



McHenry County
Administrative Services - Public Meeting
MINUTES

March 5, 2025, 8:30 AM
County Board Conference Room
Administration Building, 667 Ware Rd., Woodstock, IL 60098

Members Present: Joseph Gottemoller, Pamela Althoff, John Collins, Terri Greeno, Matt Kunkle,
Paul Thomas

Members Absent: Eric Hendricks

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at: 8:37 A.M. by Member Althoff.

Also present: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Scott Hartman, Deputy County Administrator; Alicia Schueller, Director of Public Affairs; Adam Letendre, Director of Procurement and Special Services; Tom Sullivan, Director of IT; Nicole Gattuso, Director of GIS; Tom Burroughs, Director of Facilities; Suzanne Ziebart, Director of HR; Alex Wall, County Administration Intern; Lorraine Krause, HR Benefits and Operations Manager; Kerri Wisz, CFO.

2. MINUTES APPROVAL

Mover: Kunkle

Second: Thomas

Approve previous minutes from the February 5, 2025 meeting.

Aye (4): Althoff, Collins, Kunkle, and Thomas

Absent (3): Gottemoller, Hendricks, and Greeno

Recommended (4 to 0)

2.1 Administrative Services - Public Meeting - Feb 5, 2025 8:30 AM

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. MEMBERS' COMMENTS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

None.

6. PRESENTATION

Ms. Greeno and Mr. Gottemoller join the meeting at 8:37 A.M.

Mover: Kunkle

Seconded: Collins

To allow the remote attendance of Ms. Greeno and Mr. Gottemoller.

Aye (4): Althoff, Collins, Kunkle, and Thomas

Abstain (2): Gottemoller, and Greeno

Absent (1): Hendricks

Recommended (4 to 0)

6.1 Update on Shared and Privatized Services

Alex Wall, County Administration Intern, joined the committee for the presentation.

Mr. Wall had previously sent out a document for review via email. McHenry County had been working on collaborating with departments to better understand how county services were provided, identify areas for improvement, and ultimately contain costs. This long-term project dated back to 2016 and focused on intergovernmental agreements between departments within the county, as well as between the county and external government entities. It also examined privatized services currently offered by each department.

This project was a collaborative effort between Mr. Wall, department heads, directors, and elected officials to discuss these services. Most of the work was conducted through in-person meetings and follow-ups over the past few months. In total, Mr. Wall collaborated with 20 McHenry County departments. He observed that the largest expansion of shared services between intergovernmental groups since 2016 had arguably been within the Sheriff's Office.

During his presentation, the meeting was briefly interrupted to allow Joe Gottemoller and Terry Greeno to join electronically, and a motion was made and passed to approve their participation. Afterward, Mr. Wall continued, summarizing his work with 20 departments to update the lists from 2016. He reiterated that the county had been working on this effort since the beginning of his internship, emphasizing the strong collaboration between him, department heads, and directors.

A question was raised regarding whether an analysis of cost savings had been conducted or if that would be a separate phase. Mr. Wall clarified that such an analysis was outside the scope of this project, indicating that it would be part of a future phase. The discussion then turned to examples of outsourced services, such as housekeeping and maintenance, which sometimes proved more cost-effective when outsourced, depending on the facility. The topic of privatized healthcare services was also discussed, with recognition that in some cases, bringing services in-house might be more cost-effective.

Further discussion explored whether certain services were both outsourced and managed internally. It was suggested that the next step should involve evaluating whether outsourcing truly saved money or if alternative approaches would be more beneficial. It was acknowledged that this was an ongoing process rather than a short-term project. Leadership changes and evolving circumstances made periodic reviews essential. Mr. Wall's work had helped prompt discussions among elected officials and department heads, ensuring continuous assessment of how services were provided.

The intent of the project was to inventory services, whether outsourced or managed through intergovernmental agreements, providing a clear picture of how county services were delivered. Departments were encouraged to regularly assess whether outsourcing remained in the best interest of the county. It was noted that some collaborative efforts benefited both the county and its municipal partners due to economies of scale. The complexity of cost assessments made it difficult to provide a precise financial breakdown for every service, but departments were continually reviewing these agreements.

One participant emphasized the importance of not trying to analyze every service all at once but instead focusing on those that were becoming outdated. It was noted that some agreements had been in place since 2016 and might require reevaluation. For example, the healthcare contract at the jail was a significant service that warranted a closer review.

A question was raised about whether the list of shared services had grown since 2016. It was confirmed that intergovernmental cooperation had expanded, though the county had maintained approximately the same number of employees. This was attributed more to technological advancements than privatization.

As the discussion concluded, it was suggested that while a full cost analysis for every service was impractical, an evaluation of agreements with constitutional offices might be beneficial. Having access to such evaluations would allow county board members to be more informed and responsive to constituents. The request was made for departments to provide insight into the criteria used to determine whether programs remained financially viable and continued to generate cost savings.

7. ROUTINE CONSENT AGENDA

Mover: Collins

Second: Thomas

To approve the remaining items of the Routine Consent Agenda.

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

Absent (1): Hendricks

Recommended (6 to 0)

- 7.1 Resolution Authorizing Change of FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) Third-Party Administrator (TPA) from TASC (Total Administrative Services Corporation) to FMLA-Source Effective May 1, 2025 (8)

Mover: Collins

Second: Thomas

Approval to change FMLA third-party administrator (TPA) from TASC to FMLA Source.

Recommended

- 7.3 Resolution to Provide Information Security Assessment and Penetration Testing (20)

Mover: Collins

Second: Thomas

To approve Resolution to Provide Information Security Assessment and Penetration Testing.

Recommended

- 7.4 Resolution Approving the Reclassification of Position #20002721 within the Information Technology Department Roster (20)

Mover: Collins

Seconders: Thomas

To Approve the Reclassification of Position #20002721 Within the Information Technology Department Roster.

Recommended

- 7.5 Resolution Authorizing a One Year Contract with Ayres Associates Inc. for Orthophotography with Three Option Years (65)

Mover: Collins

Seconders: Thomas

Request County Board approval of attached resolution to enter into contract for orthophotography services with Ayres Associates Inc., Madison, WI.

Recommended

- 7.2 Reclassification and Re-Titling of Grade 7N Procurement Specialist II to grade 9E Assistant Procurement Manager and an Emergency Appropriation in the Procurement FY25 Budget (06)

Pulled for discussion by Mr. Kunkle.

Adam Letendre, Director of Procurement and Special Services, joined the committee to discuss the resolution.

Mr. Kunkle stated that at the last Administrative Services meeting, it was discussed that these requests had been completed, though someone mentioned a few more might be coming. He appreciated the breakdown and the details provided but reiterated previous discussions from last fall regarding the importance of department heads proactively addressing personnel adjustments. Since department heads are familiar with their employees and those deserving of raises, it would be beneficial to incorporate these escalations into the budget rather than addressing them afterward. These increases impact costs year over year and are not just one-time requests, which will affect future budgets. Including these discussions in the budget planning process in June or July would allow for better preparation and communication with constituents about departments requiring additional funding. While not all board members have faced pushback, some have received concerns from the public, particularly as scrutiny increases over government spending. With growing attention on financial decisions at all levels, it is more important than ever to ensure thorough planning. It is frustrating to finalize a budget in November only to receive additional funding requests in January or February. More information upfront would help explain these decisions to constituents and reduce backlash.

Acting Chair Althoff agreed with the points raised and emphasized the importance of the discussion.

Mr. Letendre explained that the issue became more pressing in November when work with the broadband breakthrough cohort intensified. The release of the final broadband map right before Thanksgiving significantly increased responsibilities, causing his position to absorb tasks initially handled at the start of his tenure but later delegated due to workload constraints. These included fiscal oversight, contract enforcement, and approvals, many of which had already been managed by another employee in his absence. After November, a request was made for HR to review the position, as it was believed to be misaligned with current duties. HR conducted an analysis and confirmed that the position required adjustment.

Mr. Kunkle acknowledged the concern and recognized that many of these requests had been addressed. Most board members following these decisions understood that raises were awarded to employees who genuinely deserved them. However, scrutiny was expected to increase over the next four years. Residents who had never previously engaged had begun questioning how tax dollars were being spent. While individual board members were not directly responsible for budget allocations, careful planning in June and July would help mitigate these concerns.

Acting Chair Althoff raised a broader budget consideration, noting that during budget discussions, departments often request fewer positions than needed to maintain fiscal responsibility, which later results in supplemental funding requests. A stronger exchange of information would improve transparency and ensure that decision-makers could effectively explain budget allocations to constituents.

Mr. Collins cautioned against phrases like "we do a lot of these," as they could send the wrong message to the public. He commended HR for thoroughly reviewing requests and ensuring they were necessary rather than arbitrary. It was important to communicate this as discussions continued. In business, unexpected expenses typically lead to cost-cutting or revenue increases, which require careful financial adjustments.

Mr. Kunkle acknowledged that while the county operated differently from the private sector, budget constraints remained a challenge. Cost reductions were possible, but revenue generation was not as straightforward. With approximately 1,200 employees, a significant number of adjustments had been made over the past two and a half years. While the reasoning behind them was understood, planning ahead in June and July would create a more structured approach to these budgetary concerns.

Mover: Gottemoller

Seconded: Kunkle

Approve reclassification and retitle of 7N Procurement Specialist II to 9E Assistant Procurement Manager

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

Absent (1): Hendricks

Recommended (6 to 0)

8. OLD BUSINESS

None.

9. REPORTS

9.1 Capital Plan Update

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

The Nursing Side Project has progressed, with staff relocated and all necessary furniture moved. Some materials have been recycled, and the area is now ready for work to begin.

For Dr. Rein's Project, bids have been received for the renovation of the board, lab, and office areas. The county is reviewing various add alternates to the base bid and plans to present a resolution to the board in April for review and discussion.

The Parking Lot Project is set to begin following a pre-construction meeting on March 24. The project will be completed in phases, starting with the northeast quadrant of the back parking lot before progressing to the remaining sections, including the front parking lot and connection to the road. Temporary striping will be used between phases, and the entire lot will be resurfaced over a weekend. Lynnsey from the office is

developing a communication plan for department heads to coordinate the relocation of approximately 60 people and pool vehicles to alternate parking, with designated priority parking for early arrivals.

The Roof Equipment Replacement is scheduled for late March, with equipment shipping on March 26 and expected to arrive within seven days. A crane will be used over a Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday to lift the new equipment onto the roof, remove the old units, and terminate electric and gas connections. The new equipment is expected to be operational by Monday or Tuesday.

9.2 Human Resources Update

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

Union negotiations were successfully completed for the Ask Me Court Probations contract in a five-hour session. The contract was ratified by the union and approved by the Chief Judge. This marked the first union contract negotiation since November. Looking ahead, approximately five union contracts are set for negotiation next year, with budgeting and preparations underway for the 2026 negotiation cycle.

A new compensation study is planned for 2026, following the updated policy. Preliminary discussions have begun with the Archer group to outline the study's approach and implementation.

The county's wellness program continues to grow, focusing on six pillars of health. This month's emphasis is on financial health, aiming to help employees reduce stress and improve productivity. Health screenings participation is currently 1.5% below the 75% goal. Aggregate health data suggests a positive impact from wellness initiatives, with discussions ongoing with IPBC regarding rising pharmacy costs, particularly related to weight loss medications. A post-COVID increase in medical procedures has been observed, and early health screenings are believed to have saved three lives.

Office improvements are also underway, with plans to redesign the break room using wellness dollars from IPBC. Additional outdoor spaces for employee breaks are being considered, including a pavilion in the parking lot area.

The discussion emphasized the HR department's focus on labor negotiations, employee wellness, and strategic planning for compensation and benefits. Key initiatives include contract negotiations, wellness programming, compensation studies, and ongoing improvements to workplace facilities.

9.3 Communications

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

Communications Strategic Plan Update

The reinvigorated PIO Network met for its bimonthly meeting to receive a presentation on communications for a local event and best practices.

Communications Collaborations

County Administration communications staff collaborated with the Regional Office of Education to develop two news releases, one to solicit nominations for the annual Educator of the Year Awards and another to seek sponsors to send the McHenry County Regional Spelling Bee winner to the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee. Messaging was also posted to social media channels.

Administration communications staff also worked with the County Clerk to distribute a news release regarding elections dates and the Planning & Development Department to develop a news release, graphics, and social media content to publicize the launching of the new online permitting portal.

Communications of Note

The McHenry County Board Chairman's State of the County Address was filmed and edited to include photographs and videos of the referenced County successes. While some footage was created by County

Administration staff, other portions were shared by communications personnel in the McHenry County Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Kane County Public Information Office. Together, we were able to best showcase McHenry County's accomplishments this year. The McHenry County Board Chairman's State of the County Address can be viewed on the video section of the County homepage at: <https://www.mchenrycountyil.gov/>.

Follower Growth and Reach

During the month of February, County Administration social media channels have increased their followings by these numbers: Facebook: 189, Instagram: 16, Twitter(X): 8, and LinkedIn: 52.

Reach for Twitter and Instagram have increased compared to last month, but Facebook and LinkedIn have decreased. It should be noted that McHenry County Administration's Facebook posts have reached **111,543** accounts in this month alone. The account's total reach for this year is 434,410 accounts compared to the 336,300 accounts reached in all of 2024. McHenry County Facebook posts have also garnered over **1.57 million** impressions this year.

Reach and Engagement Metrics

ADD METRICS TABLE HERE!

9.4 Administrator Report

Peter Austin, County Administrator, joined the committee to discuss the report.

Alex Wall, an administrative intern, collaborated with 20 county departments to assess service delivery models and identify potential cost-saving opportunities.

A strategic plan workshop is scheduled for April 23. In preparation, key stakeholder meetings took place on February 27 with partners such as the Housing Authority, Conservation District, and Mental Health Board. Insights from these discussions will help shape the county's long-term planning efforts.

County representatives attended the NACo Legislative Conference, meeting with four representatives and two senators. Discussions focused on legislative priorities, including concerns about the potential elimination of tax-exempt status for municipal bonds. The delegation emphasized maintaining ongoing communication with federal legislators.

The county is exploring internet backup solutions for Valley Hi and the Department of Transportation. Discussions are underway with Comcast and Starlink, though the estimated cost to extend fiber to the location is approximately \$1.6 million.

Plans are in place to update office spaces by moving pictures, refreshing paint, and creating a gathering space for county board members. The estimated cost for these improvements is approximately \$1,000.

10. FUTURE TOPICS

Before the discussion of future topics.

Scott Hartman provided an update on the Ethics Commission's review of the ethics ordinance, which has been ongoing since June 2024. After six meetings, the Commission recommended several changes, which will be discussed at a future meeting. Terri Greeno, the Ethics Commission liaison, and Scott Hartman are available to provide further insight if needed.

Next month Mr. Austin will present his self-evaluation for 2024 and 2025, which will kick off the evaluation process moving into May. Ms. Greeno raised two concerns: first, the need for a quarterly budget update, as there have been areas with decreases, and second, the importance of understanding the distribution of the county's \$264 million budget across departments, especially in relation to employee numbers in specific areas, like the sheriff's department.

The group discussed presenting the budget information to both the Finance & Audit and Administrative Services committees for broader review, with visuals like charts or pie charts to help illustrate personnel by funds. This approach would help provide clarity and allow for better preparation in addressing questions in advance. The committee agreed to move forward with this plan.

The following items were mentioned as future topics;

The Strategic Plan Workshop is scheduled for April 23, providing an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts and feedback on the plan. This session will be a crucial step in shaping the future direction of the county's strategic goals.

Key stakeholder meetings were held on February 27 with partners such as the Housing Authority, Conservation District, and others. The insights gathered during these discussions will be compiled and shared to guide the development of the strategic plan.

A proposal was made to include monthly updates on the strategic plan in the board packets, which would be especially useful for new board members. This approach will help ensure ongoing clarity and progress tracking as the plan moves forward.

The Valley High Memory Care Unit Open House is scheduled for Thursday, the 20th, from 8:30 to 10:30 AM. This event will provide an opportunity for community members to learn more about the services offered at the facility.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mover: Thomas

Second: Kunkle

To adjourn the meeting at 9:42 A.M. -TCCazares

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

Absent (1): Hendricks

Recommended (6 to 0)