



JASPER COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

The Jasper County Board met in regular session on Thursday, September 19, 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 pm by proclamation according to law by Sheriff Francis. Sheriff Francis led a moment in silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. The following board members were present: Chairman Jason Warfel, Vice-Chairman Ron Heltsley, Ben Bollman A.C. Pickens, Michael Geier, James Judson, Eric Spiker, Jessica Schackmann, and Doug Weddell.

Public Comments: None

Adoption of the agenda. Addition to the agenda: Reappointment of Steven Kocher as Commissioner of the Sainte Marie Drainage District (Sept. 2027). There was no objection, the agenda was adopted as distributed. Geier moved to accept the addition to the agenda. Bollman seconded the motion.

Reports:

County Departments:

Ambulance Department – 127 runs for the month of August; 911- 79; Refusal/No patient found – 22; Transfers/Discharges – 20; Mutual Aid – 6. New ambulance is in service and the one repaired is back in service.

Highway Department – - The Electronic Recycling Event was held on Saturday, August 27, 2024. Gross weight collected was 12,557.00 lbs. The underweight fee is \$600.00. An invoice was submitted to the County Board for payment from the General Fund. Andrew would like board members to discuss going to one time a year for electronic recycling. It is an extra cost to the department. Pickens asked about the date that would need to let the company know of our decision. The mowing of the right of way has begun. The contractor is planning to start construction on the West Liberty Road on September 19th, but it will be starting the 20th. The summer oil and chipping for townships and county is complete including the County's Pavement Preservation consisting of 28.6 miles has been completed.

Health Department – Heltsley gave updates on the exterior of the building, and it is almost complete. Interior remodel will be going out for bid.

County Positions/Services:

Building Maintenance – Discussions throughout the month with Jeremy Haycraft, James Judson, Sheriff Francis, board chairman Warfel and States Attorney Treccia concerning a contract with Haycraft for the use of his mowers and snow removal equipment on county property. All agreed for \$500 per quarter totaling \$2,000 yearly.

Courthouse – Geier gave report

Information Technology Consultant – Logan reported on items Jason had been in an email. the fiber that was cut during the fiber installation is repaired. Cradle point is in place Cost of the repair was made

with Kemper and FieldWorxs both are paying some. There is one line between the courthouse and the county building, it is a straight line, come up with an agreement on a date. Internet service issues with speed has been resolved. The problem was a converter box that was the incorrect size. Leeds update that was downloading extremely slow and it finally installed. Something had changed in Spillman last week and it did not work with leads. Kemper needs to be fingerprinted. Charles fixed what had changed. Every week visits are now every other week because items could be handled over phone and offices were not needed. Geier asked about leads printer so there are some issues the printers have been changing IP addresses. Geier commended Garrett on working with the leads help desk with the state. Treccia asked about how the fiber between the buildings would affect the courthouse, it would just be the server that would not be accessible.

Animal Control – in board packet

Elected Officials:

Elected Officials

Treasurer- Reports from Bigard were sent in the board packet. The total income for August was \$727,814.97. The expenses for August were \$609,026.04. Total income less expenses for August a net income of \$118,788.93. Year to Date income was \$2,900,156.15. Less Expenses were \$3,052,037.63 with a net loss of \$151,881.48.

Other Elected Officials/Offices – No comments

Consent agenda. The following items were on the consent agenda Approval of County Board August 15, 2024 & September 9, 2024 Minutes; Reappointment of Raymond Beals as Commissioner of the Mint Creek Drainage District (Sept. 2027); Reappointment of Jamee Mitchell to an At-Large Position on the Jasper County Board of Health (Sept. 2027); Reimbursement Agreement for Equipment Use Between County of Jasper and Jeremy Haycraft; Adoption of Jasper County Trustee for Taxing Districts Resolutions Delinquent Taxes Real Estate Program; Approval of \$600 General Fund Payment for Electronic Recycling Fee to Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations; File County Reports; and Allow Claims Reappointment of Steven Kocher as Commissioner of the Sainte Marie Drainage District (Sept. 2027).

There was no objection, the Consent Agenda was adopted.

Old Business:

Item A. – 2024 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Courthouse Square Streetscape Improvements

At the March 21, 2024, meeting, the board voted unanimously to proceed forward with a grant that would upgrade the street lighting and sidewalks on the county property of the courthouse square to look like the city property around the square. The Application period opened on Thursday, August 1, 2024, with applications being due by September 30, 2024. Milano & Grunloh Engineers, LLC has sent over the required paperwork and is assisting in the process. A portion of the application are letters of support from businesses. The application will be submitted sometime next week.

New Business:

Items A. – University of Illinois Extension Fy2024/Fy2025 Budget and Updates

Jessica Wells, University of Illinois Extension County Director presented the FY2024/FY2025 Budget and discussed the difference in operating expenses including the new building/location in Jasper County for 2025. There is a \$31,000 addition in expenses to the budget for the coming year. Possibly adding something for the elderly. They will be moving to a larger building with a rent cost of \$36,000. They would like to ask for an increase in the tax levy. The current levy is \$62,000. The University of Illinois Extension provides educational programs & research-based information to help Jasper County residents improve

quality of life, develop skills & solve problems. There is a county board member in Galetin County who has caused issues of wanting to remove Illinois Extension from the county and is requesting for budgets from other areas.

Item B. – 2025 Jasper County Employees’ Health Insurance Rates

The County has received the HopeTrust (County Health Insurance) 2025 rates. The rates increased by about 18% across the board. The reasons for the increase include yearly net losses, 50% of claims were not with “Preferred Providers”, and multiple large procedures that were not using “Preferred Providers.” A detailed breakdown of the increased rates and proposed 2025 plans is included in the Board Packet. The proposal would be for the County to cover \$28.00 a month per employee towards their HopeTrust insurance cost. Additionally, those employees using the Health Reimbursement Plan (HRP) which they currently pay \$0 per month would be charged \$50 per month if they want to remain on the plan.

Weddell moved to approve the proposed County Health Insurance Plans and Employee Reimbursement Rates. Pickens seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote with one nay. The 2025 Jasper County Employees’ Health Insurance Plans and Reimbursement Rates have been approved.

Item C. – Approval of Jasper County Flag Commission to Consider New Jasper County Flag Design

Jasper County was founded on February 15, 1831, and the government was formed in 1835. No flag was designed for 141 years. On June 12, 1976, during a Flag Day celebration sponsored by the Newton Woman’s Club, the Jasper County Flag, original in design and worked in needlepoint by the Woman’s Bicentennial Committee members was presented on behalf of the club to the



citizens of Jasper County as a symbol of our County’s being the oldest recorded spot in the United States for this rare bird the “Prairie Chicken.” It was accepted as the county’s flag. Jasper County has a unique flag that features needlepoint work. This is a one-of-a-kind flag however because it is in needlepoint it is hard to reproduce. Ideally, the County would have a flag that could be reproduced and flown at County Buildings and other locations around Jasper County. Warfel asked the Chamber to help identify 10-12 individuals in the community from a variety of ages to serve on a Flag Commission to consider a New Jasper County Flag. The purpose of the commission would be to evaluate the submissions and select a handful of the best designs to put to a community “online” vote. The top flag design(s) would be submitted to the County Board for consideration. The County Board is not obligated to select any of the designs but it would be the hope that through this process something would be submitted that can serve as a great symbol of our County for generations to come. A short clip about what a good flag design is:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/video/submissions-open-for-new-illinois-flag-design/>

Guidelines:

Some general guidance for submissions includes:

- Design elements can include the natural features of the county, history and culture of the county.
- No limit on flag shape or ratio but designs may be edited by the commission.
- No limit on color but recommend less than four colors for clarity of design.
- There should be no watermarks or frames around the image.
- By submitting a design to the Commission, the designer is authorizing the Commission and the County of Jasper to take ownership of the design.
- Persons under 18 may submit designs if submitted in coordination with a parent/guardian, teacher, or adult mentor.

- Designs cannot be copied from other designs or use existing logos or copyright materials; however, the design can include elements or reproduction of the County Seal or prior County flag.
- Designs cannot be AI-generated.
- Submissions are limited to three per person.

Principles of Good Flag Design:

Simple enough for a child to draw - Just a few colors (3 or 4) - Meaningful Local Symbols

- No Words or Seals
- Should be Contextual

Geier moved to approve the Jasper County Flag Commission to consider a New Jasper County Flag Design. Spiker seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote. The Jasper County Flag Commission has been approved.

Item D. – United Life Care Ambulance Service, Inc. Management Contract for Jasper County Ambulance Service

Action may or may not be taken on this item following the executive/closed session.

Board Comments: No comments

Chairman’s Comments:

Jasper County Museum is seeking a new location; they will no longer be available to use the space they are in. Snedeker Risk Management 2024 Fall Client Conference was September 18 – September 19 in East Peoria. Cyber security is one of the topics that was discussed. Personnel policy was another item discussed; the county’s policy was updated but need to look for revisions to approve the policy again in December. The upcoming United Counties Council of Illinois Fall Conference will be October 25-26, 2024, at the Presidential Library & Museum Springfield, Illinois. FY2025 Budget Work is currently underway and a proposed FY2025 Budget will be displayed at the October meeting. Thanks to the treasurer office for the work on the budget. Enterprise Zone amendments now encompass all the City of Newton and the Village of Sainte Marie.

Executive/Closed Session - The board had an executive/closed session to consider the following subjects: Personnel, there may be action taken following executive/closed session. Geier moved for the board to enter an executive session under the following exceptions: Personnel (exception 1). Schackmann seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken with Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Schackmann, Spiker, Warfel and Weddell voting yes. The Board entered an Executive Session at 6:49 pm.

The board resumed open session at 8:08 pm no action was taken on Item D. – United Life Care Ambulance Service, Inc. Management Contract for Jasper County Ambulance Service.

Spiker moved to have a special meeting Oct 3rd at 6:00 pm on the management of the Jasper County Ambulance Service. Geier seconded the motion. Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Schackmann, Spiker, Warfel and Weddell voting yes, the board will hold a special meeting on the Management of the Jasper County Ambulance Service.

Geier moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 pm. Bollman seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned from executive session.

The Next Board Meeting will be on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.
Amy Tarr, Jasper County Clerk