

Cook County Board of Commissioners Meeting
December 19, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 10am by Board President Todd Stroger.

Judge Julia Nowicki, the Compliance Administrator for the county for the Shakman Decree was introduced. She stated that

- she was appointed by Judge Anderson, a federal judge, and is being paid by the county and
- her charge is to verify that the county is not hiring or promoting persons based on political considerations.
- She will be opening an office – not in the county building – and will submit a proposed budget for her office at the request of the commissioners.
- Comm. Butler stated that Judge Nowicki's oversight covers only the offices under the office of the President – that was how the decree was approved by the board.

The meeting was recessed for the Finance Committee meeting which was called to order by Chairperson Daley at 10:17am. Comm. Daley introduced the new Board Secretary, Matthew De Leon.

All Court Orders for payments of attorney's fees for indigent defendants were approved as presented without discussion. All Bills and Claims were approved as presented without discussion.

Bills and Claims for Health Services – Item 283601 –

- concerning partial payment on a contract with The Foster Group for information services at Stroger Hospital. Comm. Peraica asked Dr. Linda Murray of the Bureau of Health Services when the contract with The Foster Group expires. It expires on December 31.
- A new contract will begin on January 1, 2007 and Dr. Murray said the transition to the new contractor is moving along okay. This item and all remaining items were approved without further discussion.
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All items under Workers Compensation Claims, Subrogation Recovery, and Self-Insurance Claims were approved without discussion.

Proposed Settlements – Item 283566 – In the amount of \$6,760,000.00 for settlement of suit regarding Chandler v. Hektoen Inst for Medical Research Et Al.

- Comm. Peraica stated that the Board had met in the Litigation Committee about this item but he asked States Attorney Driscoll if this settlement would bar the county from pursuing federal grants in the future. Mr. Driscoll said no it would not.

- This settlement involved a 1989 grant concerned with pregnant addicted women in which documentation was not done appropriately. Charges were filed in 1997 – civil charges only no criminal charges. The case went to the Supreme Court. Mr. Driscoll said this payment will resolve all claims and Hektoen Institute contributed \$500,000 to the settlement.
- Comm. Quigley asked what controls are now in place to prevent such problems from occurring again.

Remaining agenda items, Bids Reports and Highway Bills were approved as presented/amended. The Finance Committee was adjourned at 10:30am.

The Zoning and Building Committee was called to order at 10:32 by Chairperson Silvestri. There were 4 recommended items on the agenda from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

- Two were withdrawn,
- one was approved without discussion.
- Item #280224 concerned application for a special use permit for destruction of a gas station and construction of a gas station/convenience store and car wash in Maine Township. Comm. Gorman stated that a gas station is a permitted use for the property but because of the car wash a unique use permit was needed.
- A public meeting had been held and attended by 3 residents. Traffic, lighting and water concerns were raised.
- The county would like to not have blighted property in the unincorporated areas.
- A roll call vote was requested with the recommendation being approved by a 9 to 8 vote. No votes were cast by Claypool, Gorman, Goslin, Moldonado, Murphy, Peraica, Quigley, Schneider.

All remaining items on the agenda were approved without discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50am.

The Roads and Bridges Committee meeting was called to order at 10:50am by Chairperson Moreno. All items were approved without discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:53am.

The Board of Commissioners meeting then reconvened.

- Comm. Quigley acknowledged Jennifer Kohler for her work in his office and stated that she is now working for President Stroger.
- The Board then acknowledged Juanita Reguseta Carrere-Mitchell on her 95th birthday.

Several agenda items were either withdrawn or sent to committee and several items that had been deferred from the December 6 meeting were again deferred. These items related to advertising for bids from various departments. A question was raised about the closure of the Englewood Clinic on December 18th. A representative from the Dept. of Health Services stated that the closure was due to vandalism and not budget issues and the clinic was open again.

Item #29 – concerns authorization to enter into contract with USI Midwest for excess insurance for the county at a cost of approximately \$10m/year for next 3 years.

- Comm. Sims wanted to know if this also covered property insurance. Mr. Hibbert of the Dept. of Risk Management stated that this recommendation does not include property insurance. He stated that the county is self-insured for property with the exception of the 69 W. Washington building. Insurance would be very expensive. Comm. Sims thought there should be an RFP to investigate property insurance for the county. Mr. Hibbert explained that this item refers to excess liability insurance for the county. Comm. Gorman asked if this went to bid how many responses were received. Mr. Hibbert stated that there were 3 responses and he would provide those to the commissioners.
- Comm. Peraica stated that the pending claims against the county have almost doubled from \$60m to \$120m. Mr. Hibbert stated that there was
 - one medical malpractice claim for \$36m, but actuarial studies have actually shown that the number of claims has decreased while the value of those claims has increased.
 - He stated that they now expect about 1 shock loss/year. In reserves there is now about \$14m for medical malpractice but they would like to increase the reserves to \$50m. Underwriters are limited for this type of insurance.
 - Comm. Peraica questioned whether it was cheaper to just be self-insured or to spend \$10m/year for excess coverage. It was pointed out the USI Midwest paid “considerable amounts” in political contributions. They have been the same provider of this insurance coverage since 2000.
 - Comm. Peraica asked if the RFP was designed to get other bids.
 - Comm. Murphy commended Mr. Hibbert for his department’s analysis on claims and stating that the county hires experts to deal with these issues.
 - Comm. Peraica requested a roll call vote on this item. It was approved.
Voting Yes: Comm. Beavers, Butler, Daley, Moldonado, Moreno, Murphy, Quigley, Steele, Sufferdin
Voting No: Comm. Gorman, Goslin, Peraica, Schneider, Silvestri
Voting Present: Comm. Claypool, Sims
Absent: Comm. Collins

Item #33 concerned an increase in a contract for maintenance and repair of automobiles in the Sheriff’s Department. A representative from the Sheriff’s Department stated that they have 978 vehicles and 124 of their cars have over 120,000 miles on them.

Item #50 – Resignation of Wally Kos as Superintendent of Highways effective the end of December. Comm. Quigley lead the accolades for Mr. Kos with his commending him for incorporating rubberized asphalt into the county road system. The other commissioners followed with their words of praise.

Consent calendar was approved without providing much insight to those in the audience as to what was included.

There was no time for public comment allotted in the agenda and in checking with the Secretary of the Board’s office it was discovered that the Rules adopted for this year do

not include public comment at board meetings – only at committee meetings if the comments pertain to the topic being discussed at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 am and the board seemed quite pleased with themselves that they were done before noon. Discussion was minimal during the meeting and as stated previously many items were referred to committee or withdrawn.

LWVCC Observer
Cynthia Schilsky