

HEATHER BOWMAN
HAMILTON COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR HAMILTON COUNTY BOARD MEETING ON:
FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

The Hamilton County Board convened at the Hamilton County Courthouse in the City of McLeansboro, State of Illinois, on Wednesday the 18th day of February, at 6:00 p.m. and was called to order by Chairman Kelly Woodrow.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

On roll call, the following board members responded as being present, which represented a quorum: Kelly Woodrow, John Mead, John Carrell, and Landon Vaughan. Adam Little was absent.

Coroner Robert Miller, State's Attorney Sarah Mead, and County Highway Engineer Rick Coronado, were also in attendance.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2026 Regular Hamilton County Board Meeting as presented. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Chairman Woodrow thanked everyone for coming and asked the civics students in attendance to introduce themselves. Next, he asked if there were any public comments. Paula Hatfield requested to give a brief update on the Extension Office and 4H programs. She talked about their upcoming plans to cook for the Farmer's Share Breakfast on March 24th, Safety Day on April 10th, and a group bowling trip. She also noted the growth and continuation of their Lego and craft clubs. Last, Paula highlighted the accomplishments of 4H member, Gracie Walker, at the Unit 26 Livestock Quiz Bowl. She said Gracie took an impressive 1st place overall and noted some of her accomplishments from last year. Paula said she may try to get Ms. Walker to come to the next meeting. This concluded her report. The board thanked her for the update.

Sheriff Tracy Lakin said Paula's report reminded him to inform the board that her newest employee slipped on a patch of ice last week on the sidewalk and broke her arm. He said all sidewalks and everything had been cleared off, but on a warm day everything melted and refroze overnight.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Chairman Woodrow noted that Treasurer, Sarah Kelly, provided her written monthly report and a copy was in the board packet.

Sheriff's Report: Sheriff Lakin said he provided numbers for 2025 in an annual report and offered to answer any questions the board had. He noted that the vehicles were already on the agenda later in the meeting and they could discuss those then.

County Clerk & Recorder's Update: Clerk Bowman said she didn't have much this month. She said it is a busy time for her office right now, with the upcoming election. Bowman said they completed their L&A testing for their equipment on Tuesday and has Election Judge Training on Thursday. She gave the board a brief description of what the L&A testing entails.

EMA Report: EMA Director, Jason Stewart, said they had 2 calls for assisted EMS service this month and one for drone assistance in Jefferson County. He also noted that they were working with the state to get funding for some of the recent storm damage. Last, Stewart said they finally received last year's EMPG grant check for a little over \$15,000.

ETSB Report: ETSB Chairman, Dorothy Smith, reminded the board of the \$45,000 grant they applied for. She said it would be June or July before they would know anything, but hoped to use the funds for various

equipment upgrades. Dorothy also stated that they recently filed their annual financial report and ordered a battery for their new system. Last, she talked about their plans for another CPR class in June.

Health Department Report: No report.

Animal Control Update: Chairman Woodrow said the animal control truck has been having issues. He noted that our current contract states we must provide a vehicle for dog catching. The Chairman thought it was the wheels or rims having trouble and asked the Sheriff if anything had been addressed. Lakin said the actual wheel had rusted and fell apart. He said he didn't know if fixing that issue would be very helpful or not due to the condition of the rest of the vehicle. Dustin Harmon, with Bellwether, said they went to check out the vehicle condition earlier in the day. He confirmed the wheel was broken due to rust and unsafe to drive. Woodrow asked if they knew how much it would cost to replace them. Sheriff Lakin said they quoted \$900 to replace the wheels, but also had a donation of a like-new set offered by Luke Bowman. Dustin said their biggest concern was spending the money to have the new wheels put on and running into additional issues that need fixed. Chairman Woodrow stated concerns he had regarding the City using the County's vehicle for their animal control calls after their own vehicle broke down. He said he asked the Mayor if they would want to go in together on a vehicle and was told he didn't think they would do that at this time. John Mead felt the vehicle should stay parked on the county's lot until it was needed for a call. State's Attorney Mead suggested using one of the nicer vehicles slated for decommission from the Sheriff's office. Sheriff Lakin said he did not list 2 of the nicer dodge trucks with intentions of keeping them as a spare and could offer one of those. Landon Vaughan asked the Sheriff if it would take long to decommission the truck to be used. Lakin said they would just need to remove the decals and was not worried about the rest. The board agreed to have the dog box moved to the dodge truck and see how that goes. They also agreed that the animal control contract needed to be revisited by the committee. Clerk Bowman noted that there were financials and information in the packet for both the City and the County. Chairman Woodrow said he would try to get a meeting set up before next month.

Ambulance Service Update: There was no update.

Administrative Services: Dustin Harmon, with Bellwether, briefly reviewed some upcoming deadlines. He said the pay for elected officials would need to be set prior to June 3rd and noted that he would develop a draft ordinance for the board to start with. Dustin also noted that the energy ordinances would need to be updated in May to reflect new state rulings for fees, decommission rules, and setbacks. Chairman Woodrow said he spoke with the group from Samsung today and noted that they were planning to attend next month. He said he felt they were really pushing to get their project started south of town by 2029.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Mead, to approve the department reports. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda was read by Heather Bowman, County Clerk.

1. Accept check #48151 in the amount of \$5,000.00 from the City of McLeansboro per the Central Dispatching agreement for the month of February 2026.
2. Accept check # 6012790 from Hamilton County Coal, LLC in the amount of \$49,889.43 for the product of lease dated 12/01/2007 and 11/01/2008.
3. Review the 1% school facilities tax schedule in the amount of \$60,533.75.
4. Review the Hamilton County Public Safety Tax Payment received in the amount of \$60,508.00. This is liability MO- Nov 2025, Collected MO- Dec 2025 Vouchered MO- Feb 2026.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to approve the consent agenda as read. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Landon Vaughan, John Carrell, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. 4 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

1. The board was presented with invoice #33620 from Novacom Communications for the final balance on the Motorola Repeater Link System, portables, and mobiles.

Chairman Woodrow and the board reflected on why they tabled the invoice from the prior month. Clerk Bowman said she did follow up on the details of the invoice after the meeting last month and offered to share what she found. Bowman said the current invoice was for the final payment on the 4 original towers, which have been installed and completed. She said there was a separate invoice for the last tower the county agreed to place. The Clerk noted that the down payment for the final tower had been made and they should expect 2 more invoices for the delivery and install. Chairman Woodrow and Dustin Harmon searched for a potential line item to pay the invoice from. The Special Projects line item in the Coal Fund was suggested.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Mead, to pay invoice #33620 from Novacom Communications from the Special Projects line in the Coal Fund. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Landon Vaughan, John Mead, John Carrell, and Kelly Woodrow. 4 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Kevin Kern with Snedeker Risk Management was in attendance to give the board an update.

Kevin said he just wanted to touch base with the board on a few things. He referenced a call he had with John Mead around Christmas time and reminded the board that they were happy to help anytime they have an issue or question. He also reminded them that the ICRMT attorneys are available year-round and briefly hit on the elected official bonds provided after each election. Last, Kevin talked about their fall conference in Peoria and the return of their regional meetings starting in April. Before concluding, he told Sheriff Lakin that he would like to get together regarding their 50/50 safety matching grant. Chairman Woodrow asked Kevin to get the invitation to them for the regional meeting once the plans were finalized. Mr. Kern said he would get it to the Clerk to send out.

3. The board was presented with the sealed bids received for the Courthouse Bathroom Renovation project.

Chairman Woodrow noted that the Clerk received 2 sealed bids and proceeded to open them. The first bid was from Southern Illinois Cabinet Doors & More Inc. for \$117,988. Chairman Woodrow confirmed this bid met the requirements set in the county's publication. The second was from Maloney Construction for \$71,750, but noted that the bid did not include additional plumbing to bring the bathrooms up to code. Landon Vaughan said he thought they had to replace the plumbing and vent pipes according to the state plumbing inspector that came to visit. Chairman Woodrow confirmed and also noted that both included water heaters as well. John Mead said the guys from Maloney construction were a little worried about the layout and only using the bid specs for the job. He also noted that they were not present when the state plumbing inspector was at the courthouse. The board agreed that the bids were not "apples to apples". John Carrell said the Maloney bid would be closer to the bid from the 1st round by Southern Illinois Cabinet Doors & More Inc. Chairman Woodrow agreed and confirmed the amount of his original bid - \$68,000. He also went back through the history of Aaron losing his original plumber, which warranted a new plumber, the state plumbing inspector, and a new bid. John Mead said he has put a bunch of time into this project, but still felt the bids were just not comparable. Landon Vaughn felt the bid that includes the plumbing was high. After a little further back and forth discussion, Landon Vaughan asked if the bids expire after a certain period of time. Dustin Harmon confirmed that one of the bids did have an expiration date of 3/20/2026. Jimmy Johnson, from the public section, asked the board if both bids would bring them up to code and noted that if not, they were only looking at one bid.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Mead, to table the bids. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

4. The board was provided with a list of retired deputy vehicles by Sheriff Lakin.

Chairman Woodrow noted that the list of vehicles was included at the bottom of Sheriff Lakin’s report. Dustin Harmon asked if they would like to add the animal control vehicle to that list. Chairman Woodrow and the rest of the board agreed, bringing the total count to 7.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to add the former animal control truck to the list of vehicles provided by the Sheriff and to advertise them for bids. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

- 5. The board was provided with a landscaping proposal for the courthouse grounds and flower planters.

Chairman Woodrow noted that they talked to Connie (VanWinkle) last year about the project, but they felt it was too late in the year to plan anything. He said she provided some drawings at that time and a copy was in their board packet.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to table the proposal until the decorative concrete work is completed on the north side of the building. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

- 6. The board was provided with a list of Claims, including any Late Claims and Highway Claims.

MOTION was made by John Carrell, seconded by John Mead, to approve all claims as presented. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- John Carrell, John Mead, Landon Vaughan, and Kelly Woodrow. 4 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

The following motions were also made in accordance with the Chairman’s recommendations:

- 7. **MOTION** was made by John Carrell, seconded by John Mead, to re-appoint Roger Swartz to the Hamilton County Housing Authority Board for a (5) year term to expire February 28, 2031. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
- 8. **MOTION** was made by John Mead, seconded by John Carrell, to appoint B.J. Johnson to the Hamilton Memorial Hospital Board for a (3) year term to expire June 30, 2028. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

Chairman Woodrow said he reached out to John Chapman to see if he had any recommendations for the next appointment on the list, but he did not hear anything back yet.

- 9. **MOTION** was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to table the appointment for the Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission Board until a volunteer could be named to replace Glenn Miller. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

MOTION was made by John Carrell, seconded by Landon Vaughan, to adjourn the meeting. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

MINUTES APPROVED ON:_____

COUNTY CLERK

CHAIRMAN