



Rock Island County
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Rock Island, IL 61201
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**Finance and Personnel Committee Minutes
Tuesday May 9, 2017 8:30 a.m.**

The Finance and Personnel Committee of the Rock Island County Board met at the above date and time in the Conference Room of the Administration Office on the second floor of the County Building, 1504 Third Ave, Rock Island, IL. Chair Richard Brunk called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Minutes as follows:

1) Call to order and roll call

Committee members present: Richard Brunk, Kai Swanson, Ginny Shelton, Brian Vyncke, Don Johnston, Dewayne Cremeens, Scott Noyd, Rod Simmer

Committee members absent: None

Others present: Kenneth Maranda, Dave Ross, Hayleigh Covella, Louisa Ewert, Larry Wilson, Kelly Fisher, Mike Steffen, Bill Long, Jerry Clyde, Darren Hart, April Palmer, Brian Schumaker

2) Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3) Approval of minutes from the April 11, 2017 meeting

Motion to approve: Rod Simmer

2nd: Brian Vyncke

Voice vote

Motion carried

4) Reports to the committee

Treasurer

Ms. Ewert noted that the committee has the monthly report of investments and balances in their packet. They also have the cover letter. Interest earned for April 2017 was \$8,409.00, bringing the current year-to-date interest to \$709,337. 00.

Ms. Ewert said she wanted to note that the county did have another interest rate increase at Blackhawk Bank. It was stuck at the 0.35% for many years. When the Federal Reserve did an interest rate hike last month it was bumped up to 0.45%. Last month she

had the IIT Trust she was going to do investments at and the County Board passed that resolution. She contacted Blackhawk Bank and they actually met that interest rate. When she called and told them that she would be filtering some of the money out of there, it prompted them to move it up. They're currently at 0.9%, which is still under 1% but is more than double what it had been at.

Ms. Ewert reported that the General Fund still has that Tax Anticipation Warrant at American Bank and still owes the internal loan from Working Cash. The TAW is \$750,000 at American Bank plus the \$524,000 Working Cash. The General Fund had deferred monthly EHB payments to the Health Insurance Fund. From December to April, it now owes then \$241,268.87.

Hope Creek did draw an additional \$500,000 on their TAW. They're now at \$1.5 million. Mr. Ross explained that most of the \$500,000 is paying back debt that Hope Creek owes the General Fund. Most of it is paid back now. That was \$400,000 almost. Ms. Ewert added that Hope Creek borrowed the additional \$500,000 to pay back a \$396,850 Capital Project Fund loan from when Hope Creek built the new building. They have owed it for 10 years. The General Fund was the recipient of that money.

Ms. Ewert noted that she did want to mention that Hope Creek is now about three months behind on paying bills.

The Liability Insurance Fund still has that Tax Anticipation Warrant of \$500,000 at Southeast Bank.

Ms. Ewert noted that they're keeping a really good eye on the Health Department balances. They mentioned last month or the month before that they wanted her to go out and try to do an RFP for a TAW, but she has a couple of funds that might be able to lend them \$50,000. That will be from two of her funds interest free to get them through the June distribution. Ms. Palmer asked for confirmation that that has not been necessary yet. Ms. Ewert confirmed that she hasn't had to do it yet. They also asked her to do it a couple of years ago and they never really needed to draw on it. It was kind of iffy whether they were going to be able to make it until June, so they decided just to go with an internal loan instead of going to the bank again.

Ms. Ewert reported that the tax bills were mailed out last Friday. The first distribution is scheduled for June 22, which is one day before the second payroll in June. She anticipates the county will have a hard time paying that. When she gets the first distribution, she will pay back EHB in full and will probably start paying down the TAW. Ms. Ewert noted that there's a resolution that'll be coming through that Mr. Ross will explain. The county may be able to get that TAW at the bank paid down even sooner.

Ms. Ewert reported that yesterday, the General Fund balance was \$28,068.07. Ms. Ewert reminded the committee that that has to cover payroll this Friday, which could be close to \$800,000. This morning, Ms. Alberts made a call to the Comptroller's Office. They never called back. They had also sent a letter last week and they never responded. Ms. Alberts got on the State of Illinois Comptroller website this morning. Replacement Tax is coming in today at \$402,806.51; Income Tax at \$92,117.95; and Supplemental Sales Tax should be in by Thursday at another \$322,716.99, so they are going to make payroll for Friday without help from the Comptroller. If that office doesn't call back, they're going to call back today. That is also before the Circuit Clerk money. In two more weeks, the county will have vouchers and payroll and will have to come up with another \$1.3 million. She doesn't know if she'll have to go out and draw on the TAW for that.

Mr. Simmer asked where Ms. Ewert thinks things will be before the tax distribution and how far in hole the hole she's projecting. Ms. Ewert explained that there's going to be a resolution coming through that the General Fund is going to borrow a \$750,000 internal loan from two of the Circuit Clerk's funds and one Probation fund. The first thing she wanted to do was pay off the TAW. She will not be able to do that like she planned, but she will be able to pay it down a little bit. She wouldn't want to turn around and have to borrow again.

Ms. Ewert noticed that she will also explain all of this briefly at Committee of the Whole tomorrow.

Auditor

Ms. Palmer noted that on the State of Illinois Payments Report Ms. Ewert was referring to, the committee will be able to see that continues on. The stuff that was brought in in May will be on next month's report. The county got no state income tax in April. It's backed up to January on receiving that. The county is now owed February, March, and April. For the Probation Officer's salary reimbursements, she thought that once they started paying July's last month that maybe they could continue with at least getting a month in, but the county got nothing in April again. It's all the way back to August that the state owes on that. That's what the General Fund problem relates to. Ms. Ewert noted that that's what her office called about. Ms. Palmer asked the committee to keep an eye on this report when she gives it to them monthly.

Ms. Palmer noted that she will be presenting tomorrow night to the Committee of the Whole the draft of the audit for the county. RSM, the external audit team, will be here. She will have full final copies at the County Board meeting next Tuesday. She encourages everyone to go in there and look at the back pages. Those will be the fund financials that they're used to looking at. They can bring any questions to her. On her reports tomorrow night, they'll notice that the numbers have been changed to agree with the audit. Ms. Palmer noted that she's also in the process of giving some assistance to payroll so if she's not in her office, look for her here on the second floor.

Mr. Ross noted that he wanted to add something that they talked about at GHA as Ms. Palmer mentions how far behind the state is on making payments to the county. There's a House bill that just passed that's, meant if it goes through the Senate, to increase the LGDF, Local Government Distributive Fund, that comes to county. Someone in the Senate has decided to put forth a bill in the Senate that does the opposite. It reduces by 25% the money the county gets. His guess is that it's so the state can get more money on the backs of local governments. That's the only thing he can think of. That is going to committee for hearing tomorrow. Mr. Ross's staff sent letters yesterday per GHA Committee, however they are not going to get there in time so he and Ms. Covella will make phone calls today to everyone on that committee. Mr. Swanson asked for that Senate Bill number. Mr. Ross said it's SB-2199. Mr. Swanson suggested that it would be prudent for everyone on this committee to talk to the State Senator. He said not to wait for a letter; call them.

Ms. Ewert noted that if anyone has ever gone on the Illinois State Statute website, you can actually put in witness lists, which is probably an even better idea. You have to create an account, but it only takes a few minutes. You can get on there and oppose. Mr. Swanson said that's a great idea and they can all do that. Ms. Shelton suggested doing that and phone calls. They do not like telephone calls. Mr. Noyd noted that the website is www.ilga.gov.

Ms. Shelton noted from experience that they do not like form letters, but they detest telephone calls. Telephone calls are the most effective because they are the most annoying to them. They're trying to do other work and continually answering the phone. She would encourage everyone to call. Mr. Noyd noted that they're meeting on it tomorrow. Mr. Ross confirmed.

Mr. Simmer said Senator Anderson told him it takes 10% away from the LGDF. Mr. Ross said it's 25%. There was an amendment by a senator that changed it to 25%. Mr. Swanson asked who sponsored the bill. Ms. Covella said it was Senator McCarter. Mr. Simmer said he's from Vandalia. Mr. Simmer noted that he wasn't happy with the original. Mr. Ross said he likes the House bill that increases it back to where it was before. Mr. Simmer said the county helps them out, so let's not pretend this is a good thing. It doesn't outweigh the bad.

Mr. Brunk encouraged everybody to either log on or make phone calls. Ms. Shelton said to do both. Log on and call. Mr. Brunk said it couldn't hurt.

Human Resources

Mr. Clyde reported that the county is maintaining balanced new hires versus terminations as a whole. Hires are not increasing. The county is just replacing employees. On the year-to-date payroll, there's a 1.88% increase for the year. The reason for that is the county is still incurring step increases for all union employees and there are two or

three smaller unions that still got their 2% increase for this year. He would anticipate somewhere around a 3% increase for the year on payroll taxes assuming the county maintains hiring.

5) Consider transfers of appropriations

Mr. Brunk noted that there are just a few of these in the General Fund, Motor Fuel Tax, Bridge Fund, and Highway Fund.

Motion to approve: Rod Simmer

2nd: Brian Vyncke

Voice vote

Motion carried

6) Consider appropriation resolutions for funds

Mr. Brunk explained that most of these are grant money and seizure money. There is one to address the request from the State's Attorney's Office that the County Board approved last month. One is a decrease in the Court Security Fund.

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

2nd: Rod Simmer

Voice vote

Motion carried

Mr. Johnston noted that his question looks like it's coming up in number 10, but it's under resolutions. He assumes that none of that money for Chief Judge Braud or the Circuit Clerk will be used for his lawyer lounge in the new annex. Mr. Johnston noted that it might sound funny but asked if everyone had read the paper this morning. Ms. Palmer explained that Judge Braud got \$1,200 donated from local attorneys and she set up a separate line item and is monitoring that very carefully. Mr. Johnston said the last sentence of the article is interesting. It has nothing to do with that. Ms. Palmer explained that the loans from there to the General Fund have nothing to do with that. Mr. Johnston said the last sentence about him running out of money on \$28 million makes him wonder about things. He asked if Judge Braud is still coming tomorrow night to give a report. Mr. Ross confirmed that he is.

7) Consider claims and TDs

Mr. Brunk noted that claims total \$1,503,373.26 and TDs total \$2,294,838.24.

Motion to approve: Brian Vyncke
2nd: Kai Swanson
Voice vote
Motion carried

8) Consider Board member per diem/mileage report

Motion to approve: Dewayne Cremeens
2nd: Scott Noyd
Voice vote
Motion carried

9) Consider consolidation of County Clerk's and Recorder's offices

Mr. Brunk noted that this topic was brought to him by Mr. Steffen. He invited Mr. Steffen to give a brief explanation.

Mr. Steffen said he'd be happy to and thanked Mr. Brunk. He explained that the possibility of this happening was brought to his attention when he and Mr. Swanson attended the Leadership Academy for county officials. They met a couple of county officials. Laura Cook in Ogle County is a Clerk and Recorder and Laurie Mense in Christian County is a Clerk and Recorder, which got him thinking if it would work in Rock Island County. Mr. Steffen said he discussed it with Mr. Swanson and Mr. Ross. Mr. Ross told him that he doesn't really have the authority to check into this and even bring the County Board facts and data. There are Elected Officials who would need to complete their terms. They would also need to put it as a referendum for the voters. Mr. Steffen said he is asking this committee to give Mr. Ross the authority to check into some facts and look into this if it's one possibility to save some money for Rock Island County.

Mr. Brunk asked Mr. Steffen if he has anything further to share. Mr. Steffen said no. He's just asking this board to make a motion to give Mr. Ross the authority to check into it and get data to bring back to them and see if it's feasible and if they should consider it.

Mr. Noyd asked if there are there no numbers on why they would even start looking at something like that or the reason why they'd spend their time looking at something when they don't know where it would be a cost savings or how much it's going to be. He asked why they would spend their time doing something if they don't even know why they're doing it. Mr. Steffen explained that Peoria County did it and reduced the number of employees in the Recorder's Office from 10 to 3 and Rock Island County has the same number. That's one possibility. He said the quick estimate off the top of Mr. Ross's head was the county would save about \$350,000.

Mr. Noyd noted that they are already short on staff. He asked if they're going to cut more staff and if they are going put more work on other people without compensating them. He asked if they have looked at the fact that if they eliminate one job, and he doesn't know which job Mr. Steffen is trying to eliminate, but if they eliminate the Recorder and put that on job the clerks, how do they compensate the Clerk's Office? He asked if they would take that salary and give it to the Clerk because they have that responsibility now. They can't just take a job away and give it to less people and expect them to do the job. Mr. Steffen said there are a lot of questions that need to be answered. It's something that's working in Cook County and they're bigger than Rock Island County. Mr. Noyd said Cook County is different.

(Multiple overlapping conversations)

Mr. Brunk called for order.

Ms. Fisher said she has a lot of answers to a lot of these questions. In fact, she has a bunch of handwritten notes and things she typed out. It all goes back to...after listening to Ms. Ewert and Ms. Palmer with the Condition of Funds, it just reinforces her argument. She will admit it sounds good. It would sound good in the newspaper to get rid of an Elected Official's office. Everybody's tired of government.

Ms. Fisher noted that the way it works is there's a history of combined offices throughout the state. Ms. Fisher noted that she's been going to meetings for 25 years. She's only in her fifth term, but as of last week she's been with the county for 25 years. I usually attended almost every zone meeting, usually on a monthly basis, state conventions, and things like that. The idea of combined offices is normally based on population. If the population was over certain number, they had two offices. There are offices that over that population that have split out. Those have always been...Ms. Fisher said she'd be getting into Cook and Peoria Counties too. Every time this is brought up, she realizes it looks like it's going to be a money saver, but a lot of times it turns out to be just a political thing to get rid of an office.

In Cook County it did pass and it surprised everyone in the Association for Clerks and Recorders. That was probably one of the most political moves in the state of Illinois at the time. Karen Yarborough is the County Recorder. She used to be in the state legislature. She had a lot of baggage with her. It was known from the time she got into the Recorder's Office that people were out to eliminate her or that office. On the other side of that coin, they had David Orr who was County Clerk. Her understanding is that he's not going to run for reelection unless he's changed. He really didn't care one way or the other. He's been in Cook County politics all his life. He didn't care.

In Peoria County, kind of the same thing happened. It was a purely political move. The current County Clerk used to be the County Treasurer. Ms. Fisher noted that she's not trying to bore the committee, but the history is important. He made his ranks up through the Association. He was President of IACCR for a while and he retired. Then he decided he was going to go back to work and be the County Clerk. In name he is the County Clerk. The County Recorder, again, this in Peoria was strictly political also. They wanted to combine them. They got the votes to put it on a referendum. It has to go on referendum. It has to go through all the steps here. It has to go to referendum. If it passes, it's Ms. Fisher's understanding that it can't be done, like with Cook County, if that got passed and Ms. Kinney got elected in that same year. Just like you can't touch compensation, you can't, it's her understanding that it wouldn't happen until four years after it got passed. The deal with Peoria County was the Recorder then got eliminated. The Recorder's Chief Deputy and other staff members, there was huge conflict between the Clerk's and Recorder's offices. Those people quit. That's the elimination of that money.

Ms. Fisher noted that it might be a savings now but she guarantees they'll have to fill those positions. As far as Rock Island County, which is what she's here for and what she cares about, she doesn't see a financial gain in combining offices. Like Mr. Noyd and Mr. Johnston said, someone has to do that job. She has staff who do great work and will continue to do that. If they put them in another office, everybody is cross-trained. While that's great because they can kind of fill in for each other, you also get people kind of doing it half-assed. It's like, "What am I going to be doing next week? What am I gonna be doing a month from now? Am I going to be doing election stuff or vital records or land records?"

Ms. Fisher noted that her staff, including herself, has a combined 115 years of experience in her office. The Recorder's Office in the county is kind of like the Recorder in the state. It's a little known office that does a great deal. She wants to tell the committee what she does for the county. Her office is one of the greatest revenue generators in the county. For the Clerk's Office, elections are the main focus. Any zone or state meeting they go to, everything is election based. Elections cost money. The Recorder's Office brings in money. Listening to Ms. Ewert and Ms. Palmer, pennies are tight. They know that in Rock Island County. She has known it for years. It keeps getting worse. Ms. Fisher noted that you'd think that the elimination of her salary would help, and that might help make payroll for one month, but then she's gone. Ms. Fisher explained that she's constantly working on ways to improve her office's technology and customer service. She has been able to offer free programs that are not only free to the public, but do not cost the county one cent. She offers a property fraud alert in her office which is where you are automatically notified if someone files a deed or anything in your name. She also offers a program now to the veterans. It's a really sharp Veteran's ID Card that even the Veteran's Office is like, "Oh, that's better than what we hand out." Then they also get discounts

throughout the community. Her office is reaching out to the local community. She and her Chief Deputy keep in touch with local businesses to keep them local. It might seem like nickels and dimes, but it all adds up. It's good community outreach. They help veterans. They help citizens that come in.

Ms. Fisher noted that right now on the third floor, probably one of the biggest milestones in the 25 years she's been in office is going on. Two representatives from the Department of Revenue are up there. Her office is streamlining their revenue stamps and the ability to fill out revenue stamps electronically. It used to be up until couple of months ago that she'd have to call the Treasurer's Office and say she needs to get revenue stamps. That means when anyone buys property, the seller or buyer pays \$1.50 per \$1,000. They decide who pays. The county gets \$0.50 back. What she has to do is she actually has to issue a label from a stamp machine she has to pay for. To get money to put in that machine, she would have to get a check from the Treasurer's Office for usually \$120,000. When they're talking about not being able to meet payroll unless this or that comes in, this is going to be a big savings. Now she does not have to come up with that money. She will be able to electronically pay the state once a month. Instead of them giving the county its money once a month, the county gives it to them on the back end. That saves the county the inconvenience of trying to come up with that money. It saves her a day out of the office in Chicago or Springfield and the liability of having the meter and the check. The biggest thing it will do is it open up e-reporting. That's one thing she's really been focused on. Recordings in her office are 25-30% electronically done now. A big hold up was when you do a closing somewhere if it's a sale, she couldn't do the deeds online. She could do a mortgage or extension, but not when they worked with a closing packet when you're signing life away, and all those things get recorded. That's all done electronically now. You can fill that form out online. Rock Island County is like the 11th county in Illinois to do this. She is constantly looking at ways to better run her office more efficiently and bring more money in. This is going to be a timesaver for everyone involved.

Ms. Fisher added that another thing she is constantly trying to promote and does a good job at it is they offer outside access to records for a fee. She has two different programs. There's one program where you subscribe and pay monthly. That brings in about \$35,000/year. Another program her office has is more remote access. Someone in California or New York who works for a title company does a quick search. That brings in about \$15,000/year. She is constantly trying to grow those things.

Ms. Fisher explained that she understands that it might look good to get rid of her office. If her office was with the County Clerk's Office, there's not going to be an independent administrator that cares enough to spend tax dollar wisely. She's not only proud of the things they do in her office, but she's also proud of how she has been able to help this

County Board every single year. Maybe some are not aware, but she has taken all of the General Fund expenses to run her office out of the General Fund. She pays out of her Document Fund. She also pays three salaries out of that fund. She's not sure if the County Clerk would do that. What she has talked about with her peers is when they combine offices, the Recorder's Office falls by the wayside. When Rock Island County is in such dire need for every penny they get, she believes she's worth keeping

Mr. Simmer noted that the only thing that would change would be the elimination of Ms. Fisher's position, but they'd still need a person in her position to continue to promote these things for some kind of wages. Ms. Fisher agreed and explained that typically when offices combine, the Recorder is the one who is eliminated, but they still need a Chief Deputy on the Recorder side and a Chief Deputy on the Clerk side. The Chief Deputy on the Recorder side is not interested in hustling this money. Their job is to take care of staff and do bookkeeping. In reality, there would probably have to be on the Recorder's side another person hired to do some sort of management. The way she looks at it is maybe they come in at lower salary, but she works hard for the money she makes. She realizes she only has a job every four years and doesn't take that lightly. She does the very best job she can. She is accountable to the County Board, taxpayers, staff, and people who use the office. Mr. Simmer said theoretically, there'd be no drop in staff. They'd only save the gap between Ms. Fisher's salary and someone else's.

Mr. Johnston noted that another thing Ms. Fisher talked about is the experience in the office, such as meets and bounds training. They train people to do that. It has to be exact with no mistakes. That takes years. Ms. Fisher noted that they we have surveyors come in whose job it is to survey property. They come in and she has a couple girls in her office who help them and run it out on these maps. It's experience like that she's really proud of in her office. The system she has is used in a few offices throughout the state with their vendor. She's had people come in who do searches throughout the entire state, up and down, and say Rock Island County has some of the cleanest records. As corny as it might sound, if you don't have the integrity of your documents, you've got nothing. Home ownership is the cornerstone in Rock Island County for any taxpayer. That's the bottom line. That starts in her office.

Mr. Noyd noted that if they cut that, if there is any savings, like Mr. Simmer said, it's very minimal. He asked why mess with real estate. That's where the county's money's at. If they have to reduce hours in those departments and they go to that department to get information to sell those houses and new builds, they can't get it. Ms. Fisher added that that information has to be available and correct. Ms. Shelton said if you're trying to close on property, you want it done timely.

Ms. Fisher explained that her office is not in the newspaper every day. That's good for her. She likes that. When it comes down to promoting her office, she'll be the biggest cheerleader. Those are her arguments.

Mr. Brunk asked for confirmation that Ms. Fisher's office also funds GIS. Ms. Fisher said that's correct. They also fund the Rental Housing Support Program that was put in place years ago for construction of Section 8 housing. That's another thing she maintains, collects, and sends off to Springfield. The Recorder gets \$0.50 and she gives the county \$0.50. It's \$0.50 per document. She does a lot with what little she has. What little she does have left in her Document Fund, they all can attest that she is willing to help the county out with. There are projects in her office she'd love to get done, but they've got to do the day-to-day stuff. They just have to keep their heads above water and do it correctly.

Mr. Swanson noted that cost reductions are always a great idea, but they can't do them without a cost/benefit analysis. If any research is done, they have to look at what revenues they're costing themselves. He thinks that's what makes this probably not a desirable move for Rock Island County. It works for other counties, but every county is different. At this point he doesn't think it's desirable, but if there is any analysis it has to take into account a complete cost/benefit analysis. He thinks the savings they would realize would be vastly outweighed by the loss of services and revenue.

Mr. Noyd said he doesn't know the services in different counties, but Rock Island County's set-up is completely different. These two offices are in separate buildings. He asked how to manage something from one building to another and keep control. You can't expect someone to keep walking back and forth across the street. They have to be around. This is not the ideal situation for something like this. Mr. Brunk noted that eventually they would have to find a new home for the Recorder's Office. That being said, he has no idea. They don't have the facilities for it.

Mr. Noyd explained that savings is a good thing, but he doesn't know that this over the long run, to spend a lot of time on it, would be profitable or even feasible. There are more things to worry about than this. He doesn't see the value in spending a lot of time on this unless there are numbers out there that really offset it. Nothing has been shown to them to get started on it. He's a little leery of it.

Mr. Brunk called for a motion. There was no motion.

10) Consider Resolution Re: Intergovernmental Loan Agreement with the Chief Judge of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit, the Circuit Clerk, and Probation Services

Mr. Ross explained that this item is adding on to what Ms. Ewert said earlier. They went to the Chief Judge and Ms. Weikert and Mr. Vandersnick and explained the financial situation. They know already, but they have funds available temporarily in some special revenue funds that they control. They have agreed to loan a total of \$750,000 to the General Fund. Mr. Ross said he doesn't remember the numbers and how they added up, but they are in the agreement. It's a total of \$750,000 to the General Fund. They will need to repay that this year. It's no difference in what the County Board already approved with the TAW except that they are able to do it internally with 0% interest and save \$10,000-12,000. It's a no brainer.

Motion to approve: Rod Simmer

2nd: Brian Vyncke

Voice vote

Motion carried

11) Review and award bids received on Friday, May 5 for contract mowing

Mr. Brunk noted that these bids are from Public Works.

Mr. Ross explained that in Public Works, there are two special service areas: Zuma Canoe Creek and Hillsdale. Both are assessed additional property taxes at their request for that money to be used for very specific things in their area. Rock Island County does bids for them for mowing. The county is the agency that has to do and awards the bids, but they have a board or committee that makes recommendations on how to spend that money. These are mowing bids for mowing levees. The Hillsdale Special Service Area has a total of 0.75 miles of a levee that would be mowed. \$1,552.50 was the only viable bid that came in; one wasn't responsive. That was from Legacy Corp. Hillsdale has already asked Rock Island County to reject that bid. That's per mowing and they can't afford it, so Public Works recommends rejecting that.

The other one is for Zuma Canoe Creek. They have a total of total of about six miles at \$8,845.00 per mow. They usually do about three mows per year. They were not able to contact representatives there to confirm what they want the county to do. The recommendation from Public Works was to award it. Mr. Massa's recommendation was to award it pending their acceptance, though that's not how it was worded in the committee approval. Mr. Ross asked the Finance and Personnel Committee to award it pending Zuma Canoe Creek Board acceptance and rejecting the Hillsdale bid. He thinks Hillsdale will find a way to mow it themselves or hire a farmer or something to do it.

Motion to approve the conditional approval per the County Administrator's recommendation: Kai Swanson
2nd: Rod Simmer
Voice vote
Motion carried

12) Consider County Engineer Salary Resolution

Mr. Brunk noted that he believes this is something Mr. Massa passed on last year. Mr. Ross explained that they still have to approve this but it will be following the recommended salary for the County Engineer as determined by IDOT. This authorizes Rock Island County to charge Motor Fuel Tax for half of Mr. Massa's salary.

Mr. Johnston asked what his salary recommendation was. Mr. Ross said \$116,800 annually. He's an exempt employee, so that's all it would be. That's the state's recommendation for the salary for his position in this county. Mr. Johnston asked what he makes now since he didn't take one last time. Mr. Clyde said he can look. Mr. Ross said it's a very small increase.

Mr. Maranda explained that when that contract is done, they give him like 2.5% for six years or whatever that contract was. Last year he only took 1%. It's \$110,000 or \$115,000 or whatever it was. That's all set by the state and they pay half and half is out of MFT. Mr. Simmer asked Ms. Palmer for confirmation that the state pays half and half is out of MFT. Ms. Palmer said whatever the state doesn't pay is covered by MFT, not the General Fund. Mr. Ross said they eventually pay half.

Motion to approve: Rod Simmer
2nd: Dewayne Cremeens
Voice vote
Motion carried

Mr. Swanson expressed great appreciation to Mr. Massa for denying the raise last year.

Mr. Clyde returned with Mr. Massa's current salary. Mr. Ross said it's at \$115,400, so a \$1,400 raise.

13) Consider changes to Employee Benefits Policy – 500.1

Mr. Ross noted that this is the Employee Benefits Policy, number 500.1. The policy currently reads under section one that new employees of Rock Island County shall have a 90 day deferral period before being eligible for benefits. The Health Insurance

Committee is recommending that change to 60 days after the start of employment. As far as the financial effect to the county, he asked Mr. Clyde to get him three years' worth of data. He got him 33 months, which was appropriate for where things are at so far this year. Over 33 months, they've averaged 2.9 new employees per month who are taking health care coverage, which is an average of \$27,000/year. Mr. Ross noted that 33 months ago, and 30 months ago, and even 24 months ago, they were still coming out of ERI and filling positions. They have had many fewer people being hired. His guess is that this would not affect the county by that \$27,000/year. That to him would be the worst case scenario.

Mr. Johnston asked if \$1,400 per employee is accurate, approximately. Mr. Ross said \$1,400 is if they take family. The average is \$779.83. Mr. Johnston asked if they all of the sudden saw a need to go from 90 to 60 days. Mr. Ross said he'd let the Health Insurance Committee representatives address that.

Mr. Ross explained that the other section is under Section 3: Retirement Health Insurance. They have modified this once before. Mr. Ross clarified that they're doing what they've always done with this. He has since talked to Erin Frere, the Benefits Coordinator, and she confirmed that he left something out that the county had always done. His whole intent with health for retirees was not to change anything and to do the same thing. She gave him the language to put in here that mirrors exactly what had been in there before the County Board adopted the new policies. He read it over and it is exactly what they do now. He asked that the change get approved now. There's no change in what they're doing, they're just codifying it.

Mr. Brunk asked the gentlemen from the Health Insurance Committee to explain what brought the committee to make this recommendation. Obviously with the county's finances, if they're going to look at taking on even a slight amount of additional expense, they'd like a good understanding of why.

Mr. Swanson introduced the Co-Chair of the Health Insurance Committee, Brian Schumaker. He's a colleague from Probation Services. Mr. Swanson wanted to publicly thank him for his leadership.

Mr. Swanson explained that this came about from a proviso in the Affordable Care Act that has not been addressed in any subsequent healthcare reform that says if you go 90 days without coverage, you're going to be financially penalized. Even with the measures currently under discussion, it actually gets worse under the bill that passed the House. If you go to that uncovered state, getting back on you can be penalized by insurance companies and actually be written off for pre-existing conditions. Rock Island County has essentially gotten a free month out of new employees. The standard among employers

in this market is 60 days so you're not penalized. By going to three months, they are putting new employees at risk. They had one case in the Sheriff's Department and a couple of other cases that have been brought to the committee where candidates for positions couldn't do it because they'd have to pay too much to go to day 61 without coverage and then get back on or go through COBRA to buy coverage for that extra month. Mr. Swanson explained that Rock Island County had been getting a pretty sweet deal. He wanted to stress about the \$1,400 figure that Mr. Johnston brought up that relatively few new employees come on at the family rate. Rock Island County hires young people because they can't afford to bring in mid-career and later folks. When they do hire, which is not as often as it was two years ago, they tend to bring people on at entry level positions who don't have a family or need family care.

Mr. Schumaker added that the hope of the Health Insurance Committee was to provide a better situation for new employees and be more competitive in hiring and avoid that cost for new employees as far as the penalty and that COBRA insurance. You can go 60 days with no penalty at all, but if you go 90 days you get penalized for the whole 90 days. That's what they're trying to avoid for new employees. Mr. Swanson noted that it makes it harder to be an employer of choice.

Mr. Noyd asked what the penalty is. Mr. Swanson explained that under the current ACA, it's a tax liability. He doesn't understand the specifics. Under the measure that passed the House of Representatives, it would be pretty dire. If you go without coverage for any length of time, those protections on preexisting conditions evaporate and they can charge whatever they want.

Mr. Simmer noted that, being in the profession, he doesn't know many who do 90 days. The standard is pretty much 60 days that he deals with when new patients come on. Mr. Ross agreed that he has always done 60 in the past. Mr. Simmer said he didn't know Rock Island County did 90. That is definitely out there. Making it retroactive shows how ridiculous the feds are. That's asinine, but it is what it is. He'd like to see it go down.

Mr. Maranda explained that the fact of it is, he thinks some of it is when you look at contracts they have a 90 day probation period. He thinks it was just tied into that if you look at some of the CBAs they've got. Mr. Swanson said they'd have to adjust that, but the lead has to come from the county, which is why the committee has unanimously requested that this committee forward to the full County Board this recommendation for modification.

Mr. Ross noted that with the CBAs, they'd just have to enter into an MOU. They won't object to it. Mr. Clyde explained that actually, the CBAs reference that all health insurance guidelines go to the committee. It's already in there.

Motion to approve revisions to policy 500.1: Rod Simmer
2nd: Ginny Shelton
Voice vote
Motion carried

Mr. Swanson thanked Mr. Schumaker. He noted that the committee works hard and has come up with ways to save the county and its employees money. The health plan is funded by the county and its employees. This committee works very hard on some really boring stuff and they've made some tremendous changes. He'd like to salute Mr. Schumaker. Mr. Brunk said he appreciates Mr. Schumaker being here.

Ms. Shelton asked Mr. Swanson if there's been any progress about insurance for rehab care at Hope Creek. Mr. Swanson said yes. They are having their people look into that. One problem is it's not currently a provider of choice, so they are giving the county an option that would put Hope Creek on the table for Rock Island County employees and retirees for rehabilitation services. They're just negotiating the price and that's where they are now. It takes a little while. He thanked Ms. Shelton for keeping that in front of them. Ms. Shelton said it always bothered her that Rock Island County insurance didn't pay for the Rock Island County nursing home. Mr. Simmer said they're shooting themselves in the foot. Mr. Swanson said they're working on it and they have a very responsive partner.

Mr. Brunk thanked Mr. Schumaker for coming. He noted that he's heard a lot of great things about the Health Insurance Committee as far as the amount of thought and time the committee puts into researching options and taking care of business.

14) Consider delinquent tax resolutions

- a. Parcel # (16) 1257 1532103001; Taxpayer ID 160614300; Andalusia Township
- b. Parcel # (09) 2766-1 0734458002; Taxpayer ID 091621475; Rock Island Township
- c. Parcel # (07) 0205944; Taxpayer ID 070205944; South Moline Township
- d. Parcel # (14) 0604491; Taxpayer ID 140604491; Bowling Township
- e. Parcel # (14) 0610291; Taxpayer ID 140610291; Bowling Township

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson
2nd: Rod Simmer
Voice vote
Motion carried

15) Closed Session as per 5 ILCS 120/2(c) (21) – Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06

The committee did not enter into closed session.

16) Consider keeping prior closed session minutes closed

Mr. Brunk explained that he looked it over and the committee only has one. If committee the is comfortable with his recommendation, he suggests they remain closed.

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

2nd: Brian Vyncke

Voice vote

Motion carried

17) Committee member opportunity for brief comments (*no decisions will be made*)

Mr. Swanson noted that Ms. Shelton reminded him that if they have a chance at future meeting, he does like the computers, but it might be good to have a 5-10 minute refresher course on them. Mr. Brunk noted that he said they're trying to go low tech here because these aren't the most modern versions. Ms. Shelton said next time maybe they can agree to meet five minutes earlier.

Mr. Brunk noted that the options were laptops or the overhead. This is much better.

Ms. Ewert noted that a few months back, she stood on the Solid Waste Committee and they had actually talked about with their recyclable grants being able to purchase iPads for the County Board members to reduce the cost of paper printing. They turned it down. It's been awhile, so maybe it's something they can bring up again and see if they can use those funds. It does reduce the paper.

18) Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m. by Chair Richard Brunk

Future scheduled meetings on June 13, July 11,
August 8, and September 12