

**SUMMARY OF APRIL 18, 2007
COOK COUNTY BOARD MEETING**

Finance Committee Highlights:

- Judge Julia Nowicki, new Cook County Compliance Administrator, stated that in two years the **County will be free of political appointments**. Already all applicants for County positions must sign a “Shakman Certification Agreement” to prevent political hiring. She suggested that the cost for services to monitor County hiring will increase.
- The **Auditor, a newly-created position**, will submit monthly status reports for review by Commissioners.
- **Revenue Report:** 32.4% of County budget has been expended. All reserves are spent; a fund balance must be generated. Each department must estimate monthly expenditures. Stroger Hospital has spent 48% of its budget. The final Cook County budget for 2007 will be delivered May 1. Some missing revenue is due to uncollected patient revenue, which may yet be collected later this year. Dr. Simon stated that there are many hospital department closings still to occur, and a \$17m savings was generated by closing the clinics. “I am not worried,” he said. “By June, expenditures will be right where they should be.”

Regular Board Meeting

- The former Chief Information Officer, Katherine O’Leary, was “fired for cause.”
- Questions arose concerning the closing of the Family Practice Unit at Stroger Hospital, moving the Family Practice unit to Provident. Dr Simon explained that **the doctors will have admitting privileges at more than one hospital**. All specialty clinics will now refer patients to Stroger Hospital. In the past 16-20% of specialty care appointments have come from doctors outside the Cook County system; this stopped as of April 16. Now uninsured patients from outside Cook County will go to a Cook County ambulatory screening clinic for assessment, with the decision for care made by Cook County doctors. Dr. Simon estimates that **\$10-\$20m will be saved** by this decision. Claypool objected to the decision. Dr. Simon said Resurrection, Advocate, U of C Hospital and others make a large profit, and may offer some payment to Cook County for care of uninsured; he will be meeting with these hospitals.
- Three new ordinances were passed to **streamline County highway management** and bring it into closer alignment with the State of Illinois. Permits for highway maintenance, repair, tree trimming and emergency work have been simplified.

Observed and reported by Linda Christianson