

Cook County Board Meeting – March 15, 2006

Due to the hospitalization of President Stroger, the meeting was chaired by President Pro Tem Joseph Moreno.

When Commissioner Peraica questioned whether **allocations to HIDTA, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, were specifically targeted to individual neighborhoods**, in light of recent violence in Englewood, Jim O'Sullivan of HIDTA reported that HIDTA supports law enforcement generally, but **not in specific neighborhoods**, through databases of gang members making background checks faster and more accurate.

Commissioner Peraica also questioned the allocation of \$600,000 to Cisco Systems to equip the Hawthorne Warehouse as an **electronic hub of information available to County staff electronically**, including court records and election data; the allocation was approved.

Commissioner Peraica praised the **Access to Care program**, providing low cost basic health care to County residents at 200% or greater of poverty throughout suburban Cook County.

The total **2006 Cook County tax levy of \$720,483,542 was passed** with 12 yes votes, 2 no, and 3 absent.

Commissioner Gorman proposed a resolution encouraging the passage of House Bill 5391 and Senate Bill 3046 **protecting consumer rights and prohibiting public utility companies from making unfair utility charges**; the resolution passed.

Commissioner Moldanado proposed a resolution to defeat H.R. 4437 making unlawful presence in this country a crime rather than a civil violation. Commissioner Peraica proposed an amendment authorizing deportment of persons who pose a threat to U.S. security; with that amendment the resolution was passed.

A resolution supporting President Stroger's speedy recovery was unanimously passed.

A resolution was passed **allowing building service workers to stay on their jobs for at least 25 days after the building has changed ownership.**

Introduced by Commissioner Quigley as a component of the Health and Hospitals report, **the ordinance to ban smoking except in private clubs and nursing homes was passed** 13 yes, 3 no, 1 absent. The ban will take effect on March 15, 2007. Suburban municipalities can opt out by passing their own ordinance.

Observed and reported by Linda Christianson