

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Legislative Committee
CHAIRPERSON: John Lang
DATE/TIME September 12, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.
PRESENT:

☒ John Lang	☐ Hendrica Regez	☒ LaDon Trost	☐ Darcy Wild
☒ John Schultz	☒ Diane Gallagher	☒ Don Zillig	☒ Don Hill

A quorum was established.

Other Board Members: None.

Others: Cal Cain, John Grizzoffi, Lynn Trost and Scott Toot

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Lang called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
2. **Minutes Approval:**
 - a) Minutes of the April 14, 2022 Legislative Committee meeting –
 - b) Minutes of the May 12, 2022 Legislative Committee meeting – Diane Gallagher made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 Legislative committee meeting and the minutes of the May 12, 2022 Legislative Committee meeting minutes. Seconded by John Schultz and motion carried.
3. **Citizens' Comments:** Cal Cain, Menominee-Dunleith Fire Chief, commented that he received John Lang's letter regarding the question that will be on the ballot. He called Lang and they had a discussion. It's a concern; it's a question; it's a topic of discussion the way some of this is worded. The study that was done a few years ago doesn't take into consideration that there are fire departments that provide EMS services but we don't have an ambulance back in the garage so therefore they get left out of a lot of the opportunities for funding. We have to have the same requirements to have vehicles respond on EMS calls as an ambulance would. As far as he knows, East Dubuque Fire houses an ambulance. And the Stockton Ambulance is under the same board of trustees as the fire district is. All of the other fire districts do not have an ambulance backed into their garage. So the way this is worded, none of those services including ours would get any benefit from any funds raised by this service tax or any other means. 75% of the calls that we run are EMS calls. We help with every EMS call in the district. We have 10 EMS people on our roster and are licensed by the state. We are required to have a certification from the Department of Health and we can't charge the patients. We have no source of EMS income. In the past we have funded through donations, we have had fundraisers which through COVID have been put on hold. The money that we need to spend for EMS services basically comes out of the small little pool of money that we have raised and saved. We don't ask our board of trustees to pay for too many EMS related items because the fire budget is so tight just like everyone else's fire budget. The way the actual question is worded on the letter says "tax funded agencies in Jo Daviess County that provide Emergency Ambulance Services." We do not drive an ambulance but in his mind they provide ambulance service. Ambulance service and EMS service to Cain are the same thing. But, the fact that the question says Ambulance service does that eliminate the fact that people who provide EMS services are left out of the mix? If that said Emergency Medical Services he probably would have called Lang and told him thanks for the letter and have a good day. John Lang commented that the first thing is to get a good positive vote. Then Representative Chesney will introduce the bill. We can take Cain's input and try to cover it in the bill.

4. Unfinished Business:

- a) Discussion and possible action on what further action needs to be taken on the 1% advisory referendum – John Lang commented that the next thing we need is an action plan and asked if anyone was willing to write a letter to the editor. Maybe there are some groups that would like to invite someone to come and talk about it. Gallagher stated that there are many ways to reach the public and someone could go to an organized group, like city council meetings, sporting events, possibly even a handout if allowed. John Lang stated that not a dime of county money went for the letter that he wrote to the newspaper, and reminded that this is done out of pocket, and not with taxpayer money. Gallagher said the League of Women Voters would like to put out information on what will be on the ballot and that committee members as individuals could be proponents for one side of it. John Lang stated the biggest thing is that this is the time frame to take action. This is the time to support it. Hill agreed and stated that he has spoken with Lucas Bourquin about possibly sending a letter out from Warren EMS in the newspaper. He said there are many newspapers out there everyone can write letters to. Gallagher stated she would be able to take individuals' letters, as well as her own, to school boards, ministers, Apple Canyon, and Galena Territory. Gallagher reminded everyone what Trost said, about how law enforcement is so important; not only to protect our permanent residents, but also our visitors, and they come here because they do feel safe, and this is another thing to make them feel safe. John Lang said that residents expect when they come here to have the same EMS services as they receive elsewhere.

5. New Business:

- a) Possible special session to address leadership priorities and action to support or oppose pending bills.
 - i. John Lang commented that there is an override session coming up in November and December. This is a typical override session and he thinks that there are some pending bills that are going to be held up. He stated that he included a copy of HB5562. He heard something on television the other night that there was a group pushing to get this bill through, but the legislators don't want to act on it until after the November election. The problem is, for a lot of us that have any type of guns, will be illegal if that passes. There's a registration fee if you have certain types of guns and you can't have a magazine capacity over 10. A lot of handguns already come with a capacity of over 10. John Lang stated that it is very possible this bill will come up in the override session, or in the lame duck. He mentioned one of the guns that could be banned would be an AR-15. This is one bill that we need to keep an eye on.
 - ii. Another thing that is becoming a big issue in Illinois, is that ever since Roe vs. Wade was overturned by the Supreme Court, the governor has advertised that Illinois is the most Liberal state in the nation for abortion. He stated that Pritzker was going to talk about COVID and how he had handled those measures, but that a lot of people weren't happy with how he handled it, so now, the big issue is going to be on abortion. They are going to make it known that Illinois is abortion friendly. John Lang read that there were outfits outside of the state that would be moving clinics into Illinois. He expects that there will be something in the General

Assembly at some time to help fund abortions or provide funds for people to come in from out of state. Gallagher said a few years back she checked some numbers, and that there were about 114,000 abortions per year in Illinois. She said she hasn't checked it recently. John Lang read an article recently online. He said that Pritzker had met with people from the East St. Louis area. Missouri passed a restrictive law on abortion. There are a lot of people coming over to Illinois to get abortions done. Gallagher thinks it's an ethical issue and that we need to get our laws separated from ethics.

- iii. There's a constitutional amendment coming up and if it passes in Illinois, this would be affect workers and collective bargaining. When they passed the Safe-T Act, they put in that law, that police departments couldn't negotiate other points like working conditions. If this passes, it would change that. Gallagher asked how this would help retain the businesses that are running out of state. There are three major companies that are leaving Illinois right now. Boeing, Caterpillar, and an investment firm called Ken Griffith who is moving to Florida because he does not feel safe for his employees at this point. This law does not go into effect until January 1st, after the Election.
 - iv. One of the big topics right now is fraud of Unemployment. Three people in the room have received cards for Unemployment even though they had never filed for it. Don Hill spoke up that he also had received the same notice. John Schultz said he contacted the Illinois Department of Employment, and they told him to tear it up, throw it away, and he was added to the list of people that it had happened to. Gallagher questioned why this does not go on to the Attorney General. John Lang said he tried to call and report it, but he never got through. He then reported it online. The problem is that our state fund for Unemployment is now in a major deficit.
 - v. Texas has been sending people to Washington D.C., New York, and Chicago, which are sanctuary cities. Illegal aliens will be issued drivers licenses at no cost, medical care, and they are being housed in DuPage County in a hotel. The State is now picking up the tab for this. John Lang expects at some time there will be legislation to provide funding for this. Gallagher worries about the schools and how special education will be needed, and more language teachers. John Lang said there is a Federal law, that if a certain percent of your students are ESL, you have to have an entire ESL program. So we need to have teachers that can speak that language. Gallagher said it will also bring down the total scores for the school, and it puts the school into that area of concern.
- 6. Further review of Spring Legislative session – Nothing additional to review.
 - 7. Bills committee members or county officials want to discuss or propose.
 - a. John Lang said people received a letter from Andrew Chesney about bills they'd like the see. He would like to see us have a Legislation to make Zoom Meetings legal, so we don't have to do the Emergency Declarations all the time to keep meetings on Zoom. Gallagher supports that because it allows the public more involvement and it goes along with the theme of Democracy. Schultz commented that it helps a lot of people that want to attend the meeting, but have to be out of town, to participate. Gallagher said it would be better to not use 'Zoom', and we

could use the wording of 'Electronic Communication'. She mentioned how she had attended a meeting at Highland Community College with Andrew Chesney, and that he had made some really good comments about things that provide value to our citizens, and this is something that provides value.

- b. The 2-3 cents on the gas tax will be going back on January 1st.
 - c. Another idea is to see if SB0070 can be raised and that was the one on ATV's. John Lang said he could send an email to Chesney. He said he thinks it's a good idea because it will be good for the County. When a vehicle can go as fast as these now do, they need to have good lights, good brakes, and they need to be insured. We could benefit from the economic impact.
 - d. John Schultz said he has been lobbied by Brad Petersburg recently, that for about a year and a half, he has been trying to get the paperwork done for a forestry improvement plan on some of his property. He has had a difficult time getting any further, and wanted some help to possibly get the Farm Bureau to lobby for whatever they need to get done.
8. **Citizens' Comments:** John Grizzoffi introduced himself as a resident of District 10 and that he would be taking over Hendrica Regez's seat after the Election. He will be running unopposed in the November Election, and December 5th will be sworn in. He is a part of the Republican Party. From his perspective, the law enforcement bill 4653, that's why there are a lot of policemen, not only in Illinois, but all over the country, that are retiring, What they have to do to make a report, they cannot be proactive anymore, and there are even a lot more suicides, especially in Chicago, from policemen that can't handle the stress of what's going on anymore. It's a bad situation and if that isn't reversed, it will only get worse.
9. **Board Member Concerns:** None.
10. Next regular meeting will be held on October 13, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.
11. Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m. following a motion made by LaDon Trost. Seconded by John Schultz and motion passed.