

Richland County Board
April 10, 2025

Convene

Travis Paddock called the meeting of the Richland County Board to order at 7:00pm on April 10, 2025, in the Jail Meeting Room. The meeting was proclaimed open, the Pledge of Allegiance recited, and a Silent Prayer was offered. Attendance: Dennis Graves, Present; Cindy Given, Present; Morgan Henton, Present; Brian VanBlaricum, Present; Travis Paddock, Present; Steve Schonert, Present; Alexis McFarland, Present.

Changes/Approval of Agenda

Travis Paddock made a motion to move 7B to Executive Session, Cindy Given seconded the motion. Cindy Given made a motion to approve the agenda with changes. Steve Schonert seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Information, Correspondence, Upcoming Meetings

Public Safety will meet May 1st at 7 o'clock pm 2nd floor conference room in the Courthouse. 911 will meet Wednesday, April 23rd at 9 o'clock am at the Olney Fire Department. 708 will meet Wednesday, April 16th at 12 o'clock pm 2nd floor conference room in the Courthouse.

Open

Seth Flach with Milano & Grunloh Engineers, Inc, was in attendance to discuss the EJ Water Main Improvements project. The county received a \$1.4 million grant to improve the water mains. He stated 1,200 feet is complete as of now.

Motion/Vote - Consent Agenda

Brian VanBlaricum made a motion to approve all items under the consent agenda. Cindy Given seconded the motion. Items approved were the minutes from March 13 & 19, 2025 for County Board, April 3, 2025, for Road and Bridge meeting, and February 26, 2025, for 911 ETSB meeting; the county officer reports; St. Joseph Parish Stringtown Picnic Liquor License; Tax deed Resolution 11-03-125-008; CDBG Grant Application for payment; Contract for OSHA Safety Training with Eastern Illinois Community College; Agreement with Local Workforce Innovation Area #23 for OSHA Safety Training Grant; Resolution to allow the Village of Noble to temporarily close County Highway 9 for May Fest, Freedom Fest, and Noble Chowder; St. Joseph Parish Stringtown Raffle.

Motion/Vote - Finance Committee

Steve Schonert discussed the claims. Claims totaling \$136,048.71 total county and \$179,651.84 non-county. Steve discussed a possible duplicate claim that will be investigated by the County Clerk. Steve Schonert made a motion to approve the claims. Cindy Given seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Steve Schonert then discussed Animal Control Officer, Andrea Edwards' vacation, personal, and compensation time. Steve stated that Compensation time is very vague in the County Employee Handbook and that will need to be updated to mirror the Labor Union Contract. Andrea did not use her time at the end of the year and Steve proposed to pay her out for her remaining time, which totals 72 hours of vacation time and 73.25 hours of Compensation time equaling 145.25 hours = \$2,759.75. Steve made a motion to pay Andrea for the lost time of 145.25 hours. Cindy Given seconded the motion. Travis Paddock then asked Andrea if she was given a copy of the County Employee Handbook to which she replied "Yes". Travis Paddock then asked State's Attorney Chelsey Clark if this would potentially open a can of worms, to which Chelsey Clark replied "Yes". A vote by roll was called. Motion passed unanimously.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Andrew Hires discussed the issues with the current radios for the department. Portables do not work once the deputy is far enough away, leaving the deputies without communication. Sheriff Hires stated that the department has \$350,000 saved for this project but would need at least another \$300,000 to be able to cover the entire county. Sheriff Hires presented the board with a letter to Mike Bost for a grant to help with the needed funds. Sheriff Hires stated that he would like to start getting bids for this project. Cindy Given asked him what the coverage is like now. Sheriff Hires stated that once you get about 5 miles out, there is no communication, and the last upgrade was in 2012. If awarded the funds for the project, coverage would be 95-96% coverage. Morgan Henton made a motion to approve the Radio Project (RFP). Cindy Given seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sheriff Hires then discussed squad car issues. Currently the department is down one squad car due to transmission issues. Sheriff Hires asked if there would be any extra funds to help purchase another used squad car instead of putting possibly \$5,000 into the 2015 squad with 160,000 miles and is the oldest squad car. Steve Schonert stated that there was about \$550,000 in Public Safety but not budgeted for a squad car. Sheriff Hires explained that he had \$75,000 in his budget for squad cars. No decision was made.

State's Attorney's Report

Chelsey Clark stated that Mary Beth Welch-Collins would begin full-time work as the Assistant State's Attorney the first of May. Sheriff Hires stated that Chelsey is doing a great job.

Animal Control

Andrea Edwards stated that Corey McDonald with IT has the new cameras going at the new facility. The Highway Department put up the new sign from Meagher Sign and Graphics.

Highway Business

County Engineer Dan Colwell discussed rt 130 resurfacing project as well as Fox River Bridge repairs. Also, the bidding is out for tree removal on rt 130 north of Vernor Lake.

Board Committee Reports

IT.

Morgan Henton stated that he had talked with Corey McDonald, and the County's new website is being utilized, with over 4400 views mainly due to the Election Results. It was also discussed to create a wireless bridge between the courthouse and the new Health office location as well as consolidating the health office phones with CTS, which would help reduce the price of the current phone bill.

Shelly Harmon with RCDC stated that the grant for broadband was submitted. Starbucks construction has begun. Northfield Subdivision is starting on their 3rd new home build. Kevin Kern and Ted Whitehead with Snedeker Risk Management were in attendance. Kevin announced their Employment Conference on May 12 as well as the SRM Conference on September 24, 2025, in Peoria. Kevin also stated that they would be happy to help update our County Employee Handbook.

Old Business

Steve Schonert stated that there was around \$63,049.21 from interest in the ARPA account.

New Business

Nothing to report.

Executive Session

Cindy Given made the motion to enter Executive Session to discuss Personnel. Steve Schonert seconded the motion. The board went into Executive Session at 8:29 PM. The board re-entered into regular session at 9:30 PM.

Adjournment

Cindy Given made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brian VanBlaricum seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Amanda Troyer
County Clerk

Travis Paddock
County Board Chairman