

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Legislative
CHAIRPERSON: John Lang
DATE/TIME: April 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

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

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: None

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 March 13, 2025 Legislative Committee meeting – **Schultz/Dittmar made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2025 Legislative Committee meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.**

3. Citizens' Comments: None

3. Unfinished Business:

- a) FY2023/FY2024 Strategic Goals and Plans – While the committee did not formally review these goals, there was discussion about the upcoming County Board Retreat and the need to develop new goals for the next two years.
- b) FY2025/FY2026 Tentative Goals: The committee reviewed and discussed potential goals, including tax assessments for various types of recreational land use and possible burning ordinances in local municipalities.
 - i. 1% Service Tax for EMS – Lang expressed doubt that this goal would come to fruition. Kaiser suggested evaluating alternative types of sales tax. Dittmar emphasized the need for further research and analysis before considering new taxes and highlighted the importance of examining opportunities for service consolidation prior to supporting such measures. Extensive discussion followed.
 - ii. Legislation allowing UTV/ATV – Lang noted the committee appears to be in full support of this initiative.
 - iii. Make US Highway 20 a 3-lane with alternating passing lanes – Kaiser clarified that while the goal may not be achievable at the county level, it is a policy direction the committee could still support.

After discussion, it was agreed to present the following goals at the upcoming County Board Retreat: 1. Research ways to change the way we tax recreational land; 2. Investigate options to sunset conservation easements; and 3. Support legislation to allow UTV/ATV use in the County.

4. New Business:

- a) April 11 – Bills must pass either House or Senate – Lang noted that he had contacted Senator Chesney following the previous meeting to request a vote against SB42. Chesney confirmed he would oppose the bill.
- b) Status on Bills the committee took a position on:

- i. SB42 – Cannabis Motor Stops – has not been up for a vote – Chesney said he would be against – Gallagher expressed support for the committee endorsing the measure. She noted that requiring cannabis to be stored in odor-proof containers places an undue burden on motorists, given that transportation of cannabis is legal. Citing research from other states, she shared data indicating that in traffic stops where the odor of cannabis was the sole basis for a search, contraband was found only 25–35% of the time. In the remaining 65–75% of cases, she argued that individuals' Fourth Amendment rights may have been compromised due to searches initiated solely on the basis of smell. While there was some disagreement among committee members, Gallagher maintained her position.
- ii. SB2217 – Township - Assignments – This has gone back to Assignments.
- iii. SB2504 – Township – Senate President Don Harman is now Chief Sponsor – No witness slips or hearing – No hearings or witness slips have been filed. Schultz noted local township opposition. Lang commented that action on this bill must occur by the following day. Kaiser explained that the bill would eliminate township assessors and grant townships authority to dissolve their own governance.
- iv. SB2160 – Wildlife – Deer hunting – No witness slips or hearing – No hearings or witness slips have been filed, though the bill has multiple co-sponsors.
- v. SB1661 – Reduce Election Judges – in Senate sub-committee election under Executive – 3-member committee – no witness slips – Lang stated it is nearly impossible to submit one. Kaiser added that most County Clerks would support the bill due to challenges in recruiting election judges.
- vi. HB1420 – Wind/Solar - Rules – The bill did not receive a hearing and was returned back to the Rules Committee.
- vii. HB1213 – UTV/ATV – Rules – the other Bills never received a committee assignment – Like HB1420, this bill did not receive a hearing and it was sent back to the Rules Committee.

Review of the Bills selected – Illinois Association of County Board Members (IACBM) – The committee reviewed the list of bills from the IACBM article, which was in the meeting packet. **Dittmar/L. Gallagher made a motion to direct Kaiser to file witness slips on behalf of the Legislative Committee only in opposition of SB42 and SB2504 and in support of SB1661, SB2160, and SB1719 if able to access on ilga.gov. The motion carried by voice vote.**

- c) Articles on other Bills of interest on Illinois Government – The committee engaged in discussion on additional reading materials provided in the meeting packet. One article noted that the average total state and local tax burden on a median U.S. household income in Illinois is approximately \$13,100. Another article prompted discussion on strategies to retain residents in the County, highlighting that 64 of Illinois' 102 counties experienced a population decline in 2024. An article on Illinois pensions was also reviewed; it claimed that no actuarial study had been conducted on Tier 2 pensions, though it appears there is no violation of federal regulations. Additional articles included in the packet were briefly discussed. Senate Bill 98 (SB98) was mentioned as well, though it was noted that it is not currently a major concern at the local level.

- d) It is expected, Illinois Budget will be tight, but there have not been any articles about what it may be – It was noted that Illinois' upcoming budget is expected to be tight, although no specific articles or details have been released. Discussion was limited.

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. Committee Member Concerns: Trost spoke about Senate Bill 42 concerning cannabis and motorists; he declared that it has been proven it is not a violation of Fourth Amendment rights, as driving is a privilege. He does not see any other way that law enforcement will be able to detect motorists under the influence of marijuana.

8. Adjourn: Dittmar/Schultz motioned to adjourn at 7:33 p.m. The motion carried by voice vote.

The next Legislative Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.