

Approved 6/24/20
MINUTES
Ways and Means Committee
May 27, 2020
@ 2:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Steven Rieker – Chairman; Sharon Williams – Vice Chairman; Jennifer Groves Allison, James Fennell, Rachel Reliford, Phillip Salzer, William Watkins, Jr.
MEMBERS ABSENT:	
STAFF PRESENT:	Scott Sorrel - County Administrator; Shauna Musselman – Assistant County Administrator; Jennie Cordis Boswell - State's Attorney's Office; Randy Brunner –Chief Financial Officer; Angela Loftus, Jamie Dowell – County Administration; Jessica Thomas – County Auditor; Rachael Parker, Mike Deluhery – County Clerk; Elizabeth Gannon – Election Commission; Beth Crider, Jennifer Yoder – Regional Office of Education; Dave Ryan – Supervisor of Assessments; Greg Fletcher – Board of Review; Nicole Bjerke - Treasurer; Brian Asbell, Doug Gaa – Sheriff's Office; Mark Little – Chief Information Officer
OTHERS PRESENT:	

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 remote meeting attendance was made by Mr. Watkins and seconded by Mr. Salzer. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of April 29, 2020 was made by Ms. Groves Allison and seconded by Ms. Reliford. The motion carried unanimously.

Informational Items/Reports/Other Minutes/Updates

County Auditor

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

County Clerk

➤ **Collections and Transactions Report**

Ms. Parker directed committee members to the submitted monthly report. Mr. Rieker asked if revenues have been impacted due to the COVID-19 crisis. Ms. Parker noted that a strong first quarter has alleviated the negative impact somewhat and commented that the office is receiving a large number of Recordings through the mail, and Vital Records requests remain strong via mail as well.

Peoria County Election Commission

Ms. Gannon advised that SB 1863 addressing vote by mail specific to the November 2020 election has gone to the Governor for signature. She commented that passage of the Bill advances the timeline for requesting a vote by mail ballot and would require election jurisdictions to automatically mail vote by mail applications to individuals who voted in the 2018 General Election, 2019 Consolidated Election, or 2020 Primary Election. She stated that the Bill would also require that applications be mailed to any individual who registers to vote between the passage of the law and the Primary Election. She indicated that approximately 68,000 registered voters (60%) will receive the application automatically.

Ms. Gannon also remarked the legislation increases the number of election judges reviewing and verifying signatures on vote by mail ballots from two to three. She commented the cost to implement the legislation is estimated at \$250,000.00 and although State and Federal funding is anticipated the amount of funding is uncertain. She noted that additional costs include increased mailing costs and purchase of additional voting equipment.

Ms. Gannon advised that although the legislation is specific to the November 2020 election, and would necessitate the purchase of additional voting equipment for that sole election, the Election Commission is investigating options such as leasing the equipment, selling the equipment back to the company or another election jurisdiction, and several surrounding counties sharing the equipment.

Ms. Gannon ensured that county residents will be informed of security measures and fraud protection regarding the vote-by-mail process.

Finance

Mr. Brunner advised that Final Audit Report is nearing completion and will be submitted in June.

Regional Office of Education (ROE)

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

- Schools are determining the best means of closing, sanitizing and returning possessions to students and staff, as well as beginning preparations for potential re-opening in the Fall.
- Bus driver training has been on hold due to shelter-in-place, and Ms. Crider is working with Illinois Virtual Schools to re-start those training courses.
- Ms. Crider recognized Oliver Mack, long-time Truant Officer for Project TARGET who will be retiring.

Supervisor of Assessments/Board of Review

- Tax Cycle

Mr. Ryan advised that in March the office took a proactive approach and began to automatically re-file applications for those individuals already receiving specified homestead exemptions. He stated that this action has moved to the state level via SB 685, which was passed unanimously by the Illinois House and Senate. He remarked that additional efforts to reduce traffic within the office after the courthouse reopens to the public will include meeting with citizens by appointment.

Mr. Ryan stated that tentative plans are being made to close the office for five weeks beginning June 8, 2020 due to current budget reductions, adding that alternate strategies that allow for some continuation of services are also being considered.

Treasurer

Ms. Bjerke advised tax collections have been strong, stating that 371 batches totaling \$35 million and are awaiting two escrow large payments which would put the total over \$50 million. She advised that batches are still outstanding from banks who have been assisting in collection of taxes. She stated that over 1,300 credit card payments have been taken totaling \$3.4 million.

Ms. Bjerke advised that 140 split payments have been received to date, adding that many individuals are paying a full first installment. She stated that 747 parcels have signed up to receive e-notices next year, which will reduce the number of tax bills to be mailed.

Ms. Bjerke advised that SB 685 will impact the Treasurer's Office by potentially delaying the tax sale until December, dependent on when the Governor signs the bill.

Ms. Bjerke advised that a portion of the office will be temporarily moved to the former Recorder of Deeds Office upon the re-opening of the courthouse to ease the flow of foot traffic.

Veteran's Assistance Commission

No report. No questions or comments from committee.

Resolution

- **Monthly Delinquent Taxes**

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Fennell and seconded by Mr. Watkins. The motion to approve carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Sorrel provided an update on legislative action:

- HB 64 with Senate Amendment #1 (Capital Bill) has been approved by both Houses of the General Assembly and awaiting the Governor's signature. \$106.1 million in funding for local government or not-for-profits within Peoria County is included in the Bill, with the funding including both roads and bridges and vertical infrastructure structure projects. \$6 million specific to Peoria County Government will be allocated to the Lake Street and Gale Avenue reconstruction projects. The \$6 million Capital Budget appropriation is anticipated to cover nearly 100% of the county's estimated share of the cost for both projects. A second allocation directly to Peoria County Government is a re-appropriation from last year's Capital Bill in the amount of \$42,836.00.
- SB 264 with House Amendment #5 (Budget Implementation Bill) has been approved by both Houses of the General Assembly and awaiting the Governor's signature. Within the CARES Act approved by the Federal Government earlier this year was an appropriation to each state for COVID-19 related eligible expenditure reimbursements. The allocation to Illinois totals approximately \$4.7 billion with 55% going to state government and 45% to local governments. \$800 million originally allocated for downstate local governments was subsequently reduced by the General Assembly to \$250 million and will be allocated utilizing the Local Government Distributive Fund formulary. It is estimated that Peoria County will ultimately receive \$1.997 million. Although the Local Government Distributive Fund allocation was increased by 5%, or an estimated \$200,000.00, the General Assembly also swept \$330 million of PPRT back to the state instead of allocating to local governments, resulting in a negative impact of \$1 million in PPRT revenue for Peoria County and resulting in a net loss of \$800,000.00 in revenue from those two sources (\$500,000.00 of that total is in General Fund revenues).
- Mr. Sorrel and the City Manager have drafted a letter for the County Board Chairman and the Mayor's signature advocating Federal legislators for additional Federal funding for local governments and to free the restrictions of those dollars so that the funding could be used not only for COVID-19 response related expenditures but also for also lost revenue.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Rieker at 2:49 p.m.

Recorded and Transcribed by: Jan Kleffman