

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Social & Environmental
CHAIRPERSON: Lynn Gallagher
DATE/TIME: May 15, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynn Gallagher, Joseph Heitkamp, Dianne Allendorf, Peggy Bastian, Robert Heuerman, and LaDon Trost. A quorum was established. Jacob Ambrosia arrived at 6:48 p.m.

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Angela Kaiser, Nicole Hermesen, and Sandra Schleicher.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairperson Lynn Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **Minutes Approval:**

- a) Minutes of the March 20, 2025 Social & Environmental Committee meeting – Heitkamp/Allendorf **motioned to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025 Social & Environmental Committee meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.**

3. **Citizens' Comments:** None

4. **New Business:**

- a) Discussion and possible action to recommend a revised fare schedule for Jo Daviess County Transit – Hermesen presented the members with some supporting information for a revised fare schedule. The intent is to eliminate the district fare map. She explained that the proposed fares increased for each town Transit already drives to. Many of the rides are already discounted. Gallagher asked if any of those rides are Medicaid-eligible. She asked what would be happening due to the \$880 million cut in Medicaid. Hermesen responded that she was not aware of any direct affect to Transit as a result of the Medicaid cut at the moment, and that she continues to bill Medicaid. She also informed the members that she did comparisons with Uber and Lyft and that Transit is by far less expensive for residents to utilize. There was extensive discussion. **Heitkamp/Bastian motioned to recommend the revised fare schedule for Jo Daviess County Transit as presented. The motion carried by voice vote.**
- b) Discussion and possible action to recommend improving the service area for Jo Daviess County Transit – The discussion from the previous item continued and Hermesen presented a revised service area that would improve operations. There was much discussion. **Bastian/Heuerman motioned to improve the service area for Jo Daviess County Transit as presented. The motion carried by voice vote.**
- c) Discussion and possible action to recommend a resolution to Establish a Capital Development Fund and associated fund description for Jo Daviess County Transit – It has been recently discussed to establish a Capital Development Fund for Transit. It would benefit the department, as it would solely be a shift in funds and how it shows on paper. It's difficult to understand a clear picture of what the operating expenses cost for Transit and this would alleviate that confusion. **Allendorf/Ambrosia motioned to recommend a resolution to Establish a Jo Daviess County Transit Capital Development Fund and associated fund description. The motion carried by voice vote.**
- d) Discussion regarding the creation of a plan for providing senior resource services in Jo Daviess County – There was discussion regarding senior resource services in the county. There are few in the area and the demographic in Jo Daviess County is aging. With the recent cut in Medicaid, there will be a lot of more senior citizens staying in their homes instead of moving into an assisted living facility, or adult daycare. In the past, there was an office for the Senior Resource Center in Hanover. That closed and the resources now come out of Stephenson County and are

very limited. There is an Intergovernmental Agreement currently in place that expires in 2027. The committee will be working on this over the next two years. The services are necessary to seniors and there is a potential to reopen a resource center once the agreement has ended. There was much discussion and the committee will continue to work on this.

5. Reports:

- a) Public Health – Sandra Schleicher presented her monthly report. The spay/neuter program has begun and is well-received. The Mop Shop is looking to offer some basic health screenings and the Health Department will do some outreach there. There was some discussion on the enforcement of ordinances regarding animals. This is a tremendous cost to the department and it would be exponentially higher if cats were regulated like dogs are. Dogs are in the state code, while cats are not. Schleicher explained that enforceability and the feasibility of regulating cats is nearly impossible.
- b) Mental Health Board – There was not a report provided.
- c) Jo Daviess County Transit/PCOM – Nicole Hermsen gave her financial report from March. She spoke about increasing the fares and reducing expenses. If Transit can reduce miles driven, they can reduce their fuel consumption. She explained that while she was looking to cut expenses, the overtime expenses were extensive; however, she has decreased this significantly. FY2025 is looking to be on track with overtime expenses. Starting June-October, the employees who work Saturday and Sunday, will be scheduled less during the week. This will also drastically cut overtime expenses. Hermsen continued to report on the current financials to date.

6. Citizens' Comments: None.

7. Committee Member Concerns: None.

8. Adjourn: Heuerman/Ambrosia motioned to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. The motion carried by voice vote.

Next regular meeting is Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.