

LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
McHenry County Government Center – Administration Building
667 Ware Road
Woodstock IL 60098

MINUTES OF THURSDAY MARCH 10, 2011

Chairman Heisler called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. The following Committee members were present: James Heisler, Chairman; Ersel Schuster; Kathleen Bergan Schmidt; and Pete Merkel. John Jung, Jr., Nick Provenzano, and Marc Munaretto were absent. Also in attendance: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Adam Lehman, Assistant to the County Administrator; and the press.

James Heisler, Chairman	
John Jung, Jr.	Pete Merkel
Marc Munaretto	Nick Provenzano
Kathleen Bergan Schmidt	Ersel Schuster

MINUTES

Committee members reviewed the committee minutes from February 24, 2011. Ms. Schuster stated that the House bills listed are not necessarily supported by the County as these issues have not been discussed by the County Board. Mr. Austin stated that these items are issues that are supported by Metro Counties and McHenry County is a member of that group. It was suggested that the position be listed as those items supported or opposed by Metro Counties. Committee members agreed to this change. Ms. Schuster made a motion, seconded by Ms. Schmidt to recommend approval of the minutes as amended. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PRESENTATION

None

OLD BUSINESS

State Legislative Update: Committee members reviewed the current updates for the State Legislative Tracking report. Committee members requested that the “position” shown on the report as “Metro Counties” position. Mr. Austin reported that Chairman Koehler attended the McCog (McHenry County Council of Governments) meeting in Springfield yesterday. The purpose is to protect local government funding, retain control on County issues, transportation, and to fight unfunded mandates. McCog has a list of the transportation projects and those issues that are supported by the County. One of the big issues being discussed is the RTA Board and how this board will look in the future. There has been a lot of discussion with other Collar County Board Chairs on this issue. There has been concern voiced regarding the control of the appointments to this board whether it is the General Assembly or County Boards. Metro Counties met with the new RTA Director at the end of January and they felt they could come to a consensus on this issue.

The Metro Counties meeting on March 30th in Springfield will be very important. They are meeting as a group to identify bills they want to fight that may not be favorable to Counties. Mr. Austin stated that Chairman Koehler and Mr. Heisler will be attending this event. After the Metro Counties meeting, they will meet with the County’s legislators/delegates to discuss the concerns of the County. They will bring back a lot of information to the Committee at its April meeting.

Committee members reviewed the State Legislative tracking list as updated by Mr. Lehmann. Mr. Lehmann stated that he would change the position to “Metro Counties” position on the State Legislation Tracking form. The “Bill Status” will be updated as changes are received. This form will grow as additional information is received.

- House Bill 9, this bill is supported by Metro Counties, nothing has changed on this bill.
- House Bill 146, nothing has changed on this bill.
- House Bill 156, this bill is supported by Metro Counties, this bill was moved out of the House on March 2nd and was assigned to the Assignments Committee.
- House Bill 213, this bill is supported by Metro Counties, nothing has changed on this bill
- House Bill 216, this bill is supported by Metro Counties, nothing has changed on this bill

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- House Bill 222, Metro Counties Legislative Committee has opposed this bill, on March 2nd, this bill was placed on Calendar Order of 3rd Reading – Short debate. This bill will be subject to appropriation, which is powerful language. Not every County has the staff to do this so the language was added as a way to opt out.
- House Bill 242 is opposed by the Metro Counties. This bill has passed and moved onto the Senate. This bill passed its Third Reading on March 3rd.
- Senate Bill 42, is opposed by the Metro Counties. This bill was on the Senate Floor on March 3rd. After amendment No. 1, Assignments refers to Local Government. This issue will receive a lot of attention on the 30th.
- House Bill 1869 was added to the list. Metro Counties Legislative Committee supports this bill. This has been assigned to the Revenue and Finance Committee. This bill would amend the Notice by Publication Act that provides that a unit of government that is required to publish a public notice in a newspaper, may satisfy this requirement by publishing the notice on its local website. If published on the website a notification of the website must be published stated that the website notice is available.
- Senate Bill 134 is supported by the Metro Counties. This bill has been assigned to the Revenue Subcommittee on Special Issues.
- Senate Bill 1926, Ms. Schmidt requested this Bill added to the list. This bill creates the Local Government Consolidation Commission Act which would allow the commission to create a recommended list of local governments to be abolished or consolidated. This would include Road Districts, Townships as well as other local governments. Mr. Austin noted there are plenty of bodies that could be consolidated but who would be making this decision? This Bill is being reviewed by the Metro County Legislative Committee. This Bill was originally introduced in February of 2010. On March 8th it was assigned to the Local Government Consolidation Commission.
- House Bill 2872, Ms. Schuster requested this Bill added to the list. This Bill creates the Illinois Rural Water Authority Act. This provides that the Board of the Illinois Rural Water Authority shall create a Board, appointed by the Governor. Sets the terms of the board as well as the powers and duties of said Board. They may issue revenue bonds to develop, construct, acquire or improve facilities for development, transportation, and distribution of water and sewage. The Authority would have the power of eminent domain and the power to acquire property.
- House Bill 1277 has been added to the list as it is moving fast through the committees. Metro Counties has not taken a stance on this Bill. This would amend the Open Meetings Act to authorize the closure of meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involve internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America.
- House Bill 3372 has been added to the list. This Bill amends the Counties Code to allow a county board in a metropolitan county located in the areas served by the former Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) to adopt a Stormwater Management Plan and adopt a schedule of fee for these activities.

Mr. Austin stated that an additional Bill that needs to be watched is the Bill to allow Lake and McHenry Counties to establish a Public Safety Fee on top of the fees currently being charged by the Fox Waterway Agency. This Bill is the product of frustration with the Fox Waterway Agency for enforcement of their ordinances. There is common knowledge that McHenry and Lake County's have to provide safety on the waterways located in their counties. The Fox Waterway Agency has stopped all funding for enforcement of their ordinances. The County was to receive \$36,000 from the agency to provide these services. Now the Marine Patrol will be \$36,000 in the hole because of the elimination of this payment. The County may have to reduce its patrol of the waterways, especially in May and October. This Bill would be an extra fee on top of the sticker fee being charged by the Fox Waterway Agency. In defense of the Fox Waterway Agency, their revenues came from fees and the State and the State has eliminated much of their funding. The Agency has laid off staff and the remaining personnel have taken pay cuts to address this issue. If enforcement is an issue, a sticker may be the answer to this issue. There are not a lot of Counties in the State that have this issue. The Chain of Lakes provides recreation for many individuals but the residents of McHenry and Lake Counties have to pick up the costs for these patrols. Committee members stated that use of the waterways will probably decrease because of the cost of gas. When the sticker fees were increased in the past there were a lot of complaints. The question remains on how to cover the expenses for these needed patrols.

Federal Legislative Update: Mr. Austin informed committee members that on March 4th the current continuing Resolution that is currently allows the Federal Government to operate was set to expire. This was extended to March 18th. When speaking to our Federal lobbyist group they stated they did not think the government will shut down on the 18th because of the lack

of an approved budget. There will probably be an extension for two to three weeks. They are currently debating the FY2011 budget, though this fiscal year is almost done. There has not been any focus on the FY2012 budget.

Recently representatives from McHenry County went to Washington DC to meet with the County lobbyist group and the County's legislative delegates. They met with Representative Walsh, and he appreciated meeting with the local representatives. They also met with Senator Durbin and Senator Kirk. They have stated that they will need to find

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ways to get funding to the local areas, especially highway funds. Each of the representatives acknowledged that it is be a tough year to get funding. The Energy and Water Committee has called out for projects so this is a good time to get McHenry County on the radar. Local regional governments will be charged with making decisions on funding allocations. The County will meet with the Midwest groups to talk about the County projects, especially transportation funding disbursements.

Discussion on Redistricting: There have been questions whether a COW (Committee of the Whole) should be held to discuss "redistricting". The Committee decided to hold a COW prior to the April evening meeting. The Board needs to determine how many County Board districts are desired, as well as question the precinct and township lines. Once priorities have been established, models can be brought to this committee for consideration. The Legislative Committee may want to decide, at its April meeting, what questions to ask the board and for them prioritize their issues. The County Board has until July 1st to make a decision on redistricting. Committee members stated that the County Clerk needs to be involved in this process as she is experienced in the redistricting process.

The next Legislative Committee is scheduled for April 14th, the March 24th meeting has been cancelled. Information will be provided on the redistricting process. Committee members requested maps to show how the current district lines are drawn. This will show how far the districts are off.

At the meeting on the 14th, they will receive updates on Metro Counties, maps will be provided for the redistricting process, and information from Washington DC will be provided. Committee members requested a timeline for the redistricting process and a list of what information would be needed by what date. They requested a representative from the State's Attorney's Civil Division and County Clerk's Office to attend the meeting to help with this issue.

NEW BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

REPORTS TO COMMITTEE:

Mr. Lehmann informed committee members that the County has received an "A+" rating from the Sunshine Review for the McHenry County website. This award is presented by the Editors of the Sunshine Review to honor the most transparent government websites in America. This year only 100 of the more than 6,000 government websites earned a "Sunny Award". The Sunshine Review is a 501c3 non-profit that collaborates with individuals and organizations across America to promote state and local transparency.

Committee members questioned if information is being provided to the local municipalities, villages and townships on what is going on at the County. They stated that there is a need for open communication with the local governments. The Committee was informed that all municipalities are being requested to put links to the County's E-News in their Villages newsletters.

ADJOURNMENT:

Noting no further business, Ms. Schuster made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

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RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD/COMMITTEE ACTION:

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