



Lake County Illinois

Legislation Text

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Minutes from June 25, 2008

June 25, 2008

The Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee met on Wednesday, June 25, 2008, on the Tenth Floor, County Building, with the following present:

Others Present:

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| Carol Spielman, Chair | Gary Gibson, Asst. County Administrator |
| Larry Leafblad, Vice-Chair | Barry Burton, County Administrator |
| Anne Flanigan Bassi | Suzi Schmidt, County Board Chairman |
| Terese Douglass (arrived at 9:10 a.m.) | Gary Gordon, Finance & Administrative Services |
| Brent Paxton (arrived at 9:12 a.m.) | |
| | Marty Buehler, Dot |
| | Marty Paulson, Chief County Assessment Officer |
| | Jerry Nordstrom, Health Department |
| | Luke Stowe, County Clerk's Office |
| | Mary Otahal, County Board Office |

Absent:

Michael Talbett

Call to Order:

Chair Spielman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Spielman led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Member Leafblad, seconded by Member Bassi, to approve the minutes from June 4, 2008. Motion carried.

County Clerk:

Luke Stowe presented the following Resolutions:

- Appointing Election Judges in the 481 voting precincts in Lake County Townships. Motion by Member Powers, seconded by Member Leafblad, to approve. Motion carried.
- Amending a previous Ordinance designating the voting sites assigned to the 481 voting precincts in Lake County Townships. These proposed polling place changes take place in Antioch Township pct. 11, Shields Township pcts. 242 and 243, and Vernon Township pcts. 290, 292 and 293. Motion by Member Leafblad, seconded by Member Douglass, to approve. Motion carried.

- Amending a previous Ordinance designating the precinct boundaries of the 481 voting precincts in Lake County Townships. It is recommended that voting precincts 54, 230 and 445 be adjusted to conform to recent annexations by the City of Zion. Motion by Member Paxton, seconded by Member Douglass, to approve. Motion carried.
- Joint Resolution adopting a revised fee for marriage licenses issues by the Lake County Clerk's Office. It is recommended that the fee be increased to \$25, which includes \$20 for the Lake County Clerk's Office and \$5 for the State of Illinois. Motion by Member Douglass, seconded by Member Leafblad, to approve. Motion carried.

Recorder of Deeds:

Motion by Member Paxton, seconded by Member Powers, to approve the report of Mary Ellen Vanderverter for the month of May 2008. Motion carried.

Treasurer:

Motion by Member Paxton, seconded by Member Powers, to approve the report of Robert Skidmore, Treasurer, for the month of May 2008. Motion carried.

State Legislative Program Update:

Kip Kolkmeier, via conference call, updated the Committee on the status of the State legislative program. He stated that out of 3,000 bills filed, only 250 have been sent to the Governor for signature. The budget that was passed includes spending authority that far exceeds the revenue. The Governor stated that the House failed to pass the revenue bills, and he is calling on them to come back into session. House Speaker Michael Madigan feels that the revenue bills that the Senate passed - authority to lease the State lottery, fund sweeps, and a pension refinancing bill, could not pass the House. The Governor has threatened to cut \$1.5 billion from the spending authority bills that were passed at the end of May.

With regard to the Capital bill, there is 100% consensus that it has to be done. At this point, the Governor and 3 of the 4 legislative leaders support it. The problem is that Speaker Madigan does not want to give the Governor a major Capital bill, and it also falls down on the revenue source. The gaming expansion bill passed out of the Senate but is not likely to be passed by the House. Mr. Kolkmeier stated that the big question is whether there will be pressure to pass it between now and November, or whether it will be held off. He stated that the legislators don't believe that we will lose federal dollars as a result of delaying the capital bill.

Mr. Kolkmeier stated that he is tracking 300 bills of interest to Lake County, and 48 of them have passed.

He touched on the following:

- HB 4956 - Increase in Children's Waiting Room Fee** - This bill is awaiting the Governor's signature.
- SB 2005 - Expand Definition of Inoperable Vehicles** - This bill is awaiting the Governor's signature.
- SB 2321 - Increase Law Library Civil Court Filing Fees** - This bill is awaiting the Governor's signature.

Mr. Kolkmeier recommended that Lake County send the Governor a formal request to sign bills.

Mr. Kolkmeier then touched on the following bills, which are still hung up:

- HB 5572 - Filing of Mechanic's Lien** - This bill was referred to the Senate Rules Committee.
- SB 2304 - Authority for County Boards to provide supportive Human Services through imposition of Taxpayer Authorized Levy** - This bill was re-referred to the Rules Committee.

There may be an opportunity to move the above the bills in the Veto Session.

SB 2275 - Raise Age from 17 to 18 for Juveniles in County Court System - This bill was placed on the Calendar Order of Concurrence House Amendment(s) 01 on May 31, 2008. Mr. Kolkmeier feels that this bill may be passed. The

bill is more limited now and would apply to misdemeanor only minors.

SB 2820 - Disclosure of Assessment Information - This bill was placed on Calendar Order of concurrence House Amendment(s) 01 on May 31, 2008.

Legislation:

Gary Gibson explained a Joint Resolution which expressed the need for the Illinois General Assembly to reach agreement to move a state capital program, such as Illinois Works, forward with the Governor to address highway and transit capital needs throughout the state and in Lake County. Motion by Member Douglass, seconded by Member Bassi, to approve. Motion carried.

Marty Paulson reported that in regard to SB 2820, the effective date is the 2009 tax year. He then talked about the State Tax Force that he is sitting on. They have had four meetings, with the first being an organizational meeting. They are currently in a fact finding mode to understand all of the impacts of the property tax process. He has requested that a presentation on school funding be made to the Task Force.

Chair Spielman remarked that Board of Review (BoR) Member Linda Barbara-Stein conveyed to her that she is studying the impact of sales ratio studies within Moraine Township. Ms. Barbera-Stein is analyzing the township deciles to determine the market trends within township. BoR Member Stein is concerned about how township wide sales ratio results can negatively impact properties at certain price levels. Mr. Paulson feels that the Property Tax Advisory Committee to the Department of Revenue, on which he sits, may be the venue to start to address this topic.

Considerable discussion took place regarding the effects of the housing slump in Lake County, and Mr. Paulson stated that the rate of foreclosures has quadrupled from 2006 to 2008. He stated that the impact of this on the assessments will begin to show in 2009. He explained that the assessments will not go down in 2008; in fact they will rise slightly. Mr. Paulson commented that a core responsibility of his position is to perform township equalization. In performing that function, he does look at what township assessors have done in terms of their reassessments, whether values have gone up or down and how much. He then analyzes the changes by each major property class - residential, commercial or industrial, and weights it by the number of parcels in each class to come up with a weighted change for the jurisdiction. He then compares that weighted change with the sales ratio study and what that says needs to occur based upon having a three year level of assessment of 33.33%. A calculation is done to determine where they are and where they need to be, and the difference is what the County Assessor will have to move those assessments up or down across the board in a given township.

Mr. Paulson also reported that as part of the new County website, there will be a page devoted to an explanation and the data used in the equalization process that the public will be able to access.

Federal Legislative Program Update:

Trent Lehman, The Ferguson Group, updated the Committee via conference call on the status of our federal legislative initiatives.

Mr. Lehman stated that the appropriation season has kicked into high gear and they are trying to get bills done prior to the 4th of July recess and to finish up as much as they can do prior to the August recess. The Homeland Security Bill and the Military Construction bill have been marked up at full Committee at the House level. Today, the full Committee in the Appropriations in the House is marking up the Commerce, Justice and Science bill, the Financial Services bill, and the Energy and Water bill. Some of the County's projects are being considered in two of these bills. Other committees will be marking up bills soon as well. We should have an idea, when the Committee reports are released, of how the County's projects have fared and how our bills are doing. Mr. Lehman hopes to have more information before the 4th of July.

Mr. Lehman reiterated that the appropriations process has slowed down because of the elections this year. Most of the bills will be considered by the full Committees and will be reported out, but most likely will not make it to the House or Senate floor. They will serve as placeholders for when Congress comes back sometime after the election to determine how they are going to finish the spending bills after the new president is determined and the make-up of the new Congress.

The Medicare moratorium issue has been included in the War Supplemental bill, a \$186.5 billion dollar bill with \$161 billion going to the war. There is language in that bill that will pass the moratorium on at least 6 of 7 criteria that were considered crucial. This could happen by the end of the week in the Senate.

Mr. Lehman reminded the Committee that Senator Obama and Congressman Kirk have decided not to do earmarks for this year until a better system can be put in place.

Congress will return after the August recess until they adjourn in early October and they will have to make a decision. The most likely scenario is that there will be a continuing resolution until after the election and possibly until after the inauguration of the new president. There may be a handful of bills that are passed, but the rest will probably be included in an omnibus bill so that action can be taken fairly quickly once they decide to move forward.

Member Douglass expressed the Committee's concern regarding the lack of a State Capital Bill and the potential loss of federal funding as a result. Mr. Lehman stated that many of the transportation bills authorized money towards transportation projects in Illinois. There is generally a cost share of 80% federal and 20% local, and the money needs to be expended by the end of the last year that the bill is in place (for multiple-year projects). The federal highway bill expires on September 30, 2009. He said that if you don't start obligating the local match money, you are in jeopardy of losing the federal dollars.

Adjournment:

Motion by Member Leafblad, seconded by Member Powers, to adjourn at 10:32 a.m. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Mary Otahal.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

Vice-Chair

Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee