

HEATHER BOWMAN
HAMILTON COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR HAMILTON COUNTY BOARD MEETING ON:
APRIL 15, 2026**

The Hamilton County Board convened at the Hamilton County Courthouse in the City of McLeansboro, State of Illinois, on Wednesday the 15th day of April, 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, Adam Little, John Carrell, and Landon Vaughan.

Coroner Robert Miller, State's Attorney Sarah Mead, Circuit Clerk Beth Sandusky, Supervisor of Assessments Clint Hopfinger, and County Highway Engineer Rick Coronado, were also in attendance.

MOTION was made by Adam Little, seconded by Landon Vaughan, to approve the minutes of the March 18, 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 if there were any public comments. Paula Hatfield asked if she could give a 4H update for the board. First, she talked about their recent trip with 27 kids to the VA Hospital in Marion. She said they were able to tour the facility, visit with the veterans, and leave behind \$500 in personal care items as a donation. Paula said they were also able to tour the VA Airport, check out a forestry helicopter, and deliver 92 blankets for the Veteran's Honor Flight on the same trip. She said they had wrapped up their Lego and craft club for the season and finished a virtual welding lesson at Mercy Heights. Last, Paula noted that the Farmer's Market would be starting the 27th of May and run through mid-September. This concluded her report. Chairman Woodrow thanked her for her time. There were no other public comments.

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: There was no update. Chairman Woodrow noted that he had not heard an update on the vehicles in a while and would check with Tracy.

County Clerk & Recorder's Update: Clerk Bowman noted that a copy of her monthly financial report was in the board packet, along with a letter from the US Treasury regarding the ARPA closeout, and an invitation to the HMHD Golf Scramble. Bowman said they were able to finish the retab and finalize the 2026 General Primary Election Results. She noted that there were no additional qualifying Vote By Mail ballots and that the totals did not change.

EMA Report: Landon noted that the EMA Director, Jason Stewart, was away on vacation and wouldn't be able to make it. He said Jason did pass on the message that they had a slow month with only 1 lift assist.

ETSB Report: ETSB Chairman, Dorothy Smith, said the state 911 surcharge increase was tabled until the fall. She noted that the increase under consideration was \$1 per month, per phone line. Last, Dorothy talked about the lack of battery backup on some of their tower sites and the possibility of using additional equipment to push the signal to other towers in the event of a power outage. Chairman Woodrow asked Dorothy if the increase in the 911 surcharge would affect the 911 ETSB board, more specifically in regards to money coming in and going out. Dorothy said they were unsure at this time.

Health Department Report: Chairman Woodrow noted that there was a letter from Nicole Schoenborn in the board packet regarding the appointments on the agenda. He said the letter basically reviewed the requirements

for their 8-member board, which must include 2 physicians, 1 dentist, and 1 County Board representative. He asked John Carrell when the next meeting was. John said they meet quarterly and the next meeting should be in July.

Animal Control Update: Chairman Woodrow reviewed the details of the current invoice on the claims list with 21 days of housing and 10.5 hours labor. He asked the board if they had any questions. John Carrell reminded him that they still need to set up a meeting with the Mayor.

Ambulance Service Update: There was no update.

Administrative Services: Dustin Harmon, with Bellwether, went over the 1st Quarter Variance Report. He noted that the revenue was only at 17%; noting that it was not a concern at this point of the year with tax income and transfers not complete yet. Dustin said the expenses were at 22% overall, with a few line items only appearing overbudget due to their front-loaded costs. Last, he touched on the energy ordinances and the questions received by Samsung. He said most of the answers they provided were contained in the state statute. Dustin said their goals for the upcoming ordinances are to be as stringent as possible, without causing extra expenses to the county. He gave examples of spill contamination and extra testing that could be required. Dustin noted that the Clerk put a 1-page summary for each ordinance in their packet to help with any questions. Chairman Woodrow asked State's Attorney Sarah Mead to have local Attorney James VanWinkle review the ordinances before they are placed on the agenda. Dustin reminded the board that the wind and solar ordinances need to be completed by June 1st and the BESS ordinance no later than September. This concluded his report.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, 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 checks from the Hamilton County Health Department for the month of March, 2026.
Salaries: \$3,822.00 Fringes: \$449.46 Unemployment: \$122.30 Insurance: \$1366.47.
2. Accept check #48321 in the amount of \$5,208.33 from the City of McLeansboro per the Central Dispatching agreement for the month of April 2026.
3. Accept check # 6013102 from Hamilton County Coal, LLC in the amount of \$2,207.92 for the product of lease dated 12/01/2007.
4. Review the 1% school facilities tax schedule in the amount of \$53,368.93.
5. Review the Hamilton County Public Safety Tax Payment received in the amount of \$53,381.54.
This is liability MO- Jan 2026, Collected MO- Feb 2026 Vouchered MO- April 2026.
6. Review the ROE #20 3rd quarter report submitted by Dr. Beth Rister.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by Adam Little, to approve the consent agenda as read. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Landon Vaughan, Adam Little, John Carrell, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. 5 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. A Birth to Five Illinois update was presented by Janice Crow.

Chairman Woodrow invited Janice to the front to address the board. She gave her introduction as the Region Council Manager, reminded the board of their coverage area, and passed out a folder of information for each member. She also reminded them of their Family Action Council's findings report, in which they assessed the

areas needs and are still working to meet the goals. Janice went over some of the materials they have put out on paper and online to help families find the resources they need. She reviewed some of their biggest resource topics, including mental and behavioral health, food and clothing assistance, and the location and funding of childcare services. Janice said many may not even realize they qualify for assistance with the updated income guidelines. This concluded her report. Janice thanked the board for allowing her to come and give the update. Chairman Woodrow thanked Janice for her time and complimented that her group had come a long way. John Mead asked if they had a local headquarters for their work. Janice explained that they work from an office at the Trade Industries building a couple days a week and remotely from home on the other days.

2. The board was presented with a request for 2026 Sponsorship from the Hamilton County Relay for Life Committee submitted by Sponsorship Chairman, Janis Rubenacker.

Chairman Woodrow asked Clerk Bowman what was donated in the past. Bowman said they traditionally do the \$250 sponsorship from line item #1504. After reviewing the treasurer's report, it was noted that fund #1504 had a remaining balance of \$1,100.00. Adam Little asked if anyone knew if the money donated stays in the County. Janice Crow offered to speak to that question and the Chairman allowed. Janice said the sponsorship money goes to the American Cancer Society for research. Chairman Woodrow asked Janice how much money they raised last year. She said last year they did \$60,000, but the goal for this year was \$52,000; noting that times have changed. She also added that they would be having the annual Survivor Brunch on Saturday at Christian Chapel Church. Chairman Woodrow asked if anyone wanted to make the motion.

MOTION was made by John Mead, seconded by John Carrell, to approve the sponsorship of \$250 for the Hamilton County Relay for Life from line item #1504 Community Donations. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- John Mead, John Carrell, and Kelly Woodrow. No- Adam Little and Landon Vaughan. 3 yes, 2 nays, motion carried.

3. The board provided with a request for sponsorship of the upcoming Special Olympics Region K Spring Games (one to be held at HCHS on May 2nd) by Jaedyn Beers.

Chairman Woodrow asked the Clerk about the history of this request. Clerk Bowman said this was the first time they have received a request for this event to her knowledge. Mark Auten (from the public section) said the event is something everyone should attend. He said they started hosting one in Hamilton County last year and was attended by 400 kids and young adults. He also noted that some of the community businesses helped with lunch and other parts of the event.

MOTION was made by John Carrell, seconded by John Mead, to approve the Spring Games Sponsorship of \$150 from line item #1504 Community Donations. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- John Carrell, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. No- Adam Little and Landon Vaughan. 3 yes, 2 nays, motion carried.

4. The quote for a new GIS aerial was presented by Clint Hopfinger, Supervisor of Assessments.

Clint passed out a copy of the proposal for aerial flights from Eagle View. There were two options on the proposal, both of which locked in the price for the next 3 aerial flights (1 during each 4-year period). Price differences were related to the image quality. Clint also noted that the GIS portion of the County Clerk's recording fee brought in \$48,000 last year and reminded the board that his GIS fund relies 100% on this revenue. He included a breakdown of the current GIS fund expenses, including the increased salary amount committed by the board in the FY26 budget. The SOA took a few minutes to give the history of the prior salary commitment amount of \$10,000 and why he pitched the idea to the County Board several years prior. Moving back to the proposals, Clint talked about the benefits of locking in the next 3 flights at the current price vs. paying more later, as all prices continue to rise. He also noted that the agreement gives the County the option to back out if the funds are not available. John Carrell asked if he could just use satellite imagery that is available for free online. Hopfinger explained that there was no way to overlay that image on the county's existing map. He said his biggest question for the board was regarding the long-term plan for their GIS salary commitment. Dorothy Smith, ETSB Chairman, said they were able to obtain a grant, years ago, for the GIS aerial flight, but could not anymore. Last, Mr. Hopfinger read a list of reasons why the GIS map is needed.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by Adam Little, to table the GIS aerial proposal. Vote by acclamation. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

5. The board was presented with proposals for Courthouse Parking Lot signage by T Ham Signs.

Chairman Woodrow noted that the proposals were included in their board packet. Adam Little asked for confirmation that all courthouse doors remain locked with the exception of the east door. The board agreed. He asked if anyone had heard if Sheriff Lakin was proposing to open the doors in the future. Chairman Woodrow said he had mentioned it to the Sheriff a time or two, but he did not confirm either way. Adam said since the doors are not open and there are no signs directing people to the correct entrance, they end up having to walk all the way around the building. He also noted that the parking lot was built for visitors of the courthouse, especially the handicapped visitors, and reminded everyone that he was against office holders and employees using the lot from the beginning. Adam pointed out that on busy days when the parking lot is completely full, spots are being taken by some courthouse employees and business owners on the north side of the square. Little said Clerk Bowman has also had visitors comment that they were unaware they could park in the parking lot and expressed his support for the signs. He said they could do different signs, but felt the ones quoted were a good investment and looked better than others he has seen for a higher price. Last, he reminded the board that they pledged to use the coal money to upgrade the courthouse and felt they needed to stick with their word on that. Chairman Woodrow said he was glad the parking lot was getting used and didn't care who parked on it. He said it wouldn't bother him if the office holders did park there, as it would clear spaces for businesses around the square. Little said he didn't feel like that was their responsibility. Woodrow asked Landon Vaughan about the cost of the sign he ordered for the Highway Department. Vaughan said he was unsure since the price also included the decals for the vehicles, but Rick could look into it. Chairman Woodrow said he just had a problem paying \$5,300 for a sign. Little added that the Legion recently paid \$12,000 for their new sign and it was the cheapest bid they received to replace what they had. He said they can seek other bids, but if the board doesn't intend to put up a sign, there is no point. He also noted that the Highway Department's sign is made of cheap corrugated plastic that is perfect for mounting to their building, but it wasn't a standalone sign, so comparing price would not be "apples to apples". Highway Engineer Rick Coronado added comments of support about leaving the doors locked with a majority female staff, based on incidents he witnessed.

MOTION was made by Adam Little, seconded by Landon Vaughan, to approve the proposals for signage from T Ham Signs, including the additional 10% allowance for color changes, in the amount of \$8,427.07 to be paid from the Special Projects line item in the Coal Fund. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Adam Little and Landon Vaughan. No- John Carrell, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. 2 yes, 3 nays, motion failed.

6. The board was provided with a copy of the agreement between the Hamilton County Board/Hamilton County Sheriff (Deputies), and Laborers' International Union of North America, the Downstate Illinois Laborers' District Council, Laborers' Local #1197.

Chairman Woodrow noted that the contract was negotiated by John Mead and John Carrell.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to approve the agreement between the Hamilton County Board/Hamilton County Sheriff (Deputies), and Laborers' International Union of North America, the Downstate Illinois Laborers' District Council, Laborers' Local #1197 as provided. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Landon Vaughan, John Carrell, Adam Little, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. 5 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

7. A copy of Resolution #2026-04-01 setting Elected Official compensation was drafted by Bellwether and provided to the board.

Landon questioned if the drafted resolution should include the Circuit Clerk instead of the Coroner. Dustin Harmon, with Bellwether, explained that the Attorney General put out an opinion that the Circuit Clerk salary can be set on an annual basis. He also noted that the prior board approved salaries for all offices at the time, but should technically be set 180 days before the term starts. Dustin further explained that the draft includes 2 years for the Coroner's salary to set them up on the correct cycle. Vaughan then asked how the Circuit Clerk's salary would be set and if it could be added to the resolution. Dustin said it would typically be part of the budget packet on an annual basis, but could be added. Last Landon clarified that the increase was 3% across the board, excluding the stipend paid by the State.

MOTION was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by John Carrell, to approve Resolution #2026-04-01, contingent upon the inclusion of the Circuit Clerk salary at the same rate for a 2-year period. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Landon Vaughan, John Carrell, Adam Little, John Mead, and Kelly Woodrow. 5 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

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

MOTION was made by Adam Little, seconded by John Carrell, to approve all claims as presented. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- Adam Little, John Carrell, John Mead, Landon Vaughan, and Kelly Woodrow. 5 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATION

9. The board was presented with the Engineering Services Agreement for structure #033-3194.

MOTION was made by John Mead, seconded by Adam Little, to approve the Engineering Services Agreement as presented. On roll call the vote was as follows: Yes- John Mead, Adam Little, John Carrell, Landon Vaughan, and Kelly Woodrow. 5 yes, 0 nays, motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

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

10. **MOTION** was made by John Carrell, seconded by Landon Vaughan, to appoint James D. "Jimmy" Johnson to the Hamilton County Board of Health, as the Hamilton County Board representative, for a (1) year term to expire April 30, 2027. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
11. **MOTION** was made by John Carrell, seconded by Adam Little, to re-appoint Karen Lappington to the Hamilton County Board of Health for a (3) year term to expire April 30, 2029. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
12. **MOTION** was made by John Carrell, seconded by John Mead, to re-appoint Glenna Sutton to the Hamilton County Board of Health for a (3) year term to expire April 30, 2029. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
13. **MOTION** was made by John Carrell, seconded by John Mead, to appoint Dr. Jacob Stewart to the Hamilton County Board of Health for a (3) year term to expire April 30, 2029. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
14. **MOTION** was made by John Mead, seconded by John Carrell, to re-appoint Ron E. Webb to the Hamilton County Water District Board for a (5) year term to expire April 30, 2031. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.
15. **MOTION** was made by Landon Vaughan, seconded by Adam Little, to re-appoint Kane Smith to the Hamilton County Water District Board for a (5) year term to expire April 30, 2031. All voting aye, none nay. Motion carried.

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

MINUTES APPROVED ON: _____

COUNTY CLERK

CHAIRMAN