined by the number of voters whereas County Board Districts are determined by the population. Not all residents are registered voters. Not all residents are even eligible to be registered voters. Some of the precincts have a lot of population, but not a lot of voters. You can have County Board districts with more precincts or less precincts just because the precinct has few voters, but lots of populations, especially precincts with lots of children. The number of precincts have been reduced because A) it saves money, but B) most of the consolidated precincts were already voting at the same polling place anyway. So, it reduces some confusion for the voters, it reduces the number of ballot styles and makes it a little easier for the election judges. They had to have less than 800 registered voters. Mr. Oliver asked how much fluctuation came up when he had consolidated.

Mr. Tanner said 5. They were consolidated with other precincts that were already voting in the same place. That brings the number from 72 to 67 precincts. That is what happens when you lose 6,770 people in the County. Most of the loss of population was in Decatur Township which is mostly County Board Districts #1 & #2. Ms. Kraft said that when she had studied the map, she saw that most of her district, County Board #5 could move either way. Mr. Tanner agreed but said that #2 is very difficult. You will almost have to move something into #2 and then add to the district you took it from. It gets difficult. That is why 7 districts starts to become difficult. He said he was not saying not to do 7, he was just saying as the pie gets smaller and keeps getting divided into the same number, it gets tougher to do. He encouraged any of the members that wanted to come and see him, he had more specific numbers they could discuss, but he felt that some type of small group would make this run smoother. The group would need to meet relatively quickly and regularly.

June 28<sup>th</sup> is the next election. It was moved from March. It is a Primary. Early voting starts 40 days prior. That will be a big change for people so they will start advertising earlier than normal to let people know. He said he was not sure how having it in the Summer would affect it. Petitions can be taken out in January. As soon as the State completes the handbook for the elected officials, Mr. Tanner said he would get it out on the website for anybody who wants to run. There is quite a bit of time. The general election will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in November like normal. That date did not change.

#### ***County Board – No report***

#### ***Recorder –***

#### ***Macon County Board Resolution Approving Increase in Appropriations in the FY21 Recorders Document Storage Budget***

Ms. Eaton explained that this is money to be increased in the Document Storage budget for implementing e-recording in the Recorder's Office. As of right now, most of the counties in the State of Illinois Recorder's Offices are doing the e-recording. She said she was going to try to do this last year, but had changes with employees going on in the office. She said she is requesting this budget change to allow for the e-recording.

E-recording is where the documents are sent via email rather than mail or personal delivery by attorneys or title companies. There are several companies that handle this for the title companies and financial institutions. Those companies get their cut for their work. The only thing that will be different for the Recorders' Office is that there will no longer be any paper copies. The information gets emailed, the employees look over the documents to make sure everything is complete. If there is anything missing or incorrect, the office can decline it and send it back. The money is transferred into an account electronically. The Recorder's office gets the money the following day. That relieves overnight carriers and some postage. Ms. Dawson asked how it would affect the Recorder's Office employees. Ms. Eaton said that they would no longer have to make paper copies, so it will eliminate that time and a little less paper. The employees will have to bring the documents up on email in order to read them rather than to open and look at mail.

That is the main difference.

Mr. Oliver asked how it would affect the public coming in to look at information. Ms. Eaton said it would still be put in the books and the same process would still be used. Mr. Oliver asked about keeping the electronic copies. Ms. Eaton said once it is received, it is digitized and put into their system and they also have back ups. There are actually 2 copies of every document. Some are stored offsite in other states.

Motion to approve forwarding the resolution to the finance committee with recommendation to approve made by Chair Kraft, seconded by Mr. Drobisch, and the motion carried 4-0.

Ms. Eaton distributed her monthly reports and offered to answer any questions. She pointed out that July had been a good month.

***Workforce Investments –***

Ms. Wilkerson distributed year end reports and highlighted some items she thought the members might find interesting.

The doors are still locked. Staff is still working really hard as they have been for the past year through the pandemic.

On August 4, Workforce had been asked to present at the Chamber Breakfast because the Chamber members in Decatur were very concerned about Workforce and how they were going to grow, hire workers / employees that are needed right now. Some members from the Department of Commerce also came and presented some information.

Last Friday, Senator Doris Turner came to visit. They discussed some challenges with Decatur, available services, how to reach hard to serve populations and what is being done with that. Ms. Wilkerson said she was able to inform Senator Turner about the services they are providing and what is being done. They hope to continue conversations and Ms. Wilkerson will be giving the Senator reports. She said it went really well.

Workforce has applied for a Youth Careers Pathway Grant. It is going to focus on Youth ages 16 - 24 for Construction and apprenticeship programs. She said she should find out by the end of August if they are approved for the \$800,000 grant. This will help prepare the youth that might apply for apprenticeship programs and give them a better chance of getting accepted. The challenge will be going out and finding the interested youth and get them excited about participating. It is a wonderful grant and she is hoping they get it.

Workforce has a little over \$4 million through several grants that are going on.

Most people being enrolled are going into health care. There is a big concern about manufacturing and generating interest there. CDL & Logistics are also a concern. Money is going to train people. Healthcare training was 86%.

PY20 Adult enrollment numbers show a total of 68. Of that only 6% were male and 94% were female. 96% were ages 22 and up. 44% were white with 63% black. 84%, up 10% from last year, are food stamp recipients. Of the adults that are enrolled in the program, 10% more are receiving food stamps this year versus last year. The need has increased.

Dislocated Workers, those who lost their job through no fault of their own, through downsizing or closures. The total number enrolled was 34. Last year, there were 22 at this time. Right now, it is over 40. It is growing. 26% are male and 74% female. 38% are white and 65% black. Food Stamp recipients are at 62%. There were none on Food Stamps last year. That means the dislocated workers, the ones with all the skill sets, the education, training, work ethic, are now receiving food stamps. That is a concern for this area.

Youth, a total of 53 enrolled, show 36% male and 64% female. 38% are between ages of 14 & 18. 30% are white with 68% black. Last year, 32% were parenting & pregnant and now it is up 10% to 42%. There is 45% that are basic skill deficient which means not reading at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading level.

The Opioid Grant statistics show that there were 146 people that were involved in the Opioid Program that came to Workforce and asked for help. 55 were eligible. 62% were male & 38% female. Looking at the age, 22-39 year olds were at 47%, 40+ were 53%. Those are people that are dealing with Opioid addiction and are trying to come out of it; trying to get back. The biggest shock going into the program was the assumption that most of the addicts would not have a high school diploma or work experience was wrong. 52 out of the 55 had high school diploma or above and 49 of the 55 are now in work based learning programs. It was really hard work to go from 146 to finding the ones that were eligible and then to get the 49 into the work based programs.

**Citizen's Remarks** - *no citizens were present.*

**Old Business** - *None*

**New Business** - *None*

**CLOSED SESSION** *None needed*

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, September 20, 2021

**ADJOURNMENT** Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Oliver and the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m. *Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, Macon County Board*