

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 20, 2023

The Finance Committee of the St. Clair County Board met on November 20, 2023 in the County Board Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Marty Crawford at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marty Crawford, Chairman
Lonnie Mosley, Asst. Chairman
John Coers
Steve Gomric
Sue Gruberman
Jana Moll
C. Richard Vernier

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mark Kern, Chairman, County Board
Debra Moore, Director of Administration
Phil Henning, County Board
Monica McMurphy, County Board Office
Jackie Krummrich, Auditor's Office
Sami Gruberman, County Board Office

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call was taken.

There were no public comments or questions asked at this Meeting.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mosley and seconded by Mrs. Moll, it was unanimously agreed to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 30, 2023.

Discussion of the Proposed 2024 Draft Budget:

Mrs. Krummrich said there had been three changes to the budget, but the bottom-line number has not changed on the budget. Money was moved within line items on the budget.

1. General Fund 1035 EMA- decreased the office supplies line by \$500 for an amount of \$4,500, increased the training line by \$1,000 for an amount of \$5,000, and decreased the repair & maint-communicate equip by \$500 for an amount of \$17,500.
2. General Fund 1016/1021 IT/Zoning – decreased the maintenance contract-software line by \$20,000 for an amount of \$1,032,626 which was moved to increase the part-time line in Zoning for an amount of \$60,000.
3. Fairgrounds- decreased the part-time line by \$15,000 and added to full-time line for an amount of \$121,800. A position of Manager-Facility was added.

Mr. Coers asked if we were going to break even this year with the Fairgrounds. Chairman Kern stated yes, but next year we are going to only have the Flea Market run for some months so that we can do some upgrades to the building. Chairman Kern said that we are putting in garage doors, bathrooms and showers, but in the coming years we think it will keep itself going. Chairman Kern stated we are going to open up the inside of the building which will allow for bigger events to be held there.

Chairman Kern said that we are exploring solar panels to see if it can cut down on some expenses. Mr. Vernier asked if this was going to be possible through a grant. Chairman Kern said yes. Mr. Gomric asked if it was going to be geothermal. Chairman Kern said he didn't think so.

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Mr. Henning asked if there were going to be any upgrades to the parking lot and signage. Chairman Kern said the goal is to restore and maintain the signage and to potentially put-up sign that can be seen from Route 15. Chairman Kern said we would like to upgrade the parking lot but need to get other things done first. Mr. Vernier said the Highway Department put a lot into the parking lot when we used it during COVID, so it is much better than it was before.

Mr. Coers asked about the East St. Louis Election Board and funding the population of voters just like the rest of the county. Chairman Kern said we are legally required to fund them because of legislation. Chairman Kern said if we took over, we would have to get all new machines because we can't have two different systems. Chairman said the citizens voted for this and the only way for us to take over would be for them to vote to abolish the election board.

Mr. Henning said the City of Rockford and the City of Bloomington are like the East St. Louis Election Board where they are separate from their respective counties. Mr. Henning said he looked at multiple counties budgets and compared to them we run a lean and tight ship on our budget. Mr. Henning said our budget is also very detailed compared to other counties and he appreciates the detail. Chairman Kern said when we prepare our budget, we try for our revenues to meet our expenses. Chairman Kern said we will have to take a hard look at the budget in a few years.

Ms. Gruberman stated they have tried to increase the sales tax by a quarter percent for the jail to be able to use the money for upgrades. Chairman Kern said they have tried to run the referendum three times, but the voters have shut it down. Mr. Gomric asked if we would soon be forced to increase because of lawsuits. Chairman Kern said I hope it does not come to that. Mr. Crawford asked if we owned the land across from the jail. Chairman Kern said I believe we own most of the land except for potentially one property.

Mr. Coers asked if the Veterans legislation to pay back to the counties would hold up. Chairman Kern said he is not sure, but it puts pressure on the local entities to maintain it. Chairman Kern said he is afraid the state is going to forget about it. Chairman Kern said he thinks it would be better if it was federally fund. Several members agreed and asked if there would ever be limitations to it. Chairman Kern said he would hope they would look into it to help the suffering counties in the state out.

Upon a motion by Mr. Gomric and seconded by Mr. Mosley, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Moore, Director of Administration