

MINUTES OF A FINANCE, FEES, AND SALARIES MEETING OF THE COUNTY OF HANCOCK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN THE CITY OF CARTHAGE ON FEBRUARY 12, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Wayne Bollin at 9:00 a.m. Members in attendance included Joe Boyles, Alex Blythe, Harry Douglas, Steve Lucie, and Mark Menn. Lee Ann Lambert and Dennis Castlebury were absent. Visitors included Abbey Beck from the Regional Office of Education, Ashlyn Housewright from the Hancock County Economic Development Housing Grant committee, Kris Pilkington, Keara Weber, Mike McVey, Bobi James, and Holly Wilde-Tillman.

Ms. Beck discussed her role as the truancy officer and was wondering if there was a room in the courthouse where she could meet with Hancock County students and guardians. She would like to show the seriousness of truancy to the students and would like to do it at the courthouse. It would be in the afternoons between 1 and 3 p.m. She was told to coordinate with Ms. Wilde-Tillman on any day that she is interested in.

Ms. Housewright spoke on behalf of the housing grant committee. They had 15 applications for the grant. Two were dismissed because they did not qualify. This was to create new housing in the county. There were 5 winners, 3 winners will be granted \$7500, and 2 winners will split \$7500. Most of the projects are hoping to be ready by the spring. The grant committee will be updated on each project.

Ms. Weber stated her fines and fees are staying consistent. She is working with the states' attorney on this.

Ms. James spoke to the committee about the Fort Madison bridge and the difficulties citizens are having with the toll. This is currently a cashless transaction. She has sent an email to the BNSF Railroad but has not received a response yet. She would like to know how the committee would like her to proceed when she hears from them. They would like them to come to a highway committee meeting. She will also be in contact with the Lee County attorney.

Mr. Douglas made a motion to move into executive session, Mr. Boyles seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. This is directly related to employment, compensation, discipline, and performance of a specific employee. Motion to move out of

executive was made by Mr. Blythe at 9:51, seconded by Mr. Douglas. All members present voted aye.

Ms. James is writing a letter to Klingner and Associates to let them know of the county's disappointment.

Mr. McVey stated tomorrow is the last day to file any complaints with the board of review. Homestead exemption rates are done at the state level. Senior freeze income went up to \$75,000. There is talk about adjusting this annually due to the cost of living. The board of review opted to not recommend the Nauvoo business as a non-for-profit status at the hearing.

Mr. Menn would like to invite the entities of the county to a meeting and educate them on how the levies work. This could include the park districts, townships, schools, etc. He would like the county clerk, treasurer and assessor involved.

Ms. Pilkington would like to get a different scanning machine for property taxes. This would cut the processing time in half. This will come out of the treasurer's automation fund. A used machine would be \$12,400 or a new machine would be \$13,650. After the initial cost it will be \$3450 yearly for support. Ms. James has looked at the contract and she has spoken with IT about this. Mr. Boyles made a motion to amend the treasurer automation fee by \$13,650 and go with a new scanner. Mr. Lucie seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all members present voting "yes". Motion carried.

Ms. Wilde-Tillman asked if Pam Edris who is the general assistance person for the townships of Hancock County. She is needing a secure email and was wondering if the county could supply her with that. IT stated that it would be \$80/year. Early voting is going on. Vote by mail ballots have gone out. There may be a necessity for new ballots. She may not find out until the end of February.

Bids were in the paper for trash collection and surplus. There were no trash collection bids. The bids on surplus will be opened at finance in March. Mr. Deshong would like a credit card for their office for the new VSO who needs to sign up for classes. The committee stated they would prefer the classes be paid for by Ms. Wilde-Tillman at this time. This will be discussed at full board with Mark Sowers, Dan Deshong, and Raymond Siegrist.

There was discussion regarding Ms. Wilde-Tillman resolution that was approved in January regarding the \$2 microfilm copy fee. Mr. Menn stated that he was disappointed in Mr.

Greeley and how this went down. The committee members expressed why they had concerns. It was the consensus of the committee to move forward with the \$2 for microfilm copies.

Mr. McVey stated that the total assessed value is up 10.8% and the rate assessment is up 9.5% over last year.

The animal control administrator salary was discussed. Dr. Harrel is important to the county and they would not want to lose her. Motion to increase her salary up to \$6000/year and the bite report fee up to \$60/case was made by Mr. Douglas. Mr. Blythe seconded. This will take effect March 1. All members present voted aye.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the salaries of the circuit clerk, county clerk, and treasurer. This included a 4% raise each year, 3% each year or a 4% the first with 3% each following year. Stipends are based on population. This will be tabled until March.

Mr. Menn informed the committee that the Regional Office of Education superintendent is retiring the first of April. There is only 1 candidate running for this position.

Judge Clark entered the meeting. He informed the committee that we are losing our public defender on March 13. They have interviewed candidates. He would like them to start March 1 and assist Mr. Thor for a couple of weeks. This will be paid for out of reserved funds that Mr. Thor has.

Claims were gone over. Motion to approve the claims except for the storage claim for Kendall Beals was made by Mr. Boyles. Mr. Douglas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all members present voting "yes". Motion carried.

Motion to recess until March 12 at 9 a.m. was made by Mr. Blythe, seconded by Mr. Lucie. All members present voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Bollin, Committee Chair