

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 7, 2006**

The Executive Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Tuesday, February 7, 2006 at 7:00p.m. at the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Ruth Anne Tobias called the meeting to order. Members present were Dennis Sands, Jeff Whelan, Julia Fauci, Pat LaVigne, Sue Leifheit, Julia Fullerton and Robert Rosemier. Mr. Steimel was absent. Chairman Tobias asked the following committee Vice-Chairmen to represent their committees and to take the seat of their committee Chairpersons. Vice Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee, Pat Vary, sat in for Roger Steimel. Others present were Ray Bockman, Gary Hanson, Greg Millburg, Rich Osborne, Jerry Augsburger, Jeff Metzger, Sr., Eileen Dubin, Vince Faivre and Anita Turner.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Rosemier, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 2006.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Ms. Fullerton, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

APPOINTMENTS

**DeKalb County Rehab and
Nursing Center Operating Board:**

Ms. Veronica Casella,
appointment for a term of 1 year,
until January 31, 2007.

DeKalb County Board of Health:

Mr. Steve Slack, appointment for
a term of 1 year, until February
1, 2007.

**DeKalb County Mental Health
Board 708:**

Ms. Eileen Dubin, appointment
for a term of 4years, until
February 1, 2010

Appointments expiring for March 2006 are:

River Valley Workforce Investment Board – 3 positions (still looking for)
DeKalb Sanitary District – 1 position
Maple Park and Countryside Fire Protection District: 1 position

Waterman Fire Protection District: 1 position
Malta Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
DeKalb Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
Cortland Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
Sycamore Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
Kirkland Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
Shabbona Community Fire Protection District – 1 position
Genoa-Kingston Fire Protection District – 1 position
Hinckley Community Fire Protection District – 1 position

Moved by Ms. Fullerton, seconded by Ms. Fauci, and it was carried unanimously to accept the recommended appointments and to forward them to the full board for approval.

COMMUTER RAIL DISCUSSION – RICH OSBORNE

Mr. Rich Osborne, DeKalb County Board Member, approached the committee about the desire to have a committee study the issue of having a commuter rail system brought to DeKalb County and what the steps are that he needs to take. He has received positive feedback so far from the people that he has approached.

Mr. Osborne said, when you look at the towns of Johnsbury and Manhattan, Illinois, there certainly isn't any inherent logic on the part of the RTA people. He knows that there is quite a lot of "doing" that would have to be involved over such a long-term project. There would be some sort of feasibility study that would require federal funding. He thinks about needs assessment like, what roads are good to expand, and what different transit needs would be. He thinks of the MPO policy committee as the steering committee. He doesn't think of them as promoters for a particular cause. At the same time they are very logical people to be receiving federal funds for various studies and so on. Any and all input at this point is welcome, said Mr. Osborne.

Ms. Fauci said that she spoke to someone who works for Union Pacific and they told her that we would need to pay for a third track to get a commuter rail service out here. She also said that she attended that last DSATS meeting where it was said that Cortland is actively looking for Metra to come out there as a commuter rail service. There is a method where Metra will spot zone and come out of their boundaries. They will go into a community that has enough people within a walking distance of the train station. Ms. Fauci also said that NIU has to be included in the picture if they do that spot zoning. If growth is going to be coming out here a commuter rail service would be good because of the gas prices going up and it would be more economical, she said.

Mr. Rosemier said that he agrees with Ms. Fauci's point that it would be more economical to have commuter rail lines. However, he does ask, do we want it? In the *Chicago Tribune* article that he recently read it said that there are some communities that don't want it because once you do have it, you are just asking for the floodgates to open. If you have a basic underlying

philosophy, that I think that we have, which is to help preserve farmland, than we could “kiss that goodbye.”

Mr. Osborne said but how true is that assumption? In a way, he feels that it does make the community more attractive to live in.

Ms. Vary said that she talked to the Head of Passenger Services at Chicago Northwestern 35 years ago and wondered why it wasn't coming out to DeKalb? He told her at the time that it was the unions fault because there was a certain timeframe that they couldn't go farther than a certain number of miles, but he also said that commuter trains lose money. He said that when growth comes it doesn't matter whether there is a train in a town or not. DeKalb County is proof of that right now, because without the train we are experiencing massive growth. We also have 25,000 students at NIU and if a commuter train is here, they may stay in the City of DeKalb longer rather than going home early on Fridays.

Mr. Sands said he agrees with everything that Ms. Vary has said but that he feels the issue should go before the Highway Committee and the Regional Planning Commission.

Chairman Tobias said that she thinks the issue here is whether or not it belongs at an ad hoc committee.

The committee discussed how a commuter train service revitalized towns because the population was walking, shopping and eating in the downtowns.

After further discussion it was agreed that the issue on commuter rail service for DeKalb County would be sent to the County Highway Committee for further discussion.

APPROVAL OF THE COUNTY BOARD AGENDA

Mr. Ray Bockman, DeKalb County Administrator, reviewed the county board agenda for the board meeting to be held on February 15, 2006.

Moved by Ms. Leifheit, seconded by Mr. Rosemier, and it was carried unanimously to forward the county board agenda to the full board for approval.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Whelan, Chairman of the Finance Committee, said that Mr. Sands' comments on the FY2007 budget were very informative and they have two resolutions coming before the full board for approval.

Ms. Fauci, Chair of the Forest Preserve Committee, said that they would be approving a sample informational brochure on the referendum at their next meeting. They will be forwarding a film policy that is similar to the courthouse film policy. She and Mr. Hannan attended a meeting together in Chicago a couple of weeks ago and said it was tremendous. Her report will be in the packet. At the meeting she learned that Will County Forest Preserve had a \$95 million referendum pass to buy forest preserve land in the amount of 3000

acres. Now they will only be able to buy about 1,000 acres because of major battles they are having with land developers. In comparison, they were awestruck that if our referendum passes in a 10-year period we would have \$5 million for about 1,000 acres.

Mr. Rosemier, Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee, said that his committee will meet the morning of February 9, 2006, in a joint meeting with the Community Services Administrative Board at the Health facilities, Multi-Purpose Room at 9:30a.m. In March 2006, their committee will hear from Mr. Herb Holderman, Superintendent of the Veteran's Commission.

Ms. Fullerton, Chair of the Economic Development Committee said that their February committee meeting has been cancelled and that in March 2006, they will be visited by Mr. Chuck Siebrasse and a speaker from NIU that Mr. Metzger, Sr., is bringing.

Ms. Leifheit, Chair of the Law & Justice Committee, said that her committee will be meeting on the last Monday in February for this month. She also informed the committee that the Jail Population Review Committee has been recalled and they will meet over the next couple of months on the overcrowding issue at the Jail.

Ms. Vary, Vice-Chair of the Planning and Zoning Committee, explained to the committee the various items that are coming before them from her committee. She explained that the last item on the zoning text amendment regarding illegal non-conforming lots is saying that the recommended language change is the "teeth" of the zoning ordinance. She explained that if an existing home is already on a non-conforming lot, with the new language, they can't expand on it. They can make improvements to the property though.

Ms. LaVigne, Chair of the County Highway Committee, said that their items are self-explanatory and have been talked about already.

Chairman Ruth Anne Tobias said that she had a meeting with a gentleman from GO21, which is the national advocacy group who would like to have freight rail increased, and he told her that they are looking for support.

She also will be speaking at the February 15th DuKane Valley Council on the State of County. This is a group that includes DuPage, Kane, Kendall and DeKalb County and they are morphing into a new organization called MetroWest. They really want to include DeKalb County in these meetings so she feels that we should look into the membership now and see if we want to join.

The NACo meeting will be in Chicago this summer and she would like to encourage as many people as possible to attend this.

Chairman Tobias asked Ms. Supple, DeKalb County Board Coordinator, to update the committee on how the Drug Prescription Card Program is going. Ms. Supple said that the County received 20,000 cards and so far she has sent

out 17,000 cards. The cards are at all the participating pharmacies in the County. She also sent them to the Tri-County Clinic at Kishwaukee College so that not only the Hispanic population can be served, but also the indigent and the college students that they see there. The DeKalb Clinic, Medical Arts Clinic, Sycamore and DeKalb Libraries all have them too. She is currently working on trying to get cards to the veterinarians in the county for pet prescription coverage. A recent article appeared in the Northern Star regarding the drug cards so that we could reach as many NIU students as possible, she further stated.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Vary, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Ruth Anne Tobias

Mary C. Supple, Secretary