

**Approved 5/27/20**  
**MINUTES**  
**Ways and Means Committee**  
**April 29, 2020**  
**@ 2:00 P.M.**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Steven Rieker</b> – Chairman; <b>Sharon Williams</b> – Vice Chairman; <b>Jennifer Groves Allison, James Fennell, Rachel Reliford, Phillip Salzer, William Watkins, Jr.</b>
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	
<b>STAFF PRESENT:</b>	<b>Scott Sorrel</b> - County Administrator; <b>Shauna Musselman</b> – Assistant County Administrator; <b>Larry Evans</b> - State's Attorney's Office; <b>Randy Brunner</b> –Chief Financial Officer; <b>Julie Ciesla</b> – Finance; <b>Angela Loftus, Gretchen Pearsall, Jamie Dowell</b> – County Administration; <b>Jessica Thomas</b> – County Auditor; <b>Rachael Parker, Mike Deluhery</b> – County Clerk; <b>Thomas Bride</b> – Election Commission; <b>Beth Crider, Jennifer Yoder</b> – Regional Office of Education; <b>Dave Ryan</b> – Supervisor of Assessments; <b>Chad Jones</b> – Board of Review; <b>Nicole Bjerke, Kelly Van Middlesworth</b> - Treasurer; <b>Trisha Collins</b> – VAC; <b>Brian Asbell, Doug Gaa</b> – Sheriff's Office; <b>Mark Little</b> – Chief Information Officer
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>	

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rieker at 2:00 p.m.

A motion to suspend the Rules to allow virtual meeting attendance was made by Ms. Williams and seconded by Ms. Groves Allison. The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of April 7, 2020 was made by Ms. Reliford and seconded by Ms. Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

**Informational Items/Reports/Other Minutes/Updates**

**County Auditor**

No verbal report. Ms. Thomas directed committee members to the submitted report.

**County Clerk**

➤ **Collections and Transactions Report**

No verbal report. Ms. Parker directed committee members to the submitted report.

➤ **2019 Property Tax Adjustment Report**

Mr. Deluhery advised that the EAV has declined 1.38% over the prior year EAV, resulting in a decline in the levy by \$390,000.00 from last year. He remarked that the Tax Levy Ordinance adopted by the County Board for a property tax rate of \$0.8241 had the effect of adding \$103,000.00 to the levy.

(Mr. Salzer enters meeting.)

**Peoria County Election Commission**

Mr. Bride advised that expected action at the state level is anticipated to increase the probability of all Illinois registered voters being mailed an application to vote. He advised that staff is in the

process of assessing projections for the anticipated increase in vote by mail ballots for the November election.

Mr. Bride commented that while vote by mail ballots accounted for 9% of voters in the 2016 Presidential Election and just under 15% in the 2018 General Election, the current projection for the upcoming Presidential Election is a 50% vote by mail turnout, an increase of 400% to 500%, or approximately 45,000 ballots. He remarked that due to the anticipated increase and resultant increase in processing the material, staff is exploring the option of automating some of those processes. He stated that funding included in the Federal COVID Care Act includes funding at the state level. He advised that the State Board of Elections will likely distribute the grant funding, which will assist in offsetting the cost of increased vote by mail application processing.

Ms. Williams asked Mr. Bride if security concerns were an issue regarding the increased vote by mail requests and possible outsourcing of the outgoing material. Mr. Bride stated a secure system is in place in other states and in areas of Illinois that in the event outgoing vote by mail packets are outsourced, and added that there are no concerns anticipated given the implementation of the existing system and additional security measures which will be taken.

### Finance

Mr. Brunner advised that an Exit Conference will be held with the external auditors on April 30th. He stated that the Final Audit Report will be submitted in June 2020.

### Regional Office of Education (ROE)

Ms. Crider provided an update on the activities of the Regional Office of Education:

- The audit has been released by the Office of the Auditor General with no findings.
- Nearly all school districts will be holding graduation virtually this year, although several districts are taking a tiered approach, with varying plans for June, July, and August.
- Teaching licenses have received a special waiver from the State of Illinois.
- Pursuing a partnership with public television and seeking assistance via grants or other funding sources related to COVID-19 ingenuity to fund equipment and resources for a public television learning channel.

Ms. Crider acknowledged the work of teachers, for both the overwhelming process of transforming their entire curriculum to an online format and their dedication to connecting to students and their families.

### Supervisor of Assessments/Board of Review

- Tax Cycle

Mr. Ryan advised that staff is reviewing options for handling the high concentration of senior citizen traffic after the courthouse opens to the public.

Mr. Ryan advised that the Board of Review continues to work on Property Tax Appeal Board cases and is investigating options for holding hearings in the fall.

### Treasurer

Ms. Bjerke advised that she has reached out to online tax collectors and Township collectors regarding the new collection process and to determine their processes. She also stated that she has worked with the IT Department on revisions in the tax collection software that allows banks to accept partial payments no less than 50% on the initial installment.

Ms. Bjerke advised that tax bills will be mailed on Friday, May 1, 2020 and will be available to view on the website on that date. She remarked that the options to pay via echeck or credit card necessitate a payment of the full installment. She also cautioned that although the initial installment has been split into two due dates, penalties will still be applied if payments are delinquent.

Mr. Rieker encouraged continuing education and media releases regarding the changes to the tax collection process this year. Ms. Bjerke agreed and noted that a "Frequently Asked Questions" section has been added to the Treasurer's Office website page.

#### *Veteran's Assistance Commission*

Ms. Collins updated the committee on the current routine of the office, noting that employees are staffing the office on a rotation basis and working with veterans via phone as much as possible. She stated that staff continue to process claims with the VA on higher level reviews via phone as well. She commented that although some physical exams have been cancelled, work continues to prepare veterans for exams via phone, Skype or other means.

Ms. Williams and Ms. Reliford relayed appreciative comments from constituents regarding their interaction and response from the VAC in recent weeks.

#### **Resolution**

- **Waiver of Marriage License Fee due to COVID-19**

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Salzer and seconded by Mr. Watkins. Ms. Parker advised that 13 marriage licenses will expire on April 30, 2020 and another 47 will expire at the end of May 2020. She stated that as State Statute does not allow an extension of the 60 day after-issuance expiration, staff requests a fee waiver for those licenses issued from February 1, 2020 through the end of the Stay at Home Order who are not able to go forward with scheduled weddings due to the COVID-19 shelter in place order. She noted that qualifying would be allowed to reapply for a new license and waive the \$70.00 license fee. She stressed that the fee waiver is not automatic, and couples must contact the County Clerk's Office to request the waiver.

The motion to approve carried unanimously.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Ms. Bjerke asked to clarify an item included on the submitted County Auditor's Report for February. She advised that \$1 million sent to Princeville State Bank was not an expenditure by Peoria County, but was an investment in a CD and should not be classified as an expenditure. Mr. Rieker advised that he will work with the County Auditor on how best to post and accurately reflect the information within the report.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Rieker at 2:42 p.m.

*Recorded and Transcribed by: Jan Kleffman*