



McHenry County
Administrative Services - Public Meeting
MINUTES

April 2, 2025, 9:30 AM
County Board Conference Room
Administration Building, 667 Ware Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098

Members Present: Joseph Gottemoller, Eric Hendricks, Pamela Althoff, Terri Greeno, Matt Kunkle,
Paul Thomas

Members Absent: John Collins

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at: 8:30 A.M.

Also present: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Scott Hartman, Deputy County Administrator; Alicia Schueller, Director of Public Affairs; Tom Burroughs; Director of Facilities; Dr. Michael Rein, County Coroner; Thomas Annarella, Valley Hi Administrator; Suzanne Ziebart, Director of HR; Debbie Weingart, Recruitment Specialist; Adam Letendre, Director of Procurement and Special Services; Kerri Wisz, CFO; Sandra Salgado, Sheriff's Office Business Manager; Lynnsey Osborne, Facilities Coordinator.

Mover: Kunkle

Second: Althoff

To allow the remote attendance of Eric Hendricks.

Aye (5): Gottemoller, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Abstain (1): Hendricks

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (5 to 0)

2. MINUTES APPROVAL

Mover: Althoff

Second: Kunkle

Approve previous minutes from the March 5, 2025, meeting.

Aye (6): Gottemoller, Hendricks, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (6 to 0)

2.1 Administrative Services - Public Meeting - Mar 5, 2025 8:30 A.M.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. MEMBERS' COMMENTS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

None.

6. ROUTINE CONSENT AGENDA

Mover: Thomas

Second: Kunkle

To approve the remaining items of the routine consent agenda.

Aye (6): Gottemoller, Hendricks, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (6 to 0)

6.1 Authorizing a contract with Patriot Maintenance Inc. of Mundelein, IL for the 2025 McHenry County Government Center (MCGC) West Parking Lot South 50% Sealcoating, Crack Filling, Traffic Marking/Line Striping Project (16)

Mover: Thomas

Second: Kunkle

Authorizing a contract with Patriot Maintenance Inc., Mundelein, IL, for 2025 McHenry County Government Center West Parking Lot Sealcoating, Crack Filling, Traffic Marking/Line Striping.

Recommended

6.3 Resolution Authorizing Adjustments in the Valley Hi Employee Roster including Reclassifying Position #61018915, Eliminating Position #61007499, #61007399, #61005899, and #61019721; and Creating 2 New FT Nurse Positions (61)

Mover: Thomas

Second: Kunkle

Valley Hi seeks authorization to allow the County Human Resources Director to make changes in the Valley Hi Employee Roster, including:

- Reclassify position #61018915, Assistant Nursing Home Administrator from a 15E to a 19E

- Eliminate vacant positions #61007499 (part-time nurse), #61007399 (part-time nurse), #61005899 (part-time nurse) and #6101721 (full-time Infection Preventionist)
- Create 2 new full-time nurse positions

Recommended

6.2 Resolution Authorizing the McHenry County Coroner Office and Autopsy Suite Renovation Project, approving a Budget and Authorizing a Contract with Stuckey Construction of Waukegan, Illinois (31)

Pulled for discussion by Mr. Kunkle.

Mr. Kunkle initially raised concerns about replacing the 10-year-old refrigeration unit, arguing that it was still functional and could potentially be used to save taxpayer dollars. He suggested using the existing system and expanding the cooler in stages. However, Dr. Rein explained that the current cooler needed both size and height expansion to accommodate a new gurney system, future rack storage, and to address current capacity issues, as the cooler was operating over capacity 6-8 times.

Key points of debate included the fact that the current refrigeration unit was approximately 10 years old, and the proposed project involved expanding the cooler into the existing freezer area. Dr. Rein argued that the space could not be incrementally expanded, Mr. Kunkle wanted to explore a more modular, cost-effective approach. The total project cost was estimated at around \$2.2 million, with approximately \$850,000 allocated for refrigeration and cooler upgrades.

After further discussion, it was agreed to invite Wold representatives to the Finance & Audit Committee meeting, and Dr. Rein would email Mr. Kunkle with more technical details. Ultimately, the committee voted to move the project forward, with Mr. Kunkle requesting that the project remain within budget and avoid additional expenses, such as bulletproof glass and epoxy flooring. The discussion centered on balancing fiscal responsibility with the need for an improved coroner's office facility.

Mover: Kunkle

Second: Althoff

To approve a resolution authorizing the McHenry County Coroner Office and Autopsy Suite renovation project, approving a budget and authorizing a contract with Stuckey Construction of Waukegan, Illinois.

Aye (6): Gottemoller, Hendricks, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (6 to 0)

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.1 Resolution Authorizing a Contract with Wold Architects and Engineers of Palatine, Illinois for a Space Needs Analysis (18)

Scott Hartman, Deputy County Administrator, joined the committee to discuss the resolution.

Mr. Hartman explained the background, stating that there had previously been a proposal for a comprehensive space study costing \$180,000-\$200,000. However, the committee felt that this approach was too broad and preferred to focus on specific space needs for the State's Attorney's Office, Courts, Sheriff's Office, Public Defender, and Specialty Court.

The initial steps involved a proposal from the first architect, which included a \$150,000 plan for limited work. Mr. Hartman felt that this proposal did not meet the committee's intent, prompting them to approach another architect, Wold, with whom they already had a relationship. The result was a new proposal from

Wold for a space study and analysis, which would cost \$32,500. This new proposal outlined a process of approximately 7 months to address the known office space needs.

Mr. Kunkle praised the administration for their efforts, specifically stating, "We asked, and they answered." He expressed his appreciation for the significant cost savings, about \$120,000, and commended the team for being responsive to the committee's direction.

Mover: Kunkle

Secunder: Thomas

To authorize a contract with Wold Architects and Engineers of Palatine, Illinois for a space needs analysis for a lump sum fee of \$32,500 plus reimbursable expenses.

Aye (6): Gottemoller, Hendricks, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (6 to 0)

8. DISCUSSION

8.1 Update on RFP for Jail Staffing Project

Peter Austin, County Administrator, and Sandra Salgado, Sheriff's Business Manager, joined the committee for the discussion.

Inmate healthcare is the second-largest expense for the Sheriff's Office, following personnel costs. The FY 25 budget allocates \$2.4 million for healthcare. The Sheriff's Office is currently in the final year of a 5-year contract with Well Path.

Several challenges are affecting inmate healthcare, including changing detainee populations, which now include ICE detainees, Lake County, Kane County, and Navy detainees. The Sheriff's Office is anticipating significant increases in healthcare costs, compounded by staffing difficulties within the healthcare sector.

The proposed approaches to address these challenges include issuing a traditional RFP, developing their own medical unit inspired by Kankakee County's model, extending the current contract for another year, and potentially partnering with local hospitals.

The current contract with Well Path follows a "turnkey" approach, covering dental, mental health, prescriptions, and basic healthcare services. To help navigate these challenges, the Sheriff's Office brought in the same consultant who assisted Kankakee County. The consultant has recently provided a staffing report, and the focus now is on understanding the exact staffing needs, as well as exploring potential liability and pharmaceutical purchase costs.

Additional discussion points include the potential for increased liability costs and the possibility of a standalone medical liability policy, in addition to the current indemnification with Well Path. The overall goal is to find a cost-effective, sustainable solution for jail healthcare that balances staffing needs, quality of care, and budget constraints.

8.2 Six Month New County Board Orientation Check-In

Peter Austin, County Administrator, joined the committee for the discussion.

Several new board members requested another orientation, as the previous zoning orientation had recently been conducted. This proposed session would focus on parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, and other topics requested by the board members.

The proposed format for the session included a presentation by Ms. Althoff and Mr. Sager, with a PowerPoint already prepared. It would offer an opportunity for members to ask questions in a smaller, less intimidating setting, with flexible attendance so members could choose to attend specific sections.

In addition to parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order, the session would also cover constituent services, how to deal with the press, and provide a detailed explanation of Robert's Rules of Order.

Logistically, the session was planned for May, with a potential alternative being a 20-minute session at the end of the April meeting. Hard copies of the presentation materials would be distributed, and collaboration with Peter would ensure the information was properly distributed.

Key benefits of the session included allowing new members to ask questions they might be hesitant to ask in larger meetings, providing a comprehensive overview of board procedures, and offering support for both new and existing board members. The discussion emphasized the importance of creating an informative, supportive environment to help board members better understand their roles and responsibilities.

9. REPORTS

9.1 Capital Plan Update

Tom Burroughs, Director of Facilities Management, joined the committee for the report.

The Crystal Lake project was awaiting permits, with the stormwater permit application already submitted and signed paperwork in place. The contractor was ready to start, and the health department had moved out. The space was prepared, and inventory was complete, with hopes to begin work within the next week. However, there were unique permitting challenges due to the location within the Crystal Lake watershed.

The Parking Lot Project at the Administration Building was scheduled to replace the existing paving, concrete, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, with a project timeline of 20 weeks starting on April 7. The project would be completed in phases: the west side of the rear parking lot starting April 7, the eastern side of the rear parking lot by May 16, the front and east parking lots by July 2, and the main entrance drive by August 4.

Key features of the parking lot project included the installation of empty conduit sleeves for potential future electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, updating monument signage with new county branding, adding an outdoor concrete pad with power, and creating a dedicated paved path connecting the east parking lot to the main sidewalk.

Due to the construction, there would be a significant reduction in on-site parking. Fleet vehicles were relocated to the northwest end of the Government Center's east parking lot, while some staff would park in the northeastern corner of the Government Center lot.

Additionally, rooftop HVAC units were scheduled to be lifted and installed on Saturday, with the goal of having the units operational and the building habitable by Monday. The manufacturer's startup team and controls contractor would be on-site to complete the installation. The update highlighted the careful planning for these infrastructure improvements to minimize disruption to county operations.

9.2 Human Resources Update

Suzanne Ziebart, Director of Human Resources, joined the committee for the report.

On March 13, a professional development seminar was attended, which focused on employment law through ITALRA. Additionally, participation occurred in the first annual IPVC (Intergovernmental Personnel Benefit Cooperative) members meeting. The cooperative now includes 172 members across Illinois.

A discussion was held regarding the impact of GLP-1 drugs (weight loss medications) on insurance costs, with over 100 county employees currently using these drugs. Potential strategies to manage rising insurance costs were considered, including raising BMI requirements and increasing employee cost-sharing.

In terms of wellness exams, 750 employees participated, with 588 repeat participants and 162 new ones. A total of 317 high-risk notifications were sent out, and one critical medical call was made, which was potentially life-saving. A positive trend was observed, with higher-risk groups moving to lower-risk categories.

During the Sheriff's testing event for the Merit Commission, 170 people signed up, and 102 attended. Of those, 68 passed the physical agility test. A significant decrease from historical testing numbers was noted, with previous events seeing about 500 participants.

As for the vacancy report, there were currently 80-85 open positions, a stable number compared to January. However, some positions were either on hold or difficult to fill, with efforts being made to track funding sources and reporting structures.

Lastly, special recognition was given to Debbie, an HR department employee, who retired after 17 years of dedicated service. The discussion provided a comprehensive overview of HR activities, focusing on employee health, recruitment, and organizational development.

9.3 Communications

Alicia Schueller, Director of Public Affairs, joined the committee for the report.

Communications Strategic Plan Update

The HR Department asked communications staff to share a social media post on the County's summer job opportunities that accept high school students. Staff shared this post, and it reached 61,353 Facebook accounts. HR received so many applications that the job posting had to close within a week. Administration staff opened a Nextdoor account this month. Nextdoor account holders can only post to their own neighborhoods, so accounts reached are likely to be McHenry County residents.

Communications Collaborations

In addition to developing a news release and social media messaging on the Finance Department's latest Distinguished Budget Award, Administration staff assisted five County offices in March including:

- The Circuit Clerk's Office to develop a news release and social media messaging regarding the new Hope Card Program kicking off on March 31, 2025;
- The Veterans Assistance Commission to develop a news release and share social media content to publicize the upcoming Vietnam Veterans Day event and provide sound services;
- The County Clerk to disseminate early voting information;
- The Procurement Department and the McHenry County Economic Development Corporation to develop a news release, social media graphics, a web banner, and messaging to encourage participation in a survey that will inform the distribution of \$1 billion for internet infrastructure; and
- The Planning & Development's Community Development Division to enhance their Lead Safe Homes Program marketing strategy and develop a news release and other communications.

The Department of Health has partnered with the Lake County Department of Health to expand Operation Dropbox to both counties. The departments developed a joint news release to encourage community partners to host drop box locations.

Communications of Note

The Circuit Clerk's news release about the new Hope Card Program was picked up by ABC7 and aired on March 24. The Hope Card Program is a pilot program to give individuals with a plenary order of protection an easier way to carry and prove the existence of their order to law enforcement. ABC7 also ran a story on the Circuit Clerk's Amnesty Week this past November. To view this story, visit Amnesty Week November 2024.

Follower Growth and Reach

During the month of March, County Administration social media channels have increased their followings by these numbers: Facebook: 399, Instagram: 20, Twitter(X): 6, and LinkedIn: 52. The Facebook channel has achieved approximately 93% of last year's total growth in followers in this year's first quarter. The County Administration Facebook posts have reached 215,228 accounts which is a 92.4% increase this month over last month. McHenry County Facebook posts have reached 578,352 accounts and have garnered approximately **2.2 million** impressions this year. Instagram posts reached 846 accounts and are down 63.4% compared to last month. Twitter's estimated 10,400 impressions are down 9%, and the County's LinkedIn posts reached 6459 accounts compared to last month's 9440.

Reach and Engagement Metrics

| Top 3 Posts by Channel Reach | | |
|------------------------------|--|---------|
| Channel | Post Summary | Reach |
| Facebook | Work has begun on the second phase of the Randall Road Project | 134,580 |
| Facebook | MCDOT is hiring high school aged summer help for highway work | 61,353 |
| Facebook | Metra is hosting an open house on the new rail yard in Woodstock | 41,354 |
| Instagram | McHenry County meets with legislators in Washington D.C. | 262 |
| Instagram | Remember Deputy Jake Keltner who passed away 6 years ago today | 226 |
| Instagram | Severe storms will be coming into the area | 215 |
| Twitter (X) | Severe storms will be coming into the area | 829 |
| Twitter (X) | The US' #1 weather-related killer is flash flooding | 305 |
| Twitter (X) | Severe storms can fell trees and limbs: avoid windows & exterior rooms | 284 |
| LinkedIn | McHenry County meets with legislators in Washington D.C. | 1,005 |
| LinkedIn | Thank you PACE and Congressman Foster for our new EV bus | 549 |
| LinkedIn | Metra is hosting an open house on the new rail yard in Woodstock | 523 |

| Top 3 Posts by Channel Engagement | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Channel | Post Summary | Engagement Rate |
| Facebook | McHenry County meets with legislators in Washington D.C. | 24.61% |
| Facebook | Current Illinois flag wins nonbinding flag redesign contest | 17.81% |
| Facebook | Work has begun on the second phase of the Randall Road Project | 17.18% |
| Instagram | Sign up to receive donations for the Operation Dropbox collection | 15.38% |
| Instagram | Thank you PACE and Congressman Foster for our new EV bus | 9.22% |
| Instagram | Take the internet survey to help fund connectivity in McHenry County | 9.09% |
| Twitter (X) | Current Illinois flag wins nonbinding flag redesign contest | 7.17% |
| Twitter (X) | Work has begun on the second phase of the Randall Road Project | 7.04% |
| Twitter (X) | McHenry County is hiring! | 5.81% |
| LinkedIn | McHenry County meets with legislators in Washington D.C. | 56.11% |
| LinkedIn | County Board Members toured Valley Hi's new memory care unit | 28.04% |
| LinkedIn | Thank you PACE and Congressman Foster for our new EV bus | 25.49% |

9.4 Administrator Report

Peter Austin, County Administrator, joined the committee for the report.

The Organizational Transitions were successfully managed, with the HR Director position transitioning smoothly to Suzanne Ziebart. The Chief County Assessment Office also had a smooth transition, with Alex Benitez taking over the role. Additionally, the integration of new MCEDC leadership under Mark was successful, with close collaboration with Steve Ballo and Mike Scala.

In terms of Technological Advancements, Microsoft Copilot licenses were implemented, with five high-level licenses distributed to elected officials and staff. Each user was tasked with reporting on how the new technology improved their daily functions. Scott highlighted ongoing work in artificial intelligence initiatives as part of the broader technological improvements.

In the Economic Development sector, Chalen Daigle and Mark Piekos worked on the EDGE program, while municipalities continued to collaborate on economic development efforts. Work on the Enterprise Zone strategic plan also progressed.

Regarding Financial Health, a preliminary audit suggested the county's fund balance stood at 6.5 months, down from 7.1 months but still stable. Lake County is helping to fund a capital program, with one-time funds being used for one-time expenses.

Looking ahead, several focus areas were identified, including the leadership transition for the Mental Health Board, exploring staffing models in comparison to Winnebago County, and potential changes in federal government relationships. Anticipated changes in FEMA funding and grant reductions (around \$600,000) were also noted.

In terms of Federal and State Interactions, a meeting was held with David Christensen regarding FEMA changes, which may have ripple effects on county funding. The county also explored the potential impacts of federal mediator changes and monitored policy shifts such as Medicaid.

Lastly, a reminder was given that Economic Interests statements were due by the end of the month.

9.4.a County Administrator Self Evaluation 2024/25

10. FUTURE TOPICS

Mr. Hartman reminded everyone before the meeting that the ethics ordinance needs to be reviewed. A copy was provided last month, but it won't be discussed today. He encouraged everyone to review it in preparation for future discussions.

Several future topics were raised. One suggestion was to change the rules to allow amendments to the budget in October. Currently, the budget is set after September with no amendments allowed, which has been problematic. There was also a proposal to establish a clear process for negotiating contracts with the County Administrator, as it's likely the current members will not be involved in the next negotiation.

Another suggestion was to better understand the county's staff structure, particularly how many staff members report to elected officials and the sources of their funding. A visual representation of this, such as a pie chart, could help the board gain a clearer picture of the county's budget, including grants and federal or state funding, which would assist in oversight and understanding the levy.

There was also concern about the county's committee structure. Currently, seven people address issues in the committee of the whole (COW), but there's not enough time to discuss issues in depth. The suggestion was made to call special meetings when needed for deeper discussions. It was explained that six members are required to request a special meeting in writing, or the chairman can call one. It was noted that calling a meeting doesn't always guarantee a quorum, so this needs to be considered.

The importance of preparation before meetings was emphasized, as members need to do their homework to fully understand the issues. Special meetings are a tool for addressing complicated matters and should be used when necessary. The board was encouraged to consider this option and to make it clear to new members in future orientations.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mover: Althoff

Second: Kunkle

To adjourn the meeting at 9:58 A.M. -TCCazares

Aye (6): Gottemoller, Hendricks, Althoff, Greeno, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (1): Collins

Recommended (6 to 0)