

**DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING**  
September 27, 2021

The following Council Members were present:

President Richard Ring  
Member William VanWye  
Member Eldonna King  
Member Robert E. Krafft  
Member David Yarde  
Member Amy Demske  
Member Amy Prosser

Others present:                    Auditor Jan Bauman  
   First Deputy Auditor Susan Sleeper  
   Attorney Donald J Stuckey

David Yarde opened the Council meeting with prayer at 8:31 a.m.

**MATTER OF MINUTES**

David Yarde made a motion to approve minutes dated September 13, 2021. Amy Demske seconded, and all approved.

**MATTER OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

Eldonna King made a motion to approve the Coroner's \$15,000 additional appropriation request to Medical Fees (32800) within the County General Fund (1001). Robert Krafft seconded, and all approved.

Robert Krafft made a motion to approve the Commissioners' \$5,000 additional appropriation request to Engineering Fees (32860) and \$25,000 to Consultant Fees (32840) within the ARP American Rescue Plan Fund (8950). Eldonna King seconded, and all approved.

**MATTER OF TRANSFERS**

Eldonna King made a motion to approve the Public Defender's request to transfer \$10,000 from Conflict Council/Deposition (11498) to Other Service Fees (32780) within the County General Fund (1001). Robert Krafft seconded, and all approved.

**MATTER OF FINANCIAL REPORT BY FUND**

The Council certified that they have received and reviewed the September 2021 Financial Report by Fund.

**MATTER OF AUBURN RENEWABLES, LLC'S ABATEMENT REQUESTS**

At the last meeting, Council decided to pause the solar abatement issue until the September 27 Council meeting to allow the Commissioners time to formulate an economic development agreement for our county. The Commissioners are nearing completion of such an agreement. The Auburn Renewables project is actually under the approval of the Auburn Plan Commission and the City of Auburn because it

is within their Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction. Auburn Renewables could have insisted that we act on the tax abatements right away, but they have gone out of their way to accommodate the County and Council while we work out the terms of these economic development agreements because they realize they are the first solar farm in the County, and an agreement with them will set the standard for others to come.

A tax abatement would abate taxes by 10% per year for the next 10 years. An economic development agreement would provide the County a fee based on the megawatts of electricity that can be produced by the solar farm. The size of this farm will be 55 acres. The size of future solar farms could be 1000 acres.

The County Plan Commission will decide whether a solar farm is permitted or not; Council will decide whether to grant an abatement for a solar farm if it is requested. And, each abatement's terms are at the discretion of Council.

Robert Krafft made a motion to delay this issue again until the November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Amy Demske seconded, and all approved.

#### **MATTER OF POLICE PENSION PLAN**

Ron Dicke was present on behalf of the Sheriff's Department. He wanted to give Council a heads up as to what they see coming in the next year and what they are trying to do to soften the blow.

When McCready & Keane does the actuarial assumption to figure out what needs to be put into the pension plan, in that formula is a 6.8% interest. That is set by the State on what you are supposed to be earning on your investments. The State is looking to reduce the interest rate to 6.25% and perhaps 5.75%. That will cause more of a burden on the County to fund the pension plan. We are still doing well. Our account is with Baird, and we have had good success with them. We meet quarterly with Baird to discuss how we have our investments in equities, bonds, and cash. The market is becoming concerning due to factors like inflation, employment, the world situation, and immigration. A correction is coming, and when it does come, it will come rapidly. What can we do to make this better?

Baird has a company called Strategics. It's an analytical company that looks at the market and the market conditions. Strategics is rated very highly in the world as an analytics company. Because we have our account with Baird, we have access to that information, and it is of no cost to us.

They have offered to rebalance our account on a monthly basis so we can be much more proactive. They think we should be at 67/33. Our contribution will be fine for 2022; the adjustments on our end will take place in 2023. This has just been informational. We want to try to soften the blow and be proactive.

#### **MATTER OF 2022 AIRPORT AUTHORITY BUDGET ORDINANCE 2021-OCC-22**

President Ring opened the public hearing at 9:00 a.m. and read 2022 Airport Authority Budget Ordinance No. 2021-OCC-22.

Rainy Day	\$ 4,301,904
Airport Authority	\$ 780,758
Cumulative Airport Building	<u>\$ 80,000</u>
<b>TOTAL ADOPTED BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 5,162,662</b>

Amy Demske made a motion to approve the 2022 DeKalb County Airport Budget Ordinance No. 2021-OCC-22 on the second and third readings. William VanWye seconded. With 6 ayes and 1 nay, motion passed. The public hearing was closed at 9:18 a.m.

### **MATTER OF 2022 SALARY & HOURLY WAGE ORDINANCE 2021-OCC-23**

Eldonna King made a motion to approve the 2022 Salary & Hourly Wage Ordinance 2021-OCC-23. William VanWye seconded. President Ring opened it up for discussion. Councilman Krafft said that he has a problem with not giving a raise to the Highway Superintendent and the I.S. Department Director. They could be making 6 digits in the private sector. And, the I.S. Director did a tremendous amount of extra work during COVID to keep the County offices running. He would like to see those employees get at least a 1% raise. President Ring talked about the WIS study a bit and added that he thinks they should actually receive a 2% raise like the elected officials were given. He was corrected in that elected officials received a 5% raise. Councilman Krafft would also like to have a work load study done next year by WIS. Councilwoman Prosser asked if those two positions are in the wrong category. They are in the correct (highest) category.

Robert Krafft made a motion to amend the 2022 Salary & Hourly Wage Ordinance 2021-OCC-23 and give the Highway Superintendent and I.S. Department Director a 2% raise for 2022. David Yarde seconded, and all approved.

A vote was temporarily postponed on the original motion plus the amendment.

If an employee is moved to a different category mid-year, their pay can be changed mid-year also? If an employee was put into a different category with an educational requirement that they don't have, that employee should be moved back down to the category they were in originally. Dotty Miller will be reviewing the job descriptions and the employees credentials to make sure they have the qualifications of their respective positions.

### **MATTER OF 2022 DEKALB COUNTY BUDGET ORDINANCE 2021-OCC-24**

[Changes were made to the following funds from what was originally advertised for the budget to what is being adopted today: County General, Local Income Tax Economic Development, CC Project Income, Cumulative Capital Development, Health, Health Maintenance, Local Income Tax Public Safety-County Share, Highway, Plat Book Fee, Statewide 911, Re-Assessment, Supplemental Adult Probation, Supplemental Juvenile Probation, User Fee, Pre-Trial Diversion, Prosecutor IV-D Incentive, and State Grant Community Corrections (odd yrs).]

At 9:33 a.m., President Ring opened the public hearing for and read into the minutes each **DeKalb County** fund and the 2022 approved budget for each fund as found in the Form 4 in Gateway as follows:

Casino/Riverboat	\$ 0
Rainy Day	\$ 334,000
General	\$ 18,596,254
Reassessment	\$ 520,548
Debt Service	\$ 224,000
Convention & Visitors Bureau	\$ 500,000
Highway	\$ 4,544,698
Local Road & Street	\$ 720,000
Cumulative Bridge	\$ 2,171,140
Health	\$ 634,879
Emergency Telephone	\$ 538,284
Cumulative Capital Development	\$ 1,572,211
Economic Dev. Income Tax	\$ 3,294,000
DART Capital	\$ 125,000
<b>TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 33,786,894</b>

Eldonna King made a motion to approve the 2022 DeKalb County Budget Ordinance No. 2021-OCC-24 on the second and third readings. William VanWye seconded. No vote was taken yet since the County General and Highway values needed to be amended for the record first.

The public hearing was closed at 9:36 a.m.

#### **MATTER OF VOTE ON 2022 SALARY & HOURLY WAGE ORDINANCE 2021-OCC-23**

After the public hearing was closed on the 2022 DeKalb County Budget and a motion to approve was seconded, Council went back to the 2022 Salary & Hourly Wage Ordinance. A vote was taken on the motion to approve the 2022 Salary & Hourly Wage Ordinance 2021-OCC-23, INCLUDING the amendment. With 7 ayes and 0 nays, the motion passed.

#### **MATTER OF 2022 DEKALB COUNTY BUDGET ORDINANCE 2021-OCC-24**

Robert Krafft made a motion to approve an amendment to the General Fund budget to \$18,597,594 and the Highway Fund to \$4,546,038 for the 2022 DeKalb County Budget Ordinance 2021-OCC-24. Eldonna King seconded, and all approved.

A vote was taken to approve the original motion INCLUDING the amendment to the 2022 DeKalb County Budget Ordinance 2021-OCC-24; with 7 ayes and 0 nays, the motion passed.

#### **MATTER OF UPDATE FROM AIC CONFERENCE**

Commissioner Watson reported that he attended the AIC Conference and attended several very good educational sessions. One was on broadband. It has been a huge initiative for DeKalb County, the Commissioners passed an ordinance making DeKalb County a broadband ready community. It will open a lot of doors for grant funding. It's a big push by the State to get broadband out. It is conceivable to have broadband fiber throughout the County by 2024. This will be very good from the stand point of virtual learning, virtual medicine, and economic development opportunities.

And, at the awards banquet, of the 16 awards that were handed out, 8 were awarded to 4 counties in our 11-county northeast district. Huntington County has a mental health initiative they are working on. Adams County was awarded for the sewer district and cooperation between governments. Allen County picked up a couple. DeKalb County's President Rick Ring was chosen out of 600 hundred Council people in the State to receive the Outstanding Councilman of the Year Award.

#### **MATTER OF MEETING REMINDER**

President Ring reminded all that Council will start meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month beginning with next month on Tuesday, November 9, 2021.

#### **MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT**

Amy Prosser made a motion to adjourn at 9:56 a.m. Second by Amy Demske, and all approved.

DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL:

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Richard Ring, President

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William VanWye, Vice President

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Eldonna King

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Robert E. Krafft

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David Yarde

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Amy Demske

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Amy Prosser

ATTEST:

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Jan Bauman  
DeKalb County Auditor