



JASPER COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2024

The Jasper County Board met in regular session on Thursday, November 21, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Jasper County Building, Board Room, 204 West Washington Street, Newton, Illinois. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board Chairman Jason Warfel. Chairman Warfel led a moment in silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. The following board members were present: Chairman Jason Warfel, Vice-Chairman Ron Heltsley, A.C. Pickens, Doug Weddell, Ben Bollman, Michael Geier, James Judson, Eric Spiker, Jessica Schackmann.

Public Comments: None

Adoption of the agenda. There was no objection, the agenda was adopted as distributed.

Reports:

County Departments:

Ambulance Department – Calls for service for October 911 – 59; Refusal/no pt contact – 14; Transfers/Discharges – 33. 2358 has been inspected and is now in service. A full-time Medic has been hired for a fully staffed. Revalidation for Medicare and Medicaid is currently being completed.

Highway Department – The Resolution for 2025 County Motor Fuel Maintenance 25-00000-00-GM is being presented to Full Board for approval in the amount of \$434,480.00. This is County Motor Fuel Funds. The mowing of the County Highway right of ways is about completed. We are working on the 2025 Township and County MFT maintenance programs. Solid Waste Schedule is available for 2025.

Health Department – The exterior is almost done, and a punch list will be completed. Next board of Health meeting will be Monday November 25th at 5:30.

County Positions/Services:

Building Maintenance – Nov 1 Jeremy Haycraft called about a problem with the county building plumbing. Main drain was plugged. Utley Plumbing cleaned the drain, but further long-term repairs are needed. Estimates are being prepared. Nov 20 – Tiffany Keller from the Chamber of Commerce asked permission to decorate the flowerpots around the courthouse and put up the “flagpole Christmas tree”.

Jasper County Courthouse – Nothing to report, Geier will reach out to ADG/Architecture & Design Group in a month.

Information Technology Consultant – Ambulance having trouble receiving printer and scanners in a timely manner.

Animal Control – 6 dogs have been adopted and will be more to be adopted if anyone has interest in adopting.

Elected Officials:

Treasurer- Reports from Bigard were sent in the board packet. The total income for October was \$574,909.74. The expenses for October were \$279,734.05. Total income less expenses for October a net income of \$295,175.69. Year to Date income was \$3,704,885.12. Less Expenses were \$3,602,731.70 with a net income of \$102,153.42.

Other Elected Officials/Offices - None

Consent agenda. The following items were on the consent agenda this evening Approval of County Board October 17, 2024, Minutes; Jasper County CEO Investor Renewal 3-Years at \$1,000 Yearly; Reappoint Doug Weddell to a 3-Year Term on the Jasper County E-911 Board [December 31, 2027]; Reappoint Daniel Stark to a 3-Year Term on the Jasper County E-911 Board [December 31, 2027]; Reappoint Donna Coad as Jasper County Representative on the Downstate Illinois Tourism Board; Reappoint Jane Casey as Jasper County Representative on the Downstate Illinois Tourism Board; Adoption of Resolution for Maintenance Under the Illinois Highway Code [\$434,480 Motor Fuel Tax Funds]; File County Reports and Allow Claims. There was no objection, the Consent Agenda was adopted.

Old Business:

Item A. – Jasper County Flag Design Contest

On September 19 at the Jasper County Board meeting the Jasper County Flag Design Commission was formed. The commission met on October 1 and set dates and guidelines for submissions. Designs were accepted between October 7th -November 15th. The commission met last night and selected 5 designs and along with the current flag will put those to an online/in-person public survey (November 21-January 3) for the public to vote on their favorites or to keep the current flag. After public feedback, the Commission will report its findings to the Jasper County Board (January or February 2025 meeting), whose members will vote on whether to adopt a new flag or retain the current flag design. Name and address will be asked to track voting only completed one time.

Item B. – Adoption of Jasper County Ordinance on Open Burning During Dry/Windy Conditions (By Sheriff Order) - \$500 Fine

Open burning is generally prohibited in Illinois, but there are some exceptions:

- **Campfires and bonfires:** Allowed on private property or in public areas where permitted.
- **Landscape waste:** Can be burned on the property where it was produced, without an EPA permit.
- **Agricultural waste:** Can be burned without an EPA permit, but there are some restrictions.
- **Household waste:** Can be burned in some cases, as per the Illinois Pollution Control Board's Part 237 Rules.

Local governments can regulate open burning in their areas, and ordinances may be more restrictive than state law. At the November 1999 Jasper County Board meeting the Board adopted an Ordinance that allows the Jasper County Sheriff to place a ban on open burning in Jasper County during dry conditions. The ordinance allows the fire district chiefs to determine when the ban is in effect (during dry and/or windy conditions) and when the ban is lifted. The fine imposed for violation of this ordinance is \$500. Because the original ordinance cannot be obtained, the Jasper County Board has been asked to readopt an Ordinance that addresses bans on Open Burning (during dry and/or windy conditions) and a penalty when in violation of the Ordinance. Weddell moved to Adopt the Jasper County Ordinance on Open Buring During Dry/Windy Conditions. Heltsley seconded the motion. Geier asked the definition of open burning. The States Attorney explained the definition. The sheriff's department would enforce the burn ban. Motion passed on a voice vote. The Ordinance on Open Buring During Dry/Windy Conditions has been adopted in Jasper County.

New Business:

Item A. – Adoption of Resolutions Increasing the Fees for The County Clerk and Recorder

Illinois Compiled Statutes allow the County Board to increase fees for both the County Clerk (55 ILCS 5/4-4001) and County Recorder (55 ILCS 5/3-5018) if an increase is “justified by an acceptable cost study showing that the fees are not sufficient to cover the costs of providing the services.” Bellwether, LLC. prepared a cost analysis and the statement of cost is included in the board packet. If approved the new fee schedule would take effect January 1, 2025. The county clerk went over the increase in fees. There was no motion.

Item B. – Adoption of Resolution Requiring Identification Number & Mailing Address on Ptax-203 Forms to File

Jasper County uses a permanent real estate index number system and a MyDec filing system with the Illinois Department of Revenue. Illinois Compiled Statutes (55 ILCS 5/3-5027) allows the Jasper County Recorder to establish a computerized system that will permit automated entry and indexing of documents in their office. Both the Jasper County Clerk/Recorder and the Supervisor of Assessments have determined that their offices could increase efficiency with the requirement that the Grantor(seller) and the Grantee(purchaser) of real property affix the permanent index number to all documents recorded in the Clerk/Recorder’s Office and a common mailing address and to record all PTAX-203 (Real Estate Transfer Declaration) under the Illinois Department of Revenue’s MyDec system to all such documents recorded in the office. Jasper County would be joining several counties that require this and if passed would take effect January 1, 2025. Schackmann moved to Adopt the Resolution Requiring Identification Number & Mailing Address on PTAX-203 Forms to File. Geier seconded the motion. Motion passed on a voice vote. The Resolution Requiring Identification Number & Mailing Address on PTAX-203 Forms to File has been adopted.

Item C. – Jasper County Ambulance Service Internet Equipment

To improve the Jasper County Ambulance Service Internet Issues the following two options are being presented. Logan Phillippe (Kemper Technology Consulting) our County IT recommend doing the Firewall as a more permanent fix but would work.

Option #1: Firewall for Jasper County Ambulance Service Quote: TOTAL \$1,475 [Equipment \$825, Extended Service \$150, Labor \$500*] *Labor is estimated

Option #2: New Wireless Bridge for Jasper County Ambulance Service Quote: TOTAL \$721.46 [Equipment \$221.46, Labor \$500*] *Labor is estimated

Spiker stated the firewall would be better. Weddell said the speeds will improve. Weddell moved to approve installing a Firewall for the Jasper County Ambulance Service at an estimated total cost of \$1,465 Geier seconded the motion. Motion passed on a voice vote. The Board has approved the installation of a Firewall for the Jasper County Ambulance Service.

Item D. – Small Business Development Center at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges \$5,000/Year Request

The Small Business Development Center is requesting funding support from the Jasper County Board to ensure the continued operation and growth of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges. (IECC). Small businesses play a vital role in our local economy by generating jobs, driving innovation, and enriching the unique character of our community. Yet, many entrepreneurs, particularly in underserved areas, often face barriers to accessing the resources, training, and mentorship needed for success. The SBDC at IECC serves both aspiring and established business owners, providing free or low-cost services such as business plan development, financial literacy training, marketing strategies, and access to funding opportunities. Additionally, they offer one-on-one mentorship, workshops, and networking opportunities, ensuring businesses receive the support needed to succeed.

The SBDC is funded in part through a matching grant from the Small Business Administration. The SBDC at IECC has received \$90K each year from the SBA, with a matching portion coming from IECC. IECC has generously provided this to establish and launch the center, acknowledging the importance of the SBDC as a vital community resource. This funding supports staff, resources, workshops, and operational needs, all critical to the center’s mission of fostering growth and innovation. Community development initiatives are most successful when done in collaboration with key stakeholders. The SBDC is seeking a partnership with Jasper County to secure funding in the amount of \$5000/yr that will support the maintenance and expansion of our services. SBDC maintains office hours in Jasper County on a regular basis to bring the services to county residents. SBDC also hosts workshops and seminars, often in partnership with the local chamber. With your support, the SBDC can continue to grow and become a cornerstone of economic development in your communities. No motion.

Item E. – Adoption of The Jasper County FY2025 Budget

At the October 17, 2024, Jasper County Board Meeting the board approved displaying the proposed budget until the November Board Meeting (required at least 15 days before a final vote). A full copy of the proposed budget was included in the board packet and a copy of the full budget was available for public inspection via the County’s website or in person (members of the public must contact or stop in the Treasurer’s office). Any changes or suggestions can be addressed at the full board meeting on November 21, 2024. The Couty Board is permitted to amend the budget at the November meeting.

(55 ILCS 5/6-1001) Counties Code Annual Budget. The County Board shall adopt each year an annual budget under the terms of this Division for the succeeding fiscal year. Such budget shall be prepared by some person or persons designated by the County Board and such budget shall be made conveniently available for public inspection and provided to the public at a public meeting at least fifteen days prior to the final action thereon expect that nothing in this Act shall restrict a County Board from acting at a public meeting to amend a budget after making that budget available to the public and prior to the final adoption.

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)-Budget Request

The County has been asked to consider adding \$50,000 to the FY2025 Jasper County Budget to establish a Jasper County Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). This RLF would provide gap financing to for-profit businesses, primarily small businesses located within Jasper County. Loan proceeds can be used to finance the acquisition and modernization of commercial real estate, acquisitions of machinery/equipment, facility renovations, and working capital. Details of terms and conditions are not complete at this time and the goal would be a potential partnership with the City of Newton to establish a larger pool of money for the RLF. The auditor recommended not doing this. States Attorney would also not recommend doing this it is not a functionality of county government.

Proposed Budget by Year

BUDGET YEAR	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	% Change
COUNTY’S CORPORATE/GENERAL FUND BREAKDOWN				
General Fund Revenue	\$3,475,532	\$3,552,397	\$3,665,117	↑ 3.2%
General Fund Expenses	\$3,647,799	\$4,521,283	\$4,646,721	↑ 2.8%
General Fund Total Difference	\$(172,267)	\$(968,886)	\$(981,604)	↑ 1.3%
TOTAL COUNTY BUDGET				
Grand Total Revenue	\$10,690,076	\$11,779,041	\$12,144,523	↑ 3.1%
Grand Total Expense	\$11,149,173	\$12,991,016	\$13,430,604	↑ 3.4%
Grand Total Difference	\$(459,097)	\$(1,211,975)	\$(1,286,081)	↑ 6.1%

As mentioned in previous years the County never has a “balanced budget” we are conservative on our revenue estimates and plan for the worst on the expense estimates. Typically, the budget submitted and approved will show a negative balance despite most years ending with a positive balance (see below).

General Fund Actual Revenue/Expenses

BUDGET YEAR	FY2022	FY2023
COUNTY’S CORPORATE/GENERAL FUND BREAKDOWN		
General Fund Revenue	\$4,559,944.53	\$4,325,632.61
General Fund Expenses	\$3,189,717.74	\$4,150,221.79
General Fund Total Difference	\$1,370,226.79	\$175,410.82

Bollman moved to Adopt the FY2025 Jasper County Budget. Heltsley seconded the motion. Motion passed on a Roll Call vote. With Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Schackmann, Spiker, Warfel and Weddell voting yes. The Jasper County FY2025 Budget has been adopted.

Executive/Closed Session - The board did not have an executive session.

Chairman’s Comments:

Election 2024 Information - Jasper County had 79.86% Voter Turnout for the 2024 General Election 66% Voted on Election Day and 34% Voted Early or By Mail. Compared to Recent General Elections: 2022 – 69.11% Voter Turnout; 2020 – 81.27% Voter Turnout

Jasper County Business and Residential Incentives - Recently Jasper County Economic Development, Inc. hosted an informal meeting that focused on Business and Residential Incentives offered in Newton, Ste. Marie and Jasper County. This packet of information is attached on pages 391-399. Incentives offered include Sales Tax exemptions, Property Tax abatement, and waving of building permit and water and sewer connection fees. For more information contact the Newton City Clerk Maggie McDonald at City Hall. Weddell said Jasper County has the best benefits to offer in the area.

Upcoming Thanksgiving Holiday - Non-Emergency County Offices & Departments will be closed on Thursday, November 28th and Friday, November 29th for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

End Of 2022-2024 County Board Term - Tonight’s meeting will conclude the 2022-2024 Jasper County Board Term. (Unless an Emergency/Special Meeting is called). The organizational meeting has been scheduled for Monday, December 2, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room of the County Building. County elected officials who were not sworn in earlier in the day will be sworn in at the organizational meeting.

Recognition Of Service – Board Members

Adam Deckard On Monday, July 8, 2024, Adam Deckard resigned from his position on the Jasper County Board to accept a position with the Jasper County Sheriff’s Office as the School Resource Officer. Mr. Deckard has devoted his life to the service of others both in his capacity as a First Responder, Police Officer and as a member of this board in service to the citizens of Jasper County. “There is no greater purpose than service to others” and Adam lives his life in that manner. It has been an honor and a privilege to call him a colleague for the past 19 months and an even greater honor to call him a friend. Adam, on behalf of the Citizens of Jasper County in recognition and appreciation for your 19 months of dedicated service on the Jasper County Board, THANK YOU!

Ben Bollman On of the great privileges of serving on this board has been calling these individuals not only my colleagues but my friends. For most on the board that friendship has developed as a result of working side by side. However, one individuals stands apart, this individual is someone who I have had the privilege of knowing for almost my entire life, nearly 40 years. I met Ben Bollman the summer before we started Kindergarten together. Just knowing him has added value to my life and calling him a dear friend for 40-

years has been a great honor. A few months ago during one of our County Budget meetings Ben had a T-shirt from the school district that read, "You are my Why." This "Why" comes from inspirational speaker Simon Sinek who has written books on "Start with Why and "Find your Why". This all centers around purpose in life the contribution you make to the world. The very brief summary of how you do that is a simple process by which you can ask your close friends, "Why are we friends?" usually based on the reply your Why is hidden in there. If you pose that question to Ben's friends, Why are you friends with Ben, why do you love Ben you would get the following replies, "Ben puts the needs of others before his own." "Ben is dedicated to helping others." ""Ben cares about the needs of the community and those around him." There is Ben's Why.....Ben exemplifies that service to others the act of actively helping and supporting other in need, following the example set for by Christ who came not to be served but to serve, demonstrating love and compassion through practical actions. Ben's lives a life dedicated to putting the needs of others before his own. This quote reminds me of Ben..."Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is life is good when you are happy, but much better when others are happy because of you." Ben, on behalf of the Citizens of Jasper County in recognition and appreciation for your 6 years of dedicated service on the Jasper County Board, THANK YOU!

Sarah Diel spoke about Ben. He has served the community as a County Board member for the past 6 years and has served as the County representative on the Chamber Board for the past four years. He has served on the Chamber Board and has contributed so much to the community. Ben Bollman was presented the November 2024 Chamber Hometown Hero Award.

Board Comments:

Board members thanked them for their service. Bollman did have to add Jasper County Chamber will have Christmas on the Square Dec 14 at 2 pm and a Lighted Christmas Parade at 6 pm.

Bollman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 pm. Spiker seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned.

The Next Meeting of the Jasper County Board will be the Organizational Meeting on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Amy Tarr, Jasper County Clerk