

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Legislative
CHAIRPERSON: John Lang
DATE/TIME: March 13, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: John Lang, Michael Dittmar, John Schultz, LaDon Trost and Peggy Bastian

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Creighton

OTHERS PRESENT: Angela Kaiser

1. Call to Order: Chairperson Lang called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A quorum was established.

2. Minutes Approval:

- a) Minutes of the February 13, 2025 Legislative Committee meeting – **Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2025 Legislative Committee meeting. Seconded by Bastian and motion carried.**

3. Citizens' Comments: None

3. Unfinished Business:

- a) FY2023/FY2024 Strategic Goals and Plans – The members did not review the goals and plans for FY2023/FY2024.
- b) Committee goals for FY2025/FY2026 – Lang recommended keeping the UTV/ATV goal on the list. He desired to keep the 1% service tax, however; Schultz commented that he did not believe it would go far and that the goals needs to be attainable. Kaiser reminded the members that each standing committee needed to select their top three goals and present them at the Retreat. They will also need plans to attain them. There has been considerable talk regarding land and conservation and there may be potential goals to discuss regarding that. There is concern regarding large parcels of land becoming conservation land and the effect it would have on taxing bodies' property taxes as a result. Schultz agreed that there should be a 'sunset' on conservation easements. Dittmar suggested adding recreation land tax to the goals. Lang brought up the idea of adding a third lane to Highway 20. The committee will bring more ideas to next month's meeting.

4. New Business:

- a) Review of introduced legislation and possible action to support or oppose:
 - i. Important deadlines –
 - a. March 21 – bills passed out of a committee – Bills are sent back to assignments or the Rules Committee if they do not pass out of a committee.
 - b. April 11 – bills passed by the House or Senate – Bill 'die' and must be reintroduced in the next General Assembly session with a new bill number if they are not passed by the House or Senate by this date.
 - ii. Four (4) UTV/ATV bills – HB1263 in Transportation – There was a considerable amount of discussion on HB1263. John Creighton spoke regarding the potential change that HB1263, if passed, would result in. The allowable speed limit would change from 35 to 55 on secondary roads and counties would have the option of choosing to participate. Dittmar suggested drafting a letter of support regarding the Bill and sending it to the Illinois Association of County Board Members (IACBM), the Vehicle and Safety Committee, and Secretary of State. **Dittmar made a motion to recommend sending a letter of support for HB1263 regarding Non-Highway Vehicles to the Illinois Association of County Board Members, the Illinois Secretary of State,**

and the Rules Committee of the 104th General Assembly. Seconded by Schultz and motion carried.

- iii. Bills on abolishing townships – SB2217, SB2504, HB2515 – In HB2515, there is mention of populations of 500 residents and was referred to the Rules Committee. It was the only bill regarding the abolition of townships, which had any kind of reference for how counties would pay for it if happened. There is nothing contained within SB2217 and SB2504 pertaining to how the County would have to pay for it if townships were abolished. Trost said the system would be more efficient if the townships dissolved. Kaiser said there would have to be a mechanism for the County to tax, for it to be financially sustainable. Dittmar pointed out that many of the townships in Jo Daviess County have an aging population and it is becoming increasingly more difficult to find candidates to run in said townships. **Dittmar made a motion to recommend sending letters of opposition for HB2515, SB2217 and SB2504 regarding the dissolution of townships due to the lack of financial information, to the Illinois Association of County Board Members, the Rules Committee of the 104th General Assembly, and the Executive Committee of the 104th General Assembly. Seconded by Schultz and motion carried.**
- iv. List of bills relevant to County Government of interest – The members reviewed the list of bills with committee assignments included in the meeting packet that are relevant to County Government. Of the list, some that the committee opposes are SB42, HB2515, SB2217 and SB2504. Additionally, SB2160, SB1661, HB1420 and HB1263 are bills the committee support. There was also discussion on whether or not standing committees can file witness slips. The consensus is that they can, as long as they clearly state that it is on behalf of their committee and not for the entire County Board. **Dittmar made a motion to authorize John Lang to file the following witness slips on behalf of the Legislative Committee: Opposition of SB42, HB2515, SB2217 and SB2504. Support of SB2160, SB1661, HB1420 and HB1263. Seconded by Schultz and motion carried.**
- v. Articles on other bills of interest – Lang briefly mentioned the articles in the meeting packet.
 - b) Illinois budget situation – articles on the budget and what lies ahead – There was discussion on Governor Pritzker and the deficit budget situation in Illinois. In the meeting packet, was an article from the Wall Street Journal regarding some Illinois counties' desire to secede and join the State of Indiana. There was more discussion regarding secession and potential outcomes.
 - c) Thank-You to Senator Chesney – Lang included a Thank-You he sent to Senator Chesney, thanking him for attending the January Legislative Committee meeting.

5. Legislative issues Committee Members or County Officials want the Committee to be aware of and take action on at another meeting: None.

6. Citizens' Comments: None.

7. Board Member Concerns: Schultz reminded the committee that Municipal elections are coming up on April 1st.

8. Adjourn on Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.: Dittmar motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Schultz and motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.