

**JO DAVIESS COUNTY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER: Jo Daviess County Chairperson Scott Toot called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2020 in the Jo Daviess County Board Room, Jo Daviess County Courthouse in Galena, Illinois.

ROLL CALL was answered as follows: Present - William Bingham, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, Robert O'Connor, John Schultz, Scott Toot, and Don Zillig. Present: 8. Present electronically - Steve Allendorf, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, John Lang, Hendrica Regez, Ron Smith, Andrew Townsend, and LaDon Trost. Present electronically: 8. Absent – Robert Heuerman. Absent: 1.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Chairperson Toot.

AGENDA ITEM I - CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizens' comments at this time.

AGENDA ITEM II – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business brought before the board at this time.

AGENDA ITEM III – NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Toot began the meeting with a statement on the *Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation and Executive Order #5 in Response to COVID-19*, specifically Section 6, which addresses the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120, requiring or relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body. This will be discussed in depth later in the meeting.

A motion to approve the *Proclamation Declaring Jo Daviess County a Disaster Area for Coronavirus Response* was made by Steve Allendorf and seconded by LaDon Trost.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 16. Nays: 0. Absent – Robert Heuerman. Absent: 1.

As outlined in Governor Pritzker's Executive Order #5, the provisions for the Open Meetings Act have been suspended for the duration of this proclamation. In order to maintain the recommended social distancing protocols, Jo Daviess County has implemented a teleconferencing program and it will be utilized for all meetings going forward. Chairperson Toot asks that all members that are participating electronically state their name before speaking and to utilize the features in the program to be recognized. This program is not only for board members, but for the public, as well. There is a link on the county website for anyone to join the meeting and offer citizens' comments. It is a new program, so he asks that everyone have patience while we learn how it works.

Board members discussed teleconferencing for meetings and expressed concern for those that are not able to attend electronically, specifically how to keep everyone safe during this time. This initiated a discussion about possibly limiting the number of county meetings and consolidating necessary county business.

A motion to limit meetings during the disaster proclamation to County Board, Joint Executive/Finance, and Zoning Board of Appeals was made by Staci Duerr and seconded by John Schultz.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot,

Jo Daviess County Board Special Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2020

Page 2 of 4

Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 15. Nays - Hendrica Regez. Nays: 1. Absent – Robert Heurman. Absent: 1.

Sheriff Kevin Turner has issued a directive regarding changes in public access to offices located in the Courthouse and the Public Safety Building. Only persons with urgent and essential business will be allowed in the Courthouse; all other business shall be conducted via phone or electronically. Those that arrive at the Courthouse may be subject to a screening process including, but not limited to answering medical questions and having their temperature taken, before they are allowed to enter. These changes are in effect immediately and will remain until further notice. In order to keep employees safe, department heads would like the ability to limit their staffing as they see fit.

A motion to give department heads the authority to make decisions regarding on-site staffing in their offices was made by Andrew Townsend and seconded by Don Zillig.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 15. Nays - Robert O'Connor. Nays: 1. Absent – Robert Heurman. Absent: 1.

In 2007, the County Board adopted the *Employee Absence During a Pandemic Event Policy*. This ensured employees had the right to voluntarily practice social distancing without sanction. They were given the option to use paid or unpaid leave if that is what they chose to do. However, the policy did not address when the employer mandates social distancing for their employees. In order to comply with recent directives and proclamations without financially penalizing employees, board members discussed an amended policy that states employees that are social distancing involuntarily will be paid their regular wage. A voluntary social distancing will still be required to use paid or unpaid leave. This policy is only in effect when a disaster proclamation has been made by the County Board and ceases when the disaster is declared over. As with all policies, it can be amended at any time.

A motion to approve the amended *Employee Absence During a Catastrophic Public Health Emergency Policy* was made by John Korth and seconded by William Bingham.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 16. Nays: 0. Absent – Robert Heurman. Absent: 1.

On September 10, 2019, the County Board approved amending the Jo Daviess County Employee Handbook as presented, effective October 1, 2019 with the eighteen month vacation cutoff effective April 1, 2020. Although employee physical attendance will be reduced due to the disaster proclamation, employees are expected to remain home during regular work hours, both to continue the efforts of social distancing and to be available to work if needed. They will have little opportunity to reduce their vacation hours during this time.

A motion to extend the date for implementation of the vacation accrual policy from April 1, 2020 to a future date to be determined was made by LaDon Trost and seconded by Diane Gallagher.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes – Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 9. Nays – Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, and Andrew Townsend. Nays: 7. Absent – Robert Heurman. Absent: 1.

Jo Daviess County Board Special Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2020

Page 3 of 4

During the FY2019 budget meetings, the County Board approved the balance transfer of \$338,949.58 from the Catastrophic Public Health Emergency Fund to the Public Health Capital Investment Fund, to be used for the purpose of a new dental clinic. These funds were originally designated for a public health emergency, which now exists in Jo Daviess County. There will be expenses incurred by the County with no assurance of reimbursement from the federal or state governments and the board would like those funds transferred back to the Catastrophic Public Health Emergency Fund.

A motion to approve *A Resolution to Amend the FY2020 Jo Daviess County Budget for the Purpose of Transferring Funds from the Public Health Capital Investment Fund to the Catastrophic Public Health Emergency Fund* was made by Steve Allendorf and seconded by LaDon Trost.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 16. Nays: 0. Absent – Robert Heuerman. Absent: 1.

In anticipation of increased expense and reduced income due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the *FY2020 Prioritized Options for Reducing Expenses and/or Increasing Revenue Policy* was discussed, specifically the options in Category 2 for reducing expenses.

A motion to implement the following options in Category 2 was made by John Schultz and seconded by Don Hill.

- Hiring freeze – any new or vacant positions to be filled only with approval of the County Board (Prior to FY2016 this option was listed as a Category 1 prioritized option, this option may not apply to elected officials. This option was eliminated from the FY2017 Budget Guidelines on June 30, 2016 by the Finance, Tax & Budgets Committee).
- Delay budgeted projects (2020).
- Limitations on new purchases – no purchase processed except for essential operating goods, contracts; grant orders, repairs to equipment and emergencies.

A motion to amend the original motion to read *“Delay budgeted projects and/or capital improvements over \$25,000.00”* was made by Andrew Townsend and seconded by John Lang.

The amendment carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 16. Nays: 0. Absent – Robert Heuerman. Absent: 1.

The amended motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes - Steve Allendorf, William Bingham, Lucas Bourquin, Staci Duerr, Diane Gallagher, Don Hill, John Korth, John Lang, Robert O'Connor, Hendrica Regez, John Schultz, Ron Smith, Scott Toot, Andrew Townsend, LaDon Trost, and Don Zillig. Ayes: 16. Nays: 0. Absent – Robert Heuerman. Absent: 1.

AGENDA ITEM VI – BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS

Scott Toot would like to see as many board members as possible using the teleconferencing option for meeting attendance until this public health emergency is over. He extended his thanks to Dan Reimer, Angela Kaiser, Kevin Turner, John Hay, Chuck Pedersen, Sandra Schleicher, and Joe Kratcha for their efforts during this uncertain time.

William Bingham anticipates a high volume of EMS calls soon and said the county dispatchers are now screening the 911 calls in order to prioritize EMS responses. This is very helpful for them and extended his thanks.

Don Zillig, Diane Gallagher, and Ron Smith thanked the employees for everything they do.

Jo Daviess County Board Special Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2020

Page 4 of 4

LaDon Trost asked members that are physically present during meetings to speak away from their microphone, as the teleconferencing program is creating an echo, making it hard for them to understand what is being said.

Don Hill and Robert O'Connor have concerns over a member's ability to teleconference if they do not have either the technology or the understanding to do so.

AGENDA ITEM VII – CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizens' comments at this time.

AGENDA ITEM X - ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by John Korth and seconded by Don Hill.

The motion carried by voice vote.

Chairperson Toot adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 13, 2020 at the Jo Daviess County Board Room, Jo Daviess County Courthouse in Galena, Illinois.