

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

STATE OF ILLINOIS        )  
  )  
COUNTY OF MOULTRIE    )

The Moultrie County Board met on Thursday, April 13, 2023, in the 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 Board members present, Marsha Kirby, Tyler Graven, Travis Phelps, Scott Buxton, Aaron Wilhelm, Kenny Graven, and Joshua Roe. Absent were Billy Voyles and John Vander Burgh.

There were 20 people in attendance including seven board members and County Clerk Qualls.

Mission Statement - read by Travis Phelps.

Correspondence: Ms. Kirby read the award presentation text for Outstanding Achievement and Property Assessment Award, Small Jurisdiction as read at the Illinois Property Assessment Institute’s 65th conference and presented to Lori Barringer. (copy of text attached.)

Minutes: Mr. Buxton moved to approve the March 9, 2023, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tyler Graven, which passed by roll call vote; 7 yes, 0 no.

Guest Speaker: Ms. Kirby introduced guest speaker, Jessie McClusky of the University of Illinois Extension office. Ms. McClusky spoke about the services the extension provides Moultrie County. Some of those services include Environmental Programs, such as the master gardener training program; Snap-Ed, helping families to gain knowledge and skills needed to make healthier choices; mental health; relationship tools; and etiquette programs in schools.

Ms. McClusky finished by requesting that Moultrie County continue to support the U of I Extension by agreeing to contribute \$61,843.00 for fiscal year 2023 – 2024.

Ms. Kirby moved to approve the Agreement between the University of Illinois Extension and Moultrie County for levy/appropriating \$61,843.00 as the County’s contribution for fiscal year 07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilhelm, which passed by roll call vote; 7 yes, 0 no.

Unfinished Business: None

Appointments by Chair: Ms. Kirby gave the first reading to appoint DANIEL COTNER as a Trustee of the Bethany Fire Protection District. Term to expire April 30, 2026.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

Ms. Kirby moved to re-appoint DANIEL HARSHMAN as a Trustee of the Moultrie County Rural Public Water District. The term expires the first Monday in May 2028. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tyler Graven, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to re-appoint MICHAEL A. HOWELL as a trustee of the Moultrie County Rural Public Water District. The term expires the first Monday in May 2027. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buxton, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to re-appoint EDWARD LANE as a trustee of the Moultrie County Rural Public Water District. The term expires the first Monday in May 2027. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roe, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to appoint JORDAN J. WATKINS as a trustee of the Moultrie County Rural Public Water District to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Willis Kuhns. The term expires the first Monday in May 2027. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buxton, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (Chair: Vander Burgh)**

Meeting held April 10, 2023.

With Mr. Vander Burgh absent, Ms. Kirby moved to approve the March 2023 Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roe, which passed by roll call vote; 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to approve all claims as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buxton, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

**BUILDING AND PROPERTY (Chair: T. Graven)**

Meeting held April 5, 2023.

Mr. Tyler Graven stated he had no motions.

**ROAD AND BRIDGE (Chair: Voyles)**

Meeting held April 4, 2023.

With Mr. Voyles absent, Ms. Kirby moved to approve the Sullivan Road District Petition for County Aid Funding Assistance for engineering and repairs for Section 22-07140-00MS, Coal Shaft Bridge Structure. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tyler Graven. Mr. Wilhelm asked if there is a specific amount for the funding. Mr. Rich Rutledge, Sullivan Township Highway Commissioner, explained this is an agreement

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**APRIL 13, 2023**

between the county and the township to carry forth the engineering for the repairs and there is a cap on the engineering agreement. The roll call vote was then taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to approve the lowest bidder for the 2023 County Maintenance Program. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kenny Graven. Mr. Rutledge again explained through the bid process Earl Walker had the lowest bid. The roll call vote was then taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no.

Ms. Kirby moved to concur with the Moultrie County townships to approve the lowest bidder for the 2023 Township Maintenance Program. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buxton. Again, Mr. Rutledge explained this is the same process as for the county. The roll call vote was then taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no.

**PLANNING, ZONING and LAND USE (Chair: Phelps)**

Meeting held April 10, 2023.

Mr. Phelps moved to approve a rezoning request from AG to I-1 for a furniture manufacturing business by DANNY RAY YODER on PIN 06-06-24-000-325, 1629 CR 1725E, Sullivan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tyler Graven, which passed by roll call vote 7 yes, 0 no.

Mr. Phelps moved to approve a Special Use Permit request for a dog kennel by Paul Helmuth on PIN 03-03-36-000-411, 2003 CR 1800E, Arthur. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roe. Ms. Kristi Hart stated the Helmuths had registered with the State and that is actually how the County found them. Mr. Helmuth did not know they needed a permit, he wasn't upset at all, just said, "oops" and worked with Kristi to request the Special Use Permit. The roll call vote was then taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no.

Mr. Phelps moved to approve a variance request for a building to be approximately 3 feet from the boundary line by Marvin Miller and Allan Kaufman on PIN 03-03-15-000-410, 1560 CR 2300N, Arthur. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roe. There was discussion that this is Rosedale School which has outgrown their original school and is expanding to a bigger school. The roll call vote was then taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no.

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

Meeting held April 5, 2023

Mr. Phelps mentioned it looks like the Sheriff's office is moving to full staff on both the corrections side and the deputy side.

Reminder there will be a first aid class offered for county employees on May 17, 2023, from 1:00 – 4:30 at the Sheriff's office.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

**AS NEEDED COMMITTEES**

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (Chair: Kirby)**

Committee did not meet.

Ms. Kirby moved to approve the Resolution to Increase Fees Charged by the Moultrie County Recorder of Deeds from \$67.00 per recorded document to \$76.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buxton. State's Attorney Tracy Weaver explained this is new legislation that goes into effect July 1, 2023, so statutorily, the Recorder has to increase the fee by \$9.00. After some additional discussion, the roll call vote was taken with the motion passing 7 yes, 0 no. (Resolution: 23-06; Book 6, Page 17)

**INSURANCE COMMITTEE (Chair: Roe)**

No meeting was held.

**PERSONNEL (Chair: Kirby)**

No meeting was held.

**TECHNOLOGY (Chair: Wilhelm)**

Meeting held April 3, 2023.

Mr. Wilhelm explained the committee discussed updating items for each office's portion of the County website and working to make all department websites consistent in appearance. Discussion was held to name two administrators for the website with one administrator being the contact person for our vendor for any kind of issue.

Discussion was held about the County partnering with PCs for People, a company who uses federal funding to offer refurbished computers, monitors, etc. to be sold to low-income families. With the last partnership the company had, they were able to sell full computers for as little as \$11.00. This is an opportunity for the County to help those less fortunate in the county to have access to the internet. At this time, the committee is just exploring the possibility of a partnership to see what that would involve.

The committee has no motions at this time.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES**

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) (Chair: Stephanie Helmuth)**

Ms. Helmuth stated the committee did not meet. The next quarterly report is due at the end of this month, and we have gotten everything back from Bellwether we needed. We now have less than \$200,000.00 remaining which has been allocated.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**APRIL 13, 2023**

**DIVE TEAM (Chair: T. Graven)**

Committee did not meet.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Kirby announced discussion/action on participation in the National Opioid Settlement Case CL-384567. State's Attorney Tracy Weaver explained the County has received an opportunity to participate in this class action lawsuit in which the State of Illinois has opted in and as a result, the county has been offered to opt in as well. This is a lawsuit that involves big pharmacy companies as well as CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart for selling opioid products. This is a national lawsuit with an estimated \$6.6 billion to be distributed over a period of approximately 15 years.

As a result of the class action, the monies will go to the IL Attorney General's office first, then distributed to the counties that do opt in. Specifically, it is going to be earmarked for things like counseling for drug treatment and opioid/drug prevention types of programs. If we do opt in, it is not unknown how much money the county may receive, but we don't have to do anything other than sign up and then wait to see what happens.

Once we receive any money, though, we will have to have some oversight in terms of how that money is distributed. Probably something like with the ARPA funds, there will be an Ad Hoc committee formed and then people can ask for the money to be distributed locally.

When asked if there is any cost to the County, Ms. Weaver stated there won't be; she will prepare the paperwork and send it off and continue to monitor the case. The State's Attorney's office will be the point of contact.

Treasurer Helmuth mentioned this is the second round of the lawsuit with 92% of the counties opting in for the first round. SA Weaver stated she didn't know why the prior board chose to not opt in. Helmuth stated Moultrie County may get as much as 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% of the amount of the award to the State depending on the number of counties that choose to opt in in this round.

Any monies would be set up in a special revenue fund, then it would be determined under whose control the funds would be placed, typically drug funds are under the control of the Sheriff. Then the Sheriff's approval would need to be sought.

After additional discussion, Ms. Kirby moved to participate in the National Opioid Settlement Case CL-384567. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilhelm which passed by roll call vote 7 yes,0 no.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION 5 ILCS 120/2**

No executive session was held.

**COMMENTS**

**BOARD**

Mr. Wilhelm updated the board on the childcare initiative. There is a meeting set for April 19, 2023 at the Sullivan Chamber & Economic Development office.

Mr. Roe would like to go on record congratulating the winners in the townships, villages, etc. of the election held April 4, 2023, and looking forward to working with them.

In addition, Mr. Roe's family being from Bethany, he would like to mention that Paige Robinson of Bethany went through the WMBA draft and was drafted by the Dallas Wings.

Mr. Buxton stated he would like to see it put in our next meeting, realignment for our election committee and any other committees that fall under the board. He believes the committees should be chaired by the county board members.

Mr. Buxton stated he is involved with Transportation, Region 8 who had a meeting to regroup to work on goals to meet this year. Buxton was put on their HR committee. They are struggling with retention on which he will work.

Mr. Phelps stated we will be moving pretty quickly, the State has set a deadline of May 26, 2023, that we have to have our wind and solar ordinance in effect. So "we" will be working on that diligently. We will HAVE to address that at the May 11 board meeting. The County has retained an attorney to work on the with us to rezone. The county passed an ordinance, then there was the moratorium, now we have to meet certain guidelines and HAVE to have something in place. The fear is that if we don't have anything in place, then it goes to the state rules. There are some things we can adjust in our ordinance and some we can't. This is being worked on with Planning & Zoning. We will get something out as soon as we can.

In addition, Mr. Phelps brought up the Building and Property Committee meeting where there was discussion about the ongoing maintenance of the courthouse and the cost of the same. One thing that was brought up was applying for grants to help cover the things that did cost \$5,000.00 is now \$100,000.00. Phelps talked to Jeff Waite who gave him the name of Carol Elder to contact to see what is out there for the county since the courthouse is an historical building. Mr. Phelps will be contacting Ms. Elder for grants and to see if there are any long-term monies to help Jef with the maintenance of the building.

Further discussion and questions were had about the wind and solar meetings to come.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

**OFFICE HOLDERS/DEPARTMENT HEADS**

Treasurer Helmuth informed the board that she and Clerk Qualls went to attend a TIF meeting for the City of Sullivan. TIF III is looking for an extension for an additional 12 years. Currently their last tax year is 2024, payable in 2025. They are getting their “feelers” out to see the response; it takes every municipality in the TIF district to sign off for the extension to be granted. One single no, and the extension doesn’t get extended.

The TIF III extension is being requested for Joe Keller to be able to continue to receive TIF monies while he builds four more houses in his new addition over the next four years.

In addition, TIF IV is being amended. Ms. Helmuth HIGHLY recommends that each board member take the opportunity to attend the TIF IV meeting April 24, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the library.

TIF I wanted a second extension of 12 years which was denied. This is key to understanding TIF. TIF 1 died, TIF VI is being amended to include TIF I. Everything we didn’t want in TIF I, is now going into TIF IV, everything being moved out of TIF III to extend TIF III is being moved into TIF IV. So even though TIF I extension was not approved, they are proposing those items get moved into TIF IV.

Undeveloped ground is amazing in TIF, look at the building up of the south of town, we got the new jail because of TIF. But we need to be aware of all of the other things affected by TIF. There are a lot of existing and residential in the proposed TIF IV because the property has to be contiguous, so it is picking up houses to get to projects. That is EAVs that will come off the table unless we can come to some sort of agreement or negotiation to that. Sullivan School Superintendent Ted Walk and Sullivan Fire Protection District Chief Larry Edwards made it perfectly clear that unless you are throwing something back on the table, you aren’t going to get this extension out of us. Pretty much, if Ted Walk says no, the answer should be no.

The only things that will be left in TIF III that they want to extend are Green Gardens, Aspen Creek, Marvin Keller Trucking, the Jail, and the Keller property where there are two out of the six houses developed. So, Keller has had 23 years and in that time, he has developed two homes, now he wants an extension to develop the additional four homes at the rate of one home per year for four year to continue to get his reimbursements for the next 12 years. So, the EAVs will be frozen on all that new property because it stays in TIF III so the City will continue to receive the TIF and the County will lose the EAVs for the duration of the TIF extension.

The County has the potential to lose a lot because of TIF. The Sullivan School District and the Sullivan Fire Protection District have the potential to lose so much too.

Jef Liddiard mentioned the amount of solar being installed on residential property. Jef states to be sure the Amish community knows about the meeting.

Lori Barringer received her sales ratio. Based on sales for 2020 – 2022, the assessed value is 30.72 and she is to be at 33.3333. That means if the township assessors and she decide to do nothing, she would have to put an 8% factor on assessed

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**APRIL 13, 2023**

values to increase them by 8%. That's not increasing your property taxes, that's increasing the value of your property. So, that is how much property values are going up based on what people are paying for property.

So, thinking about the increases and talking about TIF, in two years if everyone's EAV has to increase by 8%, you're not going to see that as a county, you're not going to get that if it's in TIF, it will all be going to the TIF.

As for solar panels on residential homes, Lori and the township assessors are keeping track of them to see if one house with solar panels sells for a comparable house with no solar panels to determine if the panels are affecting property values. This is just something that takes time.

**PUBLIC**

Mr. Rich Rutledge asked the board if there is any movement on obtaining a county highway superintendent. Mr. Tyler Graven mentioned they still have it posted, but we just aren't receiving anything. Mr. Phelps concurred.

Mr. Rutledge mentioned that Kyle Steele is doing what he can, but in some cases, there are things that Kyle can't do.

**ADJOURN:** Ms. Kirby asked for a motion to adjourn, which motion was made by Mr. Roe and seconded by Mr. Tyler Graven. The motion passed by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Linda S. Qualls,  
Moultrie County Clerk



**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**



**2023 Outstanding Achievement in Property  
Assessment Award (Large Jurisdiction)**

Presented to Lori Barringer, Monday, March 27, 2023

**Nominated by:** Mark Armstrong

**Presented by:** Mary Tamez

**Award Presentation Text:**

Tonight's recipient of the Outstanding Achievement in Property Assessment Award – Small Jurisdiction has hit the ground running since the start of their assessment career.

By statute, counties of fewer than 50,000 persons should have a coefficient of dispersion of 30% or below. Our winner's jurisdiction has a population of less than half of that. With such a small sample size and a large rural area containing a significant number of farm parcels, reaching this target is difficult. In the face of these challenges, however, our winner has met this goal every year they have been in office, with an average coefficient of 26.3% during that time.

When our winner first took office, they began an outreach program to educate taxpayers on the entire property tax system. To learn how outreach sessions are conducted elsewhere, they made an 8-hour round trip to visit Mark Armstrong in Kane County and sat through his 2-hour session. While most of us would find something more interesting to do on an autumn evening, this was the first sign of things to come from our award winner.

They also greatly expanded the information available on their office's web site to promote openness and transparency. The website now provides an in-depth description of what the public can expect from the assessment process. It also now provides detailed descriptions of both the hearings and the results so that everyone can have confidence in a fair and impartial process. Success can be seen in the declining appeal rate for their county; the average number of appeals have dropped by 73% since they took office. They have also made other significant changes to their office that have increased efficiency and have been cost-saving for taxpayers.

Our winner is known throughout Illinois as a leader in the assessment field. Soon after taking office, they joined the leadership of the County Assessment Officers Association, holding several offices before becoming president. They led the CAO Conference Committee—bringing informative, relevant continuing education sessions to four statewide IACO conferences. And through the Property Tax Advisory Committee, they have brought together various stakeholders to address the growing problem of assessor vacancies. And if that didn't sound busy enough, our winner is also a graduate of the University of Illinois Extension Program Leadership Academy for local government officials.

Our winner has really taken the "pay it forward" mantra to heart by actively seeking out new CCAOs to offer support, answer questions, and provide direction. Many new CCAOs have referred to this person as a lifeline while getting started. Our winner has even gone as far as to offer spending personal time on the weekend to help another jurisdiction complete some of the necessary steps to close out their tax year.

**COUNTY BOARD MINUTES – MOULTRIE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
APRIL 13, 2023**

This person's quiet leadership style often stands in contrast to some of our community's larger-than-life personalities, but make no mistake – leadership is exactly what it is. She is someone whose calm and impressive demeanor commands the highest level of respect from those who work with her.

Our winner is a shining example of the dedication, commitment, and achievement to which all Illinois assessing officers should aspire.

Please join me in a round of applause for the winner of the Small Jurisdiction Outstanding Achievement in Property Assessment Award – our friend, Lori Barringer.