



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
SPECIAL FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois  
Thursday, September 30, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

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Shields-Carter Meeting Room/Zoom  
Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois

**MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on December 8,**

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**Members Present via Zoom:** Samantha Carter, Lorraine Cowart, Aaron Esry, Jim Goss, Mary King, Jenny Lokshin, Jim McGuire, Diane Michaels, Brad Passalacqua, Jacob Paul, Emily Rodriguez, Chris Stohr, Jennifer Straub, Steve Summers, Leah Taylor, Eric Thorsland, Jodi Wolken, Kyle Patterson

**Members Physically Present:** Stephanie Fortado

**Members Absent:** Stan Harper

**Others Present:** Darlene Kloeppel (County Executive), Tami Ogden (Director of Finance), Bill Colbrook (Director of Administration), Dustin Heuerman (Sheriff), Aaron Ammons (County Clerk), Angela Patton (Chief Deputy County Clerk), Dalitso Sulamoyo (Chief Executive Officer, RPC), Betty Murphy (Chief Operating Officer, RPC), Kathy Larson (ARPA Project Manager), Kari May (Executive Director, Children’s Advocacy Center), Susan McGrath (Circuit Clerk), George Danos (Auditor), Cassandra Johnson (Treasurer), Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

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**Agenda Items**

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Fortado called the meeting to order at 6:49 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

**III. Approval of Agenda/Addenda**

**MOTION** by Ms. King to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Patterson. Upon roll call vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment on the Proposed FY2022 Budget**

None

**V. Communications**

None

**VI. Discussion and Decisions Regarding FY2022 Budget**

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Ms. Fortado began the conversation by explaining the task at hand for this meeting. She started with the pending decisions listed on the County Executive's memo, the first being the Treasurer's request for a pay grade increase for the Chief Deputy.

Mr. Summers expressed his support for the Treasurer's request. Mr. Goss asked for an update on the reconciliations as that is a large part of the Chief Deputy's responsibilities and his vote would be determinant on that information. Mr. Patterson and Mr. Thorsland both believe the Treasurer should be able to make salary decisions within the pay grade level and the Board should not be micromanaging such decisions. Mr. Passalacqua and Mr. Esry both spoke in opposition to this decision for the reasons stated by Mr. Goss. Ms. Johnson gave an update on the 2020 reconciliations and believes they will be completed by the end of October. Ms. Fortado asked for a poll of all members, requesting they answer support or oppose to this request. The poll showed 13 members in support with 7 opposing the Treasurer's request.

The next pending decision is to specify uses for the allocation of \$130,000 in the County Board's county administrator line item. The County Executive's Office recommends using \$37,000 for ERP project management, \$20,000 for a public process consultant for the jail consolidation, and \$15,000 for legal fees which leaves \$58,000 left for other uses. Ms. Fortado suggested using the additional funds to hire a grant manager for a two-year term to leverage ARPA funds. Ms. Carter supports Ms. Fortado's suggestion. Mr. Thorsland also supports the suggestion and recommends lowering the \$20,000 for a public process consultant to \$10,000 and putting the other half towards the grant manager position. Many members expressed their support for Ms. Fortado's suggestion with Mr. Thorsland's amendment. Mr. McGuire spoke in disagreement to cutting the amount for the public process consultant and wasn't sure this budget line was the place for a grant manager position. Ms. Fortado mentioned the wide-spread support and lack of opposition to this topic and moved on to the next decision.

The next pending decision is to specify uses for the surplus in the Public Safety Sales Tax fund. The County Executive's Office recommends retaining these funds for inmate boarding costs or adding to the Capital Asset Replacement Fund for jail consolidation expenses. Many members expressed their desire to retain those funds for inmate boarding because they do not want to bring anyone back to the downtown jail.

Ms. Fortado moved the conversation on to ARPA decisions. She suggested they use the spreadsheet on page 6 of the packet as their guide for each category of decisions. She stated they have two questions to answer: they need to give a sense of what they want to allocate for the 2022 budget and then they need to decide the total landscape of what they want to spend for each category over the lifetime of the grant. She further asked that they discuss all capital investments that do not pertain to the jail and childcare facilities and they will discuss those two as separate categories.

For capital investments, Ms. Fortado began the discussion with the recommendation to fund all requests from County Department Heads and pointed out that this list was provided in the last Committee of the Whole packet. Mr. McGuire mentioned a few requests that are very vague that he would not support. Ms. Fortado mentioned many of the facility needs within the County and suggested putting approximately \$1.5 million in the budget, then doing a full assessment of the facility needs before making any decisions. Mr. Ammons spoke to clarify some of his requests. Ms. Kloeppel explained why some of the Department Heads were not requesting for their projects be funded in the 2022 budget. To move the conversation along, Ms. Fortado suggested appropriating \$3 million to this category in 2022 only for the items on this list and requiring Department Heads to ask the Board for additional appropriations if they have other projects for 2022. A poll was taken to determine the amount of support to appropriate \$3 million to this category. The poll showed unanimous support.

The jail was the next topic of discussion. Mr. Paul started the conversation by suggesting they spend enough money to build a jail that will take care of the County's needs and house people from other counties to create some revenue for Champaign County. Mr. Passalacqua believes ARPA funds are a great opportunity to fix our

facility needs. Ms. Carter disagrees with the constituents who have messaged her, she believes they do need to do something for the jail but not use such a large portion of this funding for the jail project. Mr. Summers believes they need to move quickly on this project, cannot wait to go to referendum in 2022 and will need to use some ARPA funds. Ms. Michaels asked to see a collaboration with the cities to fund this project and other members agreed. Mr. Stohr explained that the architects will need a year to design the jail and would not begin construction until 2023. Ms. Fortado reminded everyone that they have \$3.75 million to use for design in 2022. Mr. McGuire stated that they need these ARPA funds to build this jail in a timely manner. Ms. Rodriguez believes the voters deserve to have a say by going to referendum. Mr. Thorsland and Ms. Lokshin agree that they should use \$3-4 million from ARPA funds. Ms. Taylor asked if this decision is a little premature but stated that she would support using \$6-7 million of ARPA funds. Mr. Goss believes they will need to allocate \$15-16 million but do not need to appropriate it in 2022. Ms. Fortado believes they will need to use \$7-8 million from ARPA funds. Ms. Taylor suggested using \$7 million from the entirety of ARPA funds and several people spoke against this plan and a couple agreed. Since money will not need to be appropriated for 2022, the Board did not make a final decision on this topic.

The Board moved on to the negative economic impact category. This category includes household assistance, small business assistance and aid to nonprofit organizations. Several members spoke in support of using funds for this category. Mr. Esry spoke against using such a large amount of money towards the UC Sanitary District's past due bills. Mr. Goss would like to see more money going towards the unincorporated areas because they did not receive any ARPA funds and suggested they appropriate \$1.6 million towards this category in 2022. Mr. Stohr spoke about the plan from the Chamber of Commerce and his support to giving them some funds. Ms. Fortado asked that anyone opposed to appropriating \$1.6 million to this category voice their opinion and took the lack of comment to mean all Board members were in support of this decision.

Services to disproportionately impacted communities was the next category to be discussed. This category includes funding for the Head Start program, housing support and community violence interventions. Ms. Fortado started the conversation by stating she is in full support of funding housing support and community violence interventions with the caveat that they do more studies to find the best way to spend the funds. She also believes the Board should fund the rural rehab plan. Ms. Carter and Ms. Lokshin mentioned how vital Head Start is for the community and their support to fund their projects in some way. Mr. Sulamoyo and Ms. Murphy shared a revised proposal to buy an existing structure as opposed to building a new facility. The revised proposal would cost less at approximately \$1.5 million. Several Board members expressed their support for the new proposal from Head Start with the caveat that the Regional Planning Commission takes care of all building maintenance. Ms. Fortado suggested appropriating \$3.5 million to this category (\$1.5 million for Head Start and \$2 million for the other two categories) and did not receive any opposition from the Board.

Ms. Wolken and Ms. Rodriguez left the meeting around 10:00 p.m. before the next poll.

Mr. Summers began the conversation regarding premium pay by stating they have brought down their original proposal to \$750,000 and explained how it would be disbursed. Since this topic has been discussed many times, a poll was taken to determine the amount of support for this proposal. The poll showed 12 members in support and 6 opposed.

The last ARPA category for discussion is water and broadband. Ms. Carter stated she believes broadband is exactly how this funding should be spent. Mr. Paul believes that a broadband project could make a lasting impact on the County. Members talked about appropriating \$500,000 to each County Board district for water issues and why funding a project for the Mahomet Aquaphor is important. Before making a decision on this category they determined that they have currently allocated \$10,450,000 for the other categories. Ms. Fortado then suggested to allocate \$2 million for rural water, \$3 million for rural broadband and \$500,000 for the Mahomet Aquaphor for a total of \$5.5 million for this category. This would make a total allocation of \$15,950,000. No one spoke in opposition to this plan.

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After all of the decisions, Ms. Lokshin asked that they go back to the category for services to disproportionately impacted communities and bump the allocated amount up to \$4 million. No one spoke in opposition to this amendment.

**VII. Other Business**

None

**VIII. Adjournment**

Chair Fortado adjourned the meeting at 10:27 p.m.