

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

**Lyle Shields Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana**

5:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Betz, Brendan McGinty, Steve Moser

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Beckett (County Board Member), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Greg Knott (County Board Member), Alan Nudo (County Board Member)

CALL TO ORDER

McGinty called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Betz, McGinty, and Moser were present, establishing the presence of a quorum.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

MOTION by Betz to approve the agenda; seconded by Moser. **Motion carried with all ayes.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

County Government Reform Issues

McGinty explained that Busey put the government reform issues at the top of the document attached to the agenda. The goal was to discuss what the County should be pursuing and what should be forwarded to the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee. The committee reviewed the list of issues initially suggested when the ten point plan was introduced. Betz asked to withdraw the notion about electing a Supervisor of Assessments from the list altogether because the concerns with that office had been resolved with the appointment of a new Supervisor of Assessments. Moser agreed that electing a Supervisor of Assessments was not a good idea. Betz wanted to withdraw the idea about electing the Board of Review. McGinty wanted to make an archive of the fact that these issues were discussed and decisions were made regarding the items on the list. Busey noted those decisions

would be in the minutes and she would update the list to indicate the issues were removed by the Administrative Structure Special Committee. Betz wanted to remove the idea about merging CUPHD and the County Board of Health. He thought it was a great idea, but current state legislation makes a merger very difficult. He did not think any action was possible until state laws were changed. Moser noted the merger issue could be very partisan because the tax rates were hugely different between the two public health districts. Moser said a tax increase to farmland would not go down well with his constituents. Knott said the committee should focus on matters to address in the current County Board term and any public health merger would take longer. The committee agreed to remove those issues from the list. Betz noted the single member districts, size of the Board, and a referendum question about the number of districts were essentially the same concept. He thought the committee would be irresponsible if they failed to combine such overlapping issues. The three issues could be combined into one issue about the County Board size/structure. Betz wanted the County Board size/structure issue to go to the Policy Committee for a significant discussion. The committee discussed holding public hearings about county government reform. Betz felt the issue of whether the Auditor, Coroner, and Recorder offices should be elected or appointed was already before the Policy Committee. Knott asked to have the election commission issue tabled until later. The committee agreed to remove the election commission from the discussion about the other 3 county offices. McGinty thought consideration of an Executive Committee had a great deal to do with the size of the Board and should be included in that discussion. Moser said there was a County Board Executive Committee 18 years ago. Betz and Moser agreed an Executive Committee was a legitimate part of the conversation about Board size.

McGinty asked if the role of the County Board Chair should also be included in the discussion. Moser concurred with including the Board Chair position in the discussion, but he did not want to debate the County Executive position. He asked how many Illinois counties had a County Board Chair elected by the public. Busey thought 3 of the top 18 counties had countywide elected Board Chairs, but these Chairs were not executives. She believed only Rock Island had a full-time County Board Chair position and no County Administrator. Betz thought the discussion about defining the role of the County Board Chair was very necessary. He viewed the County Executive and County Board Chair as very different positions. He felt the single County Administrator should be in place for a few years before they discuss whether to add a County Executive position. Beckett saw the role of the County Board Chair as selected by the Board is limited by statute. Moser said there was no reason the County Board Chair could not be a full-time position. Beckett questioned what a full-time Chair would do. Nudo saw a full-time Board Chair as someone to work with the County Administrator to set the agenda and develop planning for capital expenditures and streamlining government. It is advantageous when the Board Chair is willing to work with both parties. Knott said the Board's expectations and the involvement of committee chairs drive issues. Knott and Nudo agreed the Board Chair is not a full-time job. Nudo viewed the Chair position as being somewhat above partisan politics. Betz spoke about partisan politics that exist whenever a position is elected. He did not favor electing a countywide Chair because a responsible County Board could eliminate an ineffective Chair. He thought it was a legitimate topic for discussion at the Policy Committee. Moser spoke about his experience as Board Chair and how he tried to stay out of the office as much as possible. The committee agreed to discuss the Board Chair issue at the Policy Committee.

In terms of a meeting schedule, Betz said his dream was to have no committee system, instead for the Board to meet as a committee of the whole. The Board could have two study sessions and then

a meeting where action was taken each month. He thought meeting as a committee of the whole and addressing the different subjects of County business would be cumbersome and difficult, but not impossible. It might actually force some Board members to start being prepared for meetings. The current system allows members to duck responsibility. This could also be a topic for discussion when considering County Board size.

The committee discussed taking three issues to the Policy Committee: 1. the Board size and structure issue, 2. the role of the Board Chair issue, and 3. the roles of Auditor, Coroner, and Recorder. Busey suggested the Board might want to formulate a recommendation about home rule. Betz said that item was voted on the Policy Committee agenda and this special committee has the authority to remove it. He thought someone would ask for it to be removed from the Policy agenda. He would like to see a page written to educate the Board about the positives and negatives of home rule. The committee discussed zoning and home building concerns within the County's jurisdiction. The committee's discussion covered the other items on the list of recommendations and what standing committees could address those issues. Conversation turned to the subject of redistricting and moving issues to the standing committees.

Betz noted Denny Inman had prepared a list of minority contractors who worked with the County and that list should be included in information distributed regarding disparity. Beckett had asked Inman if there was a way to develop statistics regarding the percentage of minority and female-owned business working on construction projects in order to demonstrate the County's improvement. Beckett felt the availability study was more important than the disparity study to determine the investment that was needed. Busey inquired if it she could discuss the items with each of the Committee Chairs to determine what issues are appropriate to place on a standing committee agenda at this point in time. A report could be provided explaining the outcome. Many of the issues listed have huge cost implications and it may not be reasonable to move forward at this time. The committee discussed how some issues would require staff input and development before being brought to a standing committee. Moser talked about zoning changes to force owners to clean up their property. Betz wanted a memo or legal opinion on the separation of powers issue and the County Board's potential authority regarding the Police Civilian Review Board for the Sheriff's Office. He did not want to bring this item to a committee because he was not convinced the County Board had the authority to create such a board. Betz spoke about other issues that relate to elected officials. McGinty said the pacing of the remaining items should be determined by the Chair and the County Administrator. The committee concurred with this approach.

Recommendation to Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee of County Government Reform Issues for Consideration

The committee agreed the issues of 1. Board size and structure 2. the role of the Board Chair, 3. the roles of Auditor, Coroner, and Recorder, and 4. redistricting will be moved to the Policy Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

Moser stated he would be unavailable in the committee met in May.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork
Administrative Secretary

Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.