**Alexander County Board of Commissioners Minutes**

**2000 Washington Avenue**

**Cairo, IL. 62914**

Chairman: Joe Griggs Vice Chairman: Bruce Sims

Commissioner: L. “Steve” Essex

**Minutes of Regular Meeting**

**December 5th, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Griggs @ 10:00 a.m.

**Roll Call of Board Members:**

* Joe E. Griggs: Present
* Bruce Sims: Present
* L. Steve Essex: Absent

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval of the November 20th, 2023 Regular Board meeting minutes. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval of the November 29th, 2023 Special Board meeting minutes. Motion passed by vote.

Mayor of Thebes, Mary Gilomen, met with the board to discuss Thebes giving 2 miles of Fayville road to the County.  Mr. Griggs asked Highway Engineer, Nathan Bullard, if he had a chance to go out there and look at this stretch of road.  Mr. Bullard stated that for the county to take a stretch of road, the Highway Department will request that the municipality fixes, and upgrades the road to meet standards for them to take it over.  Mr. Bullard explained that the amount of money and time that would be put in for the County to take it back doesn’t benefit the County financially at all.

The board agreed with Mr. Bullard, and informed Ms. Gilomen that they would not be taking ownership of this stretch of road at this time.  Ms. Gilomen understood, and asked what they could do.  Mr. Bullard stated that they need to just clean it up, and mostly focus on cutting back all the trees and limbs.  Mr. Bullard stated that is something the Highway Department can do if Thebes wants to hire them out to do so.

Alex Farkes with 22C wanted to introduce himself to the board, and inform them of what he does, and talk about a Roadway Use Agreement between his company and the Highway Department.  Mr. Farkes explained that his company works on installing solar farms.  Mr. Farkes explained that he only found one good property to install a solar farm in, and it is on Schlamer road.  Mr. Farkes explained that he has talked to the owner of the property he wants to install the solar farm on, and he already has the approval from the state, and now he is coming to the County to get approval, and a Roadway Use Agreement during the 12-week construction process, which Mr. Farkes is in touch with Mr. Bullard to work on.

The board had no problem with Mr. Farkes project he wants to do.  The board said once the Roadway Use Agreement is suitable for both parties, they will sign it.

County Clerk Price informed the board that Heather Rose with Southern Five would not be able to attend the meeting today, but Ms. Rose did send documents for him to go over with them.  Mr. Price stated that the documents were for pay estimate #6 for $23,149.55, and for change order #4 for $3,545.36, and Mr. Price explained that Mr. Bullard has already seen these documents and has approved them as well.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval of pay estimate #6 for $23,149.55, and change order #4 for $3,5454.36.  Motion passed by vote.

Beussink, Hey, Roe & Stroder submitted their audit engagement letters for the 2023 audit.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval of the 2023 Audit Engagement Letters from Beussink, Hey, Roe, & Stroder. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Griggs stated that the part-time employee work hours policy needs to be tabled until the next meeting, December 19, 2023.

The board wanted to ask Treasurer Watkins about a couple of vouchers.  One voucher was for 2 hours of overtime for her full-time employee Vanessa Richard, she just forgot to state it was for overtime.  The other voucher was written for $7,000 for her to do the County’s budget.  The board stated that it should be only $5,000.

There was a discussion that the $7,000 might be Mrs. Watkins pay for doing the budget for the 2024-2025 budget next year, if they don’t find someone else to do the budget.  Mrs. Watkins understood, and the voucher was fixed by Mrs. Watkins to $5,000.

Mrs. Watkins asked the board if they would consider letting her move her one part-time employee up to full-time.  The board stated that they could not promise anything but if she could get some documentation drawn up, they would review it.

Mr. Price stated that it's ridiculous that the Assessor who is never here, has two full-time employees right now, and at the end of the year one of them is retiring and will have to be paid until at least March because the Assessor is never here for that individual to be able to use vacation days.  Yet, the Assessor is looking to have a person replace that full-time position in January and basically have three full-timers on pay for a few months.  Mr. Price also stated that the Treasurer is hardly here too, and now the Treasurer is possibly getting two full-timers, and his office and the State’s Attorney's office is functioning with only one full-timer, and himself and the State's Attorney are here every day.

Mr. Sims asked Mr. Price to explain a voucher that is for the Assessor’s office.  Mr. Price explained that Ms. Matlock had submitted a reimbursement for her home internet.  The board completely disagreed with this voucher, and stated it would not be signed.

Judge Farris came to the board to discuss an office issue with the new Public Defender.  Judge Farris explained that there is no open office available, and that Circuit Clerk Carey Simmons, and County Clerk Zachary Price are working on cleaning up the old Assessor office outside, and that Mr. Price has also done a good job of cleaning up his vault.  Judge Farris asked the board if temporarily they move the board meeting into Mr. Price’s vault, let the Public Defender use the board room as his office, and then once the old Assessor office is cleaned out the Board and the Public Defender can decide who wants to take that office.  The Board had no issues with this.

Sheriff Brown came to talk to the Board about getting new vehicles.  Sheriff Brown stated that he had three cars that are getting repaired and one just got back up and running.  Mr. Griggs informed Sheriff Brown that he is in talks with Jackie Gutterman from Guetterman Motors about leasing new vehicles.  The Sheriff stated he would love to have new vehicles but do not want to be put in a situation where they could be repossessed.  The board agreed with Sheriff Brown’s statement.  The Board told Sheriff Brown to get the cars repaired, and at the first of the year they will see if they can get all new vehicles on a lease, or if they will just have to buy used.  Sheriff Brown said that was good for him.

Mr. Price informed the Board that the company, James Arthur Design, who did our website, and County seal, makes ID badges.  Mr. Price explained that many times when traveling the County has to pay more for hotels because we do not have a County ID.  Mr. Price showed them an example of a county badge that James Arthur Design can do.  The board agreed that we need county badges and informed Mr. Price to be in talks with James Arthur Design to get it done.

**Claims:**

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to pay claims between November 20th – December 5th, 2023, except for the Assessors reimbursement for her home internet bill. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to pay EMA claims. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to pay Ambulance Department claims. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to pay Highway Department claims. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to pay Alexander County Payroll. Motion passed by vote.

**Adjournment:**

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Griggs second the approval to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by vote. Meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Zachary C. Price, County Clerk