**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**

**June 20th, 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: Present

Mr. Essex made motion, and Mr. Sims second the approval of the June 6th, 2023 Regular Board meeting minutes. Motion passed by vote.

The board informed Gayla Jones, and Scott Spurlock from Pulaski County that they talked to the Sheriff, and the Sheriff asked to table it until the July 3, 2023 meeting, so he and the State’s Attorney could look it over.

Ms. Jones, and Mr. Spurlock understood.

Jennifer Parks from Southern Five gave an update on head start for the county. Ms. Parks informed the board that the building they are in is no longer worth maintain, and they have to relocate. Ms. Parks asked the board for help finding a new place if they hear of anything that might come up.

Sarah Goodar from Southern Five informed the board that she is now the financial advisor, and what she needs to turn in for the county for tax distribution. County Clerk Price informed Ms. Goodar that she just has to submit the levy to the County Board, who then gives it to Treasurer Watkins to add it to the county budget, for the board’s approval.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Essex second the approval of Resolution: 06202023-1 – Public Comment. Motion passed by vote.

Mr. Essex made motion, and Mr. Sims second the approval of Right-of-Way Easement on county property (09-01-477-022) to install fiber optic lines, from Linderlake Corporation on behalf of WK&T.

Circuit Clerk Simmons wanted an update on the salary request she asked for. The board said they had looked at what she emailed them, and that if they are going to give a raise it will be the same as the other elected officials. The board said this would be tabled until the July 3rd, 2023 meeting.

Treasurer Watkins requested an Executive Session about an employee.

Mr. Essex made motion, and Mr. Sims second the approval to leave Regular Session. Motion passed by vote.

Left Regular Session at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Sims made motion, and Mr. Essex second the approval to go back into Regular Session. Motion passed by vote.

Rejoined Regular Session at 11:22 a.m.

There was a long discussion about the financial struggles of the Ambulance Department. The department just is not receiving money from the state, and insurance companies are not paying either. EMS Director explained she is having trouble paying bills, and keeping employee, and afraid they will have to shut down. Mrs. Watkins informed that even if she does borrow money that come time for first distribution, she would need to borrow money again because she wouldn’t get much of her distribution back.

The board agreed they will have to figure out a way to help Ambulance Department to avoid having to shut down.

Mrs. Watkins, and Mrs. Bigham wanted to let the board know to anticipate for $40,000 at the next board meeting to cover Ambulance bills.

State’s Attorney Zachary Gowin asked for a budget increase to allow for his office to have a second full-timer. He explained that since 2015 his Deputy, and himself have been doing the work of another full-timer their self. Mr. Gowin explained that he needs the extra person in his office so he can do his duties as State’s Attorney for Court, and for the county itself. Mr. Gowin, said he would come back with more information on how much to increase.

The board agreed with allowing Mr. Gowin to start looking for another person, and to come back with more information so they can approve his request to raise his budget. Tabled until the July 3rd, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Griggs wanted to talk to the county officials about their budget and bills being paid. Mr. Griggs stated that even though their budget allows for so much, it does not mean that there is enough to pay. Mr. Griggs asked that they all be more mindful of this, and that the board are going to look more closely at the budget and the vouchers that are being approved.

Mr. Griggs signed the documents to allow the location of the cannabis dispensary.

Mr. Essex made motion, and Mr. Sims second the approval to pay claims between June 6th – June 20th, 2023. Motion passed by vote.

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

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

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

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

Mr. Essex made motion, and Mr. Sims second the approval to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by vote. Meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Zachary C. Price, County Clerk