

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
MAY 9, 2024**

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
)
COUNTY OF MOULTRIE)

The Moultrie County Board met on Thursday, May 9, 2024, in the County Board Room, Second Floor, Moultrie County Courthouse. Vice-Chair Marsha Kirby called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The opening prayer was given by board member Aaron Wilhelm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance recited by all in attendance.

Roll Call was taken, with the following members present Marsha Kirby, Tyler Graven, John Vander Burgh, Travis Phelps, Scott Buxton, Aaron Wilhelm, Kenny Graven, and Josh Roe. Absent - Billy Voyles. A quorum was present.

There were 24 people in attendance, eight board members, and County Clerk Qualls.

Mission Statement – Read by Josh Roe.

Correspondence: None.

Minutes: Kirby asked for a motion to approve the April 11, 2024, county board minutes. T. Graven moved to approve said minutes. Buxton seconded the motion. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken; the motion carried 8 yes, 0 no.

Guest Speakers:

Kirby introduced Morgan Jones and Rachel Stenger of the University of Illinois Extension office. Handouts were given to each of the board members. Morgan Jones introduced herself, serving as the Marketing Coordinator for the surrounding counties. With Ms. Jones is Rachel Stenger, 4H Coordinator for Coles and Moultrie Counties.

Ms. Jones explained some of the programs the Extension has to offer, including programs like master gardener, SNAP education program, deer donation program, etc.

Rachel Stenger then shared information about the local 4H groups which grew from 69 members in 2022-2023 to 114 members in 2023-2024.

Ms. Jones then explained they were at the meeting on behalf of Jessie McClusky, County Director. The extension is funded by State, County, and privately raised funds. The Extension’s programs have benefited over 500 youth in the schools and 4H Clubs, as well as countless adults who have participated in the programs.

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The Extension is asking for continued support from the County to levy an amount of \$63,699.00; a 3% increase over last year.

Kirby then introduced Crystal Edwards, Moultrie County CEFS Coordinator. Ms. Edwards shared information about the Food Pantry. The food pantry is privately funded which means CEFS doesn't have to follow federal and state guidelines but does have to follow health department guidelines. CEFS does not have to ask a person for income information in order to get food. The food pantry is open to Moultrie County residents once a month.

CEFS also helps with such things as Rental and Mortgage payment assistance; LIHEAP, state and federally funded, to assist with utility bills; Emergency Shelter and Homeless Assistance, federally funded; Food Pantry; and Christmas gifts for children.

CEFS is starting a mobile food pantry. A lot of people aren't able to come to Sullivan, so they are taking the food pantry to them. The first day is May 10 and they are going to Bethany where they will have boxes for 20 families. Each box is worth approximately \$130.00. Fortunately, they buy in bulk from Kirby Foods who help a great deal.

Fuel vouchers , which is what she is asking for money for at this time, this helps people with the ability to get to and from work.

Ms. Edwards was asked if she had seen an increase in need. There has been a huge growth in the food pantry numbers. Prior to September [2023], there were around 70 – 72 boxes per month. In April, they hit 145 boxes. As of the date of this meeting, they were at 50 for the month of May.

Kirby asked if they see an increase in need over the summer. Ms. Edwards mentioned she has learned from others in the office, they have had students come in, for which they do not ask for their address. If a child comes in to ask for food, they will provide the child with food.

Roe mentioned over the past six months, he has mentioned several times that CEFS Head Start is in need of teachers, it's nice to have a face to go with the need; along with the need for transportation.

Unfinished Business: None

Appointments by Chair:

Kirby moved to re-appoint Chris Wright to the ETSB Board. Term to run from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, or until a successor is appointed. K. Graven seconded the motion. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken; the motion carried 8 yes, 0 no.

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NEW BUSINESS

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (Chair: Vander Burgh)

Meeting: May 6, 2024.

Vander Burgh moved to approve the Treasurer's report for April 2024. T. Graven seconded the motion. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken; the motion carried 8 yes, 0 no.

Vander Burgh moved to approve all claims as presented. The motion was seconded by Wilhelm. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken; the motion carried 8 yes, 0 no.

Vander Burgh moved to remove signer Chris Sims from the Moultrie County ESDA Response Dive Team Account #308569 and add Bonnie M. Liddiard as authorized signer. The motion was seconded by Roe. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken; the motion carried 8 yes, 0 no.

BUILDING AND PROPERTY (Chair: T. Graven)

Meeting: April 18, 2024, April 22, 2024, and May 1, 2024.

T. Graven stated the committee did meet, but he has no motions. They did open the bids for the jail coating/sealing. They should have that for next month.

ROAD AND BRIDGE (Chair: Voyles)

Meeting: May 2, 2024.

Kirby moved to approve Resolution Appropriating Funds for the payment of the County Engineer's Salary. T. Graven seconded the motion. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

PLANNING, ZONING and LAND USE (Chair: Phelps)

Meeting: May 3, 2024.

Mr. Phelps moved to approve Special Use Permit request for a dog kennel by John and Wanita Helmuth on PIN 06-06-16-000-116, 1785 CR 1400E, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by Roe. Phelps stated this is just a housekeeping issue, the Helmuth's previously had a kennel. Under our new guidelines, they are only needing to meet all the requirements at this time. With no further discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

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Phelps moved to approve Variance request for the ability to retain the shipping containers/semi-trailers for storage on the property by Bernell Martin on PIN 08-08-12-000-215, 1123 CR 1275N, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by Wilhelm. Wilhelm asked if this is just for storage. T. Graven stated this is a commercial property using it for storage. With no further discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Variance request by Central Plastic Products to build a sign approximately 6 ft. from the public right of way in the southeast corner of PIN 08-08-26-000-213, 984 IL Rt. 32, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by K. Graven. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Special Use Permit request by Central Plastic Products for a lighted sign on PIN 08-08-26-000-213, 984 IL Rt. 32, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by Roe. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Variance request by Debra Hilligoss for a shed to be approximately 9 ft. from the north property line on PIN 11-11-16-000-114, 551 CR 1400E, Gays. The motion was seconded by T. Graven. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Rezoning request by Thomas and Jennifer Lambdin from AG to I-2 for a meat processing plant on PIN 08-05-30-000-316, 628 Souther Rd., Sullivan. The motion was seconded by T. Graven. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Variance request by Patrons of Railside School to build approximately 30 ft. from the public right of way on the front (south) property line on PIN 03-03-35-000-408, 1660 CR 2000N, Arthur. The motion was seconded by Roe. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Phelps moved to approve Variance request by Sarah Golden to build approximately 10 ft. from the south property line on PIN 08-08-27-300-073, 73 South Shores, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by K. Graven. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE (Chair: Phelps)

Meeting: May 1, 2024.

No motions. Phelps stated they continue to watch the Safe-ty Act and they did make the recommendation for Chris Wright to be on the ETSB Board at that meeting.

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AS NEEDED COMMITTEES

DIVE TEAM (Chair: T. Graven)

Meeting: April 17, 2024.

T. Graven stated they have no motions, but they are happy to see Shelby County back with a full active dive team.

PERSONNEL (Chair: Kirby)

Meeting: April 30, 2024.

Kirby moved to approve the annual salary for the Moultrie County Coroner to be set at \$42,560.00 for fiscal year 2025 with an annual 4% increase for the next three consecutive fiscal years. The motion was seconded by Vander Burgh. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Kirby moved to approve the annual salary for the Moultrie County Circuit Clerk to be set at \$66,490.00 for fiscal year 2025 with an annual 4% increase for the next three consecutive fiscal years. The motion was seconded by T. Graven. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 7 yes, 1 no by Buxton.

Kirby moved to approve the annual salary for the Moultrie County Chief County Assessment Officer to be set at \$65,000.00 for fiscal year 2025 with an annual 4% increase for the next three consecutive fiscal years. The motion was seconded by Wilhelm. Pam Wittkowski, sitting in the audience, mentioned, the other two are elected officials and have to be set every four years; with this appointed position, just curious why you are setting it for four years instead of annually. T. Graven stated they decided to make it four years to make it easier by lining it up with the elected officials. They didn't feel coming to the board every year was necessary for that position. Kirby stated she knows some other counties do that for the CCAO. There being no further discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 7 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain by Buxton.

ELECTIONS (Chair: Buxton)

Meeting: April 25, 2024.

Buxton stated they did not have a quorum at the meeting, so he is bringing a recommendation for discussion/action on rescinding Ordinance 18-02 – Ordinance to Reduce the Number of Election Judges in Emergency Referendum, Odd-Year Regular Elections, Special Primary or Special Elections.

Buxton stated he would like to see it back the way it should be and where they come to us. Linda would bring to the board when they need to take action (inaudible) and not leave it open-ended from year to year.

Roe stated part of the information given to them by the County Clerk was election voter turnout for the last six years. The point being brought was turnout has been so low that it hasn't been necessary to have five judges. Part of the discussion was, do we

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prepare for that, or do we prepare for the full potential. Right now, the County Clerk's office can make the decision to drop from five to three if it is necessary and keeping the ratio. It gives her office the ability to do that without the judge and state's attorney or the board. The way it has been in the past, it gives the County Clerk's office the ability to do that. Roe's view is rather than someone pointing the finger at one office, was to make it so they can point the finger at nine people.

Phelps asked if we drop down, is that just in certain precincts or is that for the whole election process. Roe stated for just certain precincts.

Tim Singer asked the board, beside the fact it's hard to get judges, if a judge calls out sick at 5:00 a.m. the morning of election, is the county board going to meet? Roe stated, yes. Graven stated or the judge and state's attorney can make the call.

State's Attorney Tracy Weaver clarified, there are two ways: the county board can do it by ordinance, or she, as the State's Attorney, can file a motion with the court to cluster precincts. So, there are two different ways to reduce election judges; by ordinance or court order.

Pam Wittkowski stated where election judges are concerned, for two months prior to the election it is a constant rotation of election judges with all the different reasons they can, then can't work. Wittkowski explained in the past election (March 2024), we had one Republican left and no Democrats. So, we looked at the Methodist church which has three precincts and at the last general primary, how many voted so we could get an idea of what we can expect. It was decided since we have no more Ds, and we have to have a D at this other precinct, we had to reduce one of the three precincts down from five to three. This kind of stuff happens a lot.

Wilhelm stated the prior clerk had come before the board several times for this. It was brought before the board and approved. It is presumed since the clerk came before the board since the 2018 ordinance, it wasn't meant to be open-ended.

State's Attorney Weaver clarified an emergency meeting still needs 48 hours' notice does have to be given for the board to meet. So, they couldn't necessarily meet the morning of election day. She would then request the court to cluster precincts; that would be an emergency.

The board was asked if they are going to pass an ordinance every year. T. Graven stated, yes, if they have to. People in the audience said, "That makes no sense." T. Graven said what's been done the last three years, Qualls asked what three years. There are only two ordinances, in 2018 when the open-ended ordinance was passed and in 2020 when the Clerk went before the Court to cluster precincts then the one immediately following that because of COVID.

Audience member, Jeff Gregory stated, "That makes not sense. Basically, you have an ordinance now that is taking care of this problem. You are wanting to rescind it, so you can pass another ordinance to do the same thing. Obviously, this has happened in the past, they passed the ordinance, it happened just this time, common sense tells you it's probably going to keep happening, because you can't force any body to be a judge.

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Kirby moved to rescind Ordinance 18-02 – Ordinance to Reduce the Number of Election Judges in Emergency Referendum, Odd-Year Regular Elections, Special Primary or Special Elections. The motion was seconded by Roe. With no further discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

LIQUOR COMMISSION (Chair: Voyles)

Meeting: April 25, 2024.

Kirby moved to approve the application for License to Sell Alcoholic Liquor at Retail for Class “J” (“A” and “E”) for the NorthEnd Pub and Grill, by new owner, William Bates, effective April 25, 2024 – June 30, 2024. The motion was seconded by Wilhelm. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kirby stated for discussion/action on committee assignments, Josh has requested Buxton to be assigned the insurance committee. Buxton will start joining those.

Kirby read from the agenda, discussion/possible action to support or not support the extension of Sullivan TIF III. Kirby asked if anyone had an update on the TIF III. Phelps shared that they did meet with the City and the taxing bodies, the City has approved TIF IV, which is on the south part of town which encompasses to the east and to the north. TIF III is in the northwest part of town around Keller addition. That TIF is up to expire. So, the question is, do we extend that for another 13 years? The City did a very good job of, if IV touched III, they could go ahead and include that with IV. In good faith, they did not make those two TIFs touch; so, this is an independent vote. All taxing bodies will have to vote to approve [the extension]; if one votes no, it does not get extended for the 13 years. Also, the City excluded some areas on the map that were included in the original TIF IV. TIF III to the County is about \$11,000.00 which we lose if we extend the TIF III. But the area of TIF IV they excluded to help us out, is about \$41,000.00. The development of the City is going south. In TIF III, the apartments in TIF III are tax exempt. There is minimal impact on us to continue III, and hopefully there will be some development there.

Kirby moved to support the extension of Sullivan TIF III. The motion was seconded by Vander Burgh. There being no discussion, roll call was taken; the motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Wilhelm gave a childcare initiative committee update. One new provider in Lovington with eight slots. They are working with a provider in Arthur.

Kirby asked for a motion to go into executive session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property for use by Moultrie County, namely Fields-Wright Medical Center, 2 W. Adams, Sullivan, IL. T. Graven made the motion with K. Graven seconding the motion. Roll call vote was taken; the motion to go into executive session passed 8 yes, 0 no. Kirby announced the board will go into executive session at 7:51 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION 5 ILCS 120/2

The board returned from executive session at 8:30 p.m. Kirby informed those present the board had discussion on the Fields-Wright Medical Center and moving forward with that; T. Graven will be the liaison for that.

COMMENTS

BOARD

Roe stated the head of CEFS reached out to him about Shelby County. Shelby County is our grant recipient for transportation division of CEFS. However, they haven't completed a 2022 and have begun a 2023 audit yet. So, IDOT will not give the money to Shelby.

CEFS reached out with three options, 1. We take on the role of grant recipient for the six counties that are currently served with Shelby county. 2. Seeing if Effingham County wants to take on all seven counties as the sole grant recipient for CEFS. Or, 3. All counties could choose to try to operate as a grant recipient for themselves and not include other counties, which would be a headache for everyone.

Discussion was held about Moultrie County taking on the role of grant recipient. It was decided the board would like Moultrie County to be shown as grant recipient. The head of CEFS is willing to come to a board meeting to discuss and answer any questions.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

None.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Lori Barringer thanked the board for her raise. She informed the board for the eighth year in a row she won the Van Guard award, giving her a \$1,000.00 credit toward the cost of Van Guard.

PUBLIC

None.

ADJOURN:

Kirby asked for a motion to adjourn. Wilhelm moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by T. Graven. Via voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Linda S. Qualls
Linda S. Qualls,
Moultrie County Clerk