

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**September 11, 2019**

The monthly Finance Committee meeting was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the McDonough County Courthouse, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Law Library. Committee members present were Chair Travis Hiel, Vice Chair Scott Schwerer, Larry Aurelio, Letha Clark, Rod McGrew, Trevor Toland and Mike Cox. Others in attendance included County Chair George Dixon, County Clerk Gretchen DeJaynes, Joe Erlandson, Terra Litchfield, Keith Krohe, Tim Lobdell, Sandy Nelson, Maggie Brooks (North Central), and Amy Anderson (Bridgeway).

Chairman Hiel called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **BUDGET-708**

Sandy Nelson presented the budget, and brought along the last five years budget. Uncertainty going forward, but he is confident the 2020 budget is good. Staff changes and minimum wage increase, full time retiring and what it will cost to replace him, it's hard to get the other four years right now. Chair Hiel asked if the 708 Board was working on it, and Nelson said yes. Counties include, Warren, Mercer and McDonough.

### **Other Budget Items**

Tim Lobdell presented for Tri-County

### **Insurance Update**

Keith Krohe gave an insurance update.

### **Review & Approval of August 14, 2019 Minutes**

Member McGrew moved with a second by Member Aurelio to approve the minutes of August 14, 2019 as submitted. Motion carried on a voice vote.

### **MCPT Report Review & Approval**

The monthly report for August 2019 from McDonough County Public Transportation was reviewed. Member Aurelio moved with a second by Member Toland to approve the August 2019 MCPT report in the amount of \$1,558.50. Motion carried on a voice vote.

### **Bushnell Senior Meals Report Review & Approval**

The monthly report for August 2019 from the YMCA for transportation of senior meals in Bushnell was reviewed. Member Schwerer moved with a second by Member Aurelio to approve the August 2019 YMCA report in the amount of \$1,065.98. Motion carried on a voice vote.

### **Coroner Report**

The monthly Coroner Report was received and filed.

### **Monthly Financial Reports**

The monthly Financial Reports were received and filed.

### **Transfer of Funds**

No Report. Mutual Medical is down to \$140,000.

### **Warrants Issued in Vacation**

Member Schwerer moved with a second by Member McGrew to approve the Warrants Issued in Vacation. Motion carried on a voice vote.

### **Board Approval of Transfer & Appropriation of Monies**

None

## **Approve Hiring of an Executive Assistant for County Board**

Chair Dixon presented the copy of the recommendation of a hiring for an executive assistant. Chair Hiel explained that he received a call today concerning this and the last several years our employees are asked to take a 2% raise. She is concerned that if the County hires and “executive assistant,” if that person comes in at higher than starting, that was going to upset employees. She was speaking for her employees, but thought it would go beyond that to other offices in the courthouse. Tammy also stated that this was an extra expense on the County when budgets were low and again, we were asking everyone to hold tight on their budgets. She expressed a lot of concerns and also thought that you would have employees wanting to change positions and then not getting it, being more upset. Member Clark also said she contacted her as well and Chair Hiel covered it very well. Chair Dixon said there is no sense when you’ve had access to it, no sense of going through every line of it, just some highlights, that position would answer to the Board Chair, assistant to scheduling, and everyday activities of that position. Would attend and record minutes of all County Board Meetings. We suggest they would supervise County Information Technology needs, monitor the contract with TimbukTech. We feel like this would be a big step forward in our HR department, Dixon states, which we don’t have an HR department per say. This person would be to be responsible for all those activities whether it be policy manual or helping with hiring and dismissal of employees, make sure everything is done right. They would also help with the budget process, whether it be the individual departments, through the year, watching out for expenses, income levels and also be able to assist them with the final budget at the end of the year. They would also be involved with the audit process and a new one which we aren’t faced with yet, Treasurer did take care of, but compliance with all grant requirements, we got this GATA thing coming on or we had to deal with this year. We hired it out basically to the auditors and I think this position could step in and put that information together. Primarily this position would give us a chance to go back to where we were a couple years ago, when we had a, not sure what her title was, an administrator or whatever. Would be answering to the Board for all these activities, develop a sense of teamwork that I think would be really important in getting our job done. It’s good for the long range look of the County. Quite honestly, Dixon explains, the way we are set up right now and what we have gone through the first nine months, since the last election. Unless we get something turned around, and be able to have that position manageable, it’s going to be tough to get somebody to be a Board Chair. This would be a tough situation if we couldn’t. Member Schwerer asked Dixon, this is a very detailed job description, did you get that from somewhere or where did this originate from, this particular job description? Chair Dixon claims he put it together after reviewing several other counties. Member Schwerer asked if there would be educational requirements for the position. Chair Dixon, gave it considerable thought, most of them indicate 3-5 years, a lot of them have Master’s Degree required, plus 3-5 years experience, didn’t include that because we thought it would be eliminating some candidates and you could eliminate them in the interview process if they didn’t have what you were looking for. Chair Hiel explained what Gretchen distributed, this is the job description of what the Clerk’s office is doing now, this is what the County reimburses the Clerk’s office to do. County Clerk DeJaynes explained, they did this when Beth left in 2017 and it worked very smoothly for 2 years, but she agrees this is no longer working, it was the understanding when we did this, that anybody at any time was unhappy, they can step out of this and her office will be stepping out. She explained, her office will take care of this for another 30 days, but then we will be done handling all of these things. It will be a little less than \$5,000 that she will be returning to the County which she has reflected in her budget and she has dropped her budget to \$30,000, that the office got for this position. Chair Dixon asked Gretchen to repeat on the \$5,000, she stated \$30,000, is what the Board gave for the position. She will turn back in \$5,000, which is more than she had to, considering being done in the middle of October. She is assuming that you will get them hired by the first of October, some things that need to be thought about are, your budget needs to be on display by November 5, 2019, that will be a considerable time. She would encourage, whomever takes the position to take the Web Design Class at Spoon River, because that’s a lot of work and takes a lot of time to get that done. Member Aurelio asked

who will be responsible for training, because this is going to be a heavy load. Who will be responsible on the Board for the training of this individual? County Clerk DeJaynes also recommended to the Committee, that Illinois is now a gender neutral state, and Chairman is no longer allowed, so when this job is posted you need to think about taking that out of there. Member Schwerer asked about the rate of pay, because in the job description it states, commensurate with experience, what type of salary are you thinking, George? Chair Dixon states it's going to be what we can identify as the person that's available. Gretchen explained that you are getting \$30,000 back, but anything over that you will have to find that budget slot. Member Aurelio asked then, full time or part time? Chair Dixon says, I guess we can be flexible if we are going to address these issues, that's a full time position. Member Schwerer asked again, what kind of salary range are you anticipating, Dixon answered, they would like to look at \$30,000-\$35,000, in his view point, that won't hire a "top-notch" person, if we identify a "top-notch" person and offer them \$30,000, it would be a shame to see them walk away, but that's somewhat of a range that we have talked about. Member Schwerer asked where he planned to get this money, Dixon explained \$30,000 would come back out of Gretchen's budget. Dixon explained, most of the Board is telling him, they have a problem, get it done. If we have to tap into some of the wind farm money, we will. Member Schwerer asked, what wind farm money, Dixon stated \$336,000 that they kicked in this year. Member Schwerer said is thinks that money is already spent, Dixon stated no it isn't, we just got to talking we have \$700 some odd thousand and that \$336,000 is in there and that will spend down of course between now and the end of the year. Chair Dixon also claims it is also anticipated there will be an additional \$39,000 of real estate tax coming into the County, which would not be next year. County Clerk explained, that will not all be in County General, that \$39,000 will be split up how the enterprise zone is split, County General will only get their portion. You cannot move money because of how the zone is set up. Chair Dixon said, well that is the number you gave me off the income of that real estate, and County Clerk DeJaynes explains, yes, but that does not all go to General County. Chair Dixon asked how much would, Gretchen said she would need a tax rate, no one could present the tax rate and she was unable to come up with that number off of the top of her head. Member Litchfield asked County Clerk DeJaynes, why isn't this working, County Clerk DeJaynes stated, George and I have a completely different opinion on how the County Board procedures should be done, it won't work, he is absolutely right and it will probably be the one thing her and George will agree on, we just don't agree on the procedural process on how things are getting done. Member Litchfield asked why we can't be team players and put personal issues aside, it's sad. Gretchen agreed it is very sad. Member Litchfield reiterates why in the world can't we just get along. Stacey Alexander produced the rates Gretchen needed for Corporate Funds and Special Use Funds, they were as follows: Special use fund, 1.098300, Corporate fund, 0.253830. County Clerk DeJaynes figured and told the Committee, that out of the \$39,000 from real estate tax, \$7,800 will go into County General Fund, approximately, County General is 1/5 of the tax rate. Dixon then says, like he says, there is that other money there that they can tap into, depending on what level we come in at. Chair Hiel says there has to be some other thoughts and opinions on this subject. Member Toland expressed he is very skeptical after reading this job description, he can't imagine someone stepping into this job and doing all those things, he explained he has been on the Board now for seven years, worked with Beth, worked with Gretchen, and saw their knowledge. Member McGrew stated his concerns from previous before Beth and receiving comp and recovering from surgery. Also taking over at meetings and such. Member Aurelio also said he doesn't know where the issue is coming from, but he said 6-8 months ago, they had a meeting about The Chair and Vice Chair, who was going to step up and who was going to be prepared, they were saying that wasn't being done. Then he questioned, is it being done now? Is the Vice Chair stepping up and doing more than the Vice Chair in the past, and preparing himself for the Chair spot. That was discussed that we needed to prepare our Vice Chair for that, is that being done? Chair Dixon claims, yes it is. Chair Dixon claims they have a lot of meetings and Mike is a part of that, so then we set it up to where he could be a part of the executive committee. Member Aurelio said, to George, that you had just mentioned we would have a hard time finding another Chair and Aurelio said he assumed that was what we were working towards. Member McGrew, said, that doesn't guarantee Mike

would be Chair either and that could happen, not feasible, but it could. Member Aurelio expressed his thought a Chair, would be working with a Vice Chair more on these issues, or we pick someone that would like to be Chair, it makes sense to prepare someone. Vice Chair Cox said, Member Schwerer did an excellent job as Chair, but no one knew what a Chair did, Member Aurelio disagreed, because he kept Aurelio informed on every project on the Board, no one ever questioned it to him. Member Litchfield said, that was all you and Scott. Member Schwerer states, this is all past history, Member Aurelio agreed, he just thinks we need a plan. Vice Chair Cox wants to shed a little light on where we are at, and why we should change that direction. Cox states he knows very little and claimed Aurelio knew a lot, George has learned a lot, and states we got ourselves in that position because we didn't do anything for 10 years. Cox says if you're going to use the same bull for 10 years, you're going to get the same results. Our team, which has brought in more people into the mix, we hope, as Chair people, that is why I wasn't a Chair of a Committee, because we wanted to see more people step up, and that got us in trouble. Everywhere we turn we got in trouble, Cox states he has had this opinion from the get go, how do you run a \$20 million organization with a part time CEO and what is the results of that and how long can you continue to do that? Then you add an administrative assistant, then she left, and everybody thought, that's great, lets save money and put that work on another department, right. Now we have shed some of that work to another department and now we have a Chair and Clerk that work well together, but now we have a Chair and a Clerk that apparently doesn't work well together, we got to fix it. But, in fixing it, we have researched it, and found out that I don't know how this County operates, I'm not sure we are doing the HIPPA thing right. I think too many people, know too many peoples business, Cox says. You want to talk about liability on HIPPA, there's the liability, if you don't do it and you have her do it, that's two people that know about individuals health issues that shouldn't know it. County Clerk DeJaynes explains, we have always had two people do it, there has always had to have been. Cox claims he doesn't think that's legal. Gretchen tells them there can be multiple HIPPA in an organization. Cox says he just sees, correct, we are asking a lot, but we have to start somewhere, but this County. Cox then says there is savings in this budget, we just need the right person to find it, these people come in here and throw these numbers out here and you ask them, I asked this guy, he didn't give an answer to his account balances. Cox then states, regardless of taking on a job, he isn't quite sure why Scott wanted it, it had to take a lot of his time, some people have a lot, some don't. How long are we going to be able to do that on volunteer people that is getting a \$10,000-\$15,000 salary, and how much can you expect out of them? If this is a step just to help that individual or help us as a County, I would like to see someday, we ought to be as a Board, an overseer, not the ones that if the computer quits working you get the call, if the air conditioner breaks, what are you going to do about it, Cox doesn't think that's what they should be doing and it looks like that's what the Chair was doing. Chair Hiel then says, sounds like what you're saying Mike, is you would like an administrator for the County, similar to a city administrator, Cox interrupted and said at some point I think you're going to have to, Hiel, says the City Administrator that oversees and virtually knows about everything, they have a 24/7 job, Cox says within reason. Cox says we got the Elms that you're not going to, and maybe some other organizations they can't oversee every day to day operations, but they got to have the day to day and pass it to the Chair and be in contact with that person. Cox then expresses, this new thing on the grants, it's just going to keep getting worse and worse and someone is going to have to keep doing that work and doing it right or none of the grants are going to get approved, the way I understand it. Chair Hiel explains to Cox that if that is what he is saying, then their job description as a Board isn't even adequate. Vice Chair Cox says that could be, Dixon said it's headed by a draft, we are looking for input. Chair Hiel said it's way more comprehensive than we can probably find, especially for the kind of money we are talking here, because the City Administrator's make over \$100,000/yr. Chair Dixon addressed Hiel and said, you are talking about an administrator and we are looking for an administrative assistant. Chair Hiel says, but you aren't changing what Mike is talking about, Cox says we have to start somewhere, he really thinks so, he knows a lot of other organizations, that's it's a lot less than \$20 million that has to run the day to day. Scott's never shared with us what he did day to day, I know what George is going through. Cox claims he wouldn't want anybody, for that

kind of compensation to have to deal with that, it's not fair, when it was smaller operation, possibly. County Clerk DeJaynes asked, have you checked into how many counties our size have an administrator, a true administrator and a secretary and how they pay for them? Chair Dixon stated over half the counties do have, DeJaynes then asked again, our size, our demographics are so broad, you have to limit it to a population base. Chair Dixon states, that includes some like in the southern part of the state that are a lot smaller than we are. Chair Hiel asked about our neighboring counties. Cox and Dixon both stated Adams county is one. Hiel asked about Hancock, Fulton, Knox? Cox and Dixon were both unsure. Dixon said he doesn't think Fulton and Hancock does, he can't speak for Knox. Chair Hiel says yes, everyone wants more assistance, but an administrator would make the budget workbook take a hit. Chair Hiel stated he thinks Gretchen's office has done a great job, there is just a personality conflict, but in general but we are not out of compliance on anything. These are important, I do feel the County Board would benefit having an employee that would answer to the Board, I think there would be true benefits. Hiel claims, where that lies, whether it's a part time secretary that works for \$10,000/yr to an administrator that works for \$100,000/yr. Hiel stated he and Gretchen had a very good conversation, going and having my opinion that her office has done a good job doing this, I did not want he to see this and I felt it should be discussed, so I sat down and had this conversation with her. Chair Hiel said he is concerned of the job description and thinks it would take this new person a year, working with Gretchen's office to learn this, this list is critical. Chair Hiel is concerned on the transition of the new employee and how to make it smooth and what works best for the County. Chair Dixon said, yes the administrator is a eutopia, but this is a lower level, less expectations than an administrator would have and if they looked at that, they would not be able to accomplish that for a period of time, we would have to grow into it. County Clerk DeJaynes then added, for your information, her office got \$30,000 for the list of jobs she gave to the Committee, we will be turning those jobs back over, it is not a perfect world and you are going to have to find someone to do these jobs. Member Schwerer added questioning the job description again, you talk about a lower level administrator, but this says, serving as point of contact for all department heads providing direction regarding Human Resource legal matters, so you are going to want this person to give legal advice to people? Dixon answered, they can put together, consult whoever they need to and put that stuff together to as an HR person, yes, no they're not going to be an attorney. Member Schwerer states, I would hope we aren't going to hire an attorney, but who else is going to give assess legal matters besides an attorney? Chair Dixon told Schwerer, they can gather information and share it with a department head, whoever, in no way does that indicate they're going to be an attorney. Member Schwerer addressed, one of the things when Beth was here, was the fact that for the night meetings, there was not a set policy, when we looked at this two years ago, when she had to do a meeting at 6, she was to come in that day at 9. Gretchen explained that is how the person before was hired, Beth was given double time for any night meeting, it didn't matter how many hours she worked that week. Schwerer is just recommending that it should be a set standard thing for hours, Chair Dixon agreed it would be cost effective, Member Litchfield added a lot better than double time. Member McGrew said he doesn't remember any of the Board members consulted on what to pay Beth, Gretchen explained, that when Linda left, she said the job needed to pay more and the night meetings needed to be considered part of the job, she is unsure who made that decision, McGrew asked who set that and she doesn't know. Member Litchfield said Gretchen is right, there was a whole lot of contention in the Courthouse when Beth was here, because she made a whole lot of money and Gretchen and Kim's offices they come in at squat and that's the only thing Litchfield has to say about it, because with these people there are a lot of the people in these offices have to know so much and change constantly. Chair Hiel asked Vice Chair Cox if this is going to get us where you are wanting to be, Cox states he just thinks it should be the right person and he doesn't think they will accomplish much the first year. Gretchen explained, they're going to have to, they don't have a choice, this is what her office did, we didn't get a year to train, but she will issue a letter and she and her office will be done October 15, 2019 with their duties that she handed them. Vice Chair states, what he was trying to say, the bigger picture, they won't gain much ground in a year, the first thing they have to do is build a relationship with office holders in the Courthouse in order to

work with them, not against them, that's going to probably be the biggest task. Cox then states, now if they're making more money than a clerk in her office, this person needs to make more than that. Member Schwerer asked Cox what he thought they should make, Cox answered he didn't know, the job description is asking an awful lot, so part of it could be that the resumes we get may not fit everything there and we may have to piece, so if there is something that individual doesn't need to handle, I don't think we need to ask them to do it, but if no one else is going to do it, then apparently we will have to pay what it takes. Chair Hiel said, he doesn't know if we will have the ability, but this stuff has to start October 16, 2019, that's an immediate concern of mine. Member Aurelio said we have a budget we should be spending this time on, Hiel expressed concern on October 16 he will be handed a budget that is only 25%-30% complete and going to have less than a month to get that on display, November 4. Chair Hiel said, that person has to be able to do everything on that list, that's another concern. Member McGrew asked for another 30 days, County Clerk DeJaynes said no. Member Aurelio asked if there is something we can do quick or do we need to discuss. Member Clark said, I heard Gretchen say 30 days, Gretchen told her I won't leave you high and dry. Member Toland states, so it sounds like we have dug ourselves a hole, by putting ourselves in this position. County Clerk DeJaynes asked I would assume you are going to advertise for the position pretty shortly and you'll hire prior to the first of October and they will have a couple weeks. Chair Hiel asked or you could just wait until the first of the year, until you can broach the subjects, County Clerk DeJaynes said could we, we didn't. Chair Hiel said we haven't done anything yet, we broached the subject, but we have not determined, as of Board, the Board hasn't determined a direction on this, they have discussed the topic. County Clerk DeJaynes stated, when this was done, it was if either party, it was done in Finance originally, if either party was unhappy with the situation, we could get out of it. Chair Hiel explains he sees a major flaw in this paper and it is major in his opinion. It does not have any contract general, 30 days isn't sufficient, it wasn't in there. Vice Chair asked if anyone recalls the \$30,000, because he doesn't, County Clerk DeJaynes said yes, this was passed at the Board. Chair Hiel said this was approved at full Board, major flaw in that when there should've been longer. Member Litchfield asked why it was changed in the first place when Beth left, and Chair Hiel explained we had an immediate need, we had a solution to the problem and we were saving money and Scott stepped up and did things. Member Clark said she thinks it was a unanimous vote. County Clerk DeJaynes also added, it was to move the position around, have more people know, and that everyone didn't do one thing. Member Schwerer said, it was to have more people available, there was a whole office that could handle an issue. Chair Dixon said, we have shared some opinions around the room, a lot from certain individuals, Trevor what are you thinking? Member Toland said he wished he had a solution, a lot of comments are appropriate, but he's really skeptical how they can work someone in, in a short amount of time. Member McGrew did say, he liked it when they had their own secretary, we just gave \$5,000 for a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, are they still having this training session? Gretchen explained that is something that they have been doing to 15 years. Member McGrew asked how many were attending it, Gretchen said no one would've known that and Member Schwerer went on to say call out to the ASCS office and ask for Cindy Moon and ask her how many people are attending that. Member Clark thinks there is a need, but now there isn't an option. Board Member Erlandson was addressed by Chair Dixon and asked if he had anything, he asked if Gretchen would give a buffer period, Gretchen said no, she was not approached and this is something that Dixon and Cox wanted, so no, could we have played well, probably. Chair Dixon asked DeJaynes, what happened when I came to your office to discuss the relationship, DeJaynes said when you said I needed to start doing more of your work, is that the conversation that we had, she said she wouldn't get into a scrapping match, when I don't feel it is going to benefit the Committee at all, he isn't going to change. Erlandson said obviously something has to change and it's going to be a rough transition, it doesn't change things and he's not sure what the answer is, but I'm not sure what the alternative is at this point. Gretchen explained it was a rough transition when we received it and got no training, it happens. Member Schwerer addressed Vice Chair Cox and told him that when he became Chair, he was willing to take time off work and go to meetings and work very hard at the job to learn it, so it can be done without a Vice Chair. Everyone is elected every four years and a Chair

every two so that can change at any time, it was a lot of work.

Member McGrew motioned to approve hiring of an executive assistant for County Board to Full Board, Member Schwerer seconded. Motioned carried on a roll call vote of 4 yeas, 1 nay, 1 pass.

**Approve Sikich Contract**

\$71,500 for Audit \$9,500 for single audit \$10,900 Circuit Clerks Audit

Member Schwerer moved to send the Sikich Contract to Full Board, Member Clark second. Motion carried on a voice vote

**Approval of Claims**

Member Schwerer motioned to approve August claims, Member McGrew second. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**BUDGET-County Clerk, Gretchen DeJaynes**

2% salary increase for employees. Elections doubled because there will be two elections. Depending on what legislation we get, election budget could go up \$150,000.

**Executive Session**

None

**Other**

George told the Committee that 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be touring the Courthouse tomorrow.

Member Schwerer asked about the Fulton County marijuana ordinance that Chair Dixon was supposed to check on and send out. Chair Dixon, better than that, he got one from United Council. Schwerer asked if that would be on this months agenda, Chair Dixon said I take your advice but one committee should see it first. Schwerer also asked if they were going to get a copy of the agreement that George signed with First Midstate and any other agreements for bonds we have received, was supposed to go to Full Board. Dixon said it didn't have to go to Full Board, but Schwerer explained that it isn't what the Committee decided, it was supposed to go to Full Board. Chair Dixon said he could probably get them.

Chair Hiel addressed that we got our Bond Rating AA-. The Local economy is major.

**Adjourn**

Member McGrew moved with a second by Member Aurelio that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried on a voice vote. With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.