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JO DAVIESS COUNTY

FINANCE, TAX, & BUDGETS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 27, 2026

I. Call to Order

Committee Chairperson Schultz called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Thursday, August 27, 2026 in the Jo Daviess County Board Room, Jo Daviess County Courthouse in Galena, Illinois.

II. Roll Call

Roll Call was answered as follows: Present – John Creighton, Michael Dittmar, Diane Gallagher, Michael Holt, John Lang, John Schultz, LaDon Trost. Present: 7. Present electronically: 0. Absent: 0.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 30, 2026, Finance, Tax, & Budgets Committee meeting was made by Diane Gallagher and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.

IV. Citizens' Comments

Melisa Hammer, County Treasurer, stated she had emailed concerns regarding last month's draft minutes and felt they were one-sided and missing items. She requested her objection be noted in the current minutes. Committee members agreed her comments would be included under Citizens' Comments. No other public comments were offered.

V. Unfinished Business

FY2025/FY2027 Strategic Goals: The committee briefly revisited strategic goals and noted no changes since the prior meeting. No discussion or action occurred.

Update on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): The County Administrator reported the Capital Improvement Plan had been updated on the day of the last meeting and no changes had occurred since. No action was required or taken.

VI. New Business

Update on the FY2027 Budget Preparation: The County Administrator reported the FY2027 budget process remained on schedule. Round 2 revenue estimates had been requested from departments with minimal changes. She explained restoration of certain general fund operational targets after departments documented shortfalls caused by last year's methodology, including courthouse utilities, supervisor of assessments educational expenses, and jury costs. The committee supported the proportional dollar-for-dollar restoration approach, with no formal action taken.

The committee discussed the Election Equipment Upgrade Fund (049), which held only minimal remaining dollars and was no longer needed. **A motion to recommend a Resolution to Dissolve and Rescind the Election Equipment Upgrade Fund (049) was made by John Lang and seconded by Diane Gallagher. The motion carried by voice vote.**

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The committee briefly discussed the voluntary dental insurance contract with UnitedHealthcare, reflecting a 7.5% premium increase, the first increase in approximately seven years. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 contract renewal with United Health Care to provide voluntary employee benefit options for dental insurance with a 7.5% premium increase was made by John Schultz and seconded by Michael Dittmar. The motion carried by voice vote.**

A motion to recommend a FY2027 contract renewal with 3E Partners to provide voluntary employee benefit options for accident insurance, critical illness insurance, and hospitalization insurance from Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company with 0% premium increase was made by John Schultz and seconded by Michael Dittmar. The motion carried by voice vote.

The committee reviewed the Medical Associates QHDHP Non-Embedded 2000 Single-Only plan, noting a 10.5% premium increase. The County Administrator reported that all active employees enrolled in single coverage use this plan, and the monthly premium will rise from $999.58 to $1,104.36. Because the plan is non-embedded, a family contract (if it existed) would require one person to meet the full family deductible before reaching the out-of-pocket maximum. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 health insurance contract renewal with Medical Associates Health Plans to provide a Medical QHDHP Non-Embedded 2000 Single-only health insurance plan with a 10.5% premium increase was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.**

The committee discussed the Medical Associates QHDHP 3400/6800 plan, also reflecting a 10.5% premium increase. The County Administrator provided additional clarification on deductible structure: unlike the non-embedded plan, this plan is embedded, meaning each covered individual has their own deductible limit. For example, an employee on a family plan would only need to meet the $3,400 individual deductible, not the $6,800 family deductible, before reaching their out-of-pocket maximum. This distinction was emphasized as a meaningful difference in how costs are experienced by employees. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 health insurance contract renewal with Medical Associates Health Plans to provide a Medical QHDHP 3400/6800 health insurance plan with a 10.5% premium increase was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.**

The committee recommended renewing the Medical Associates Copay 3000/6000 plan with a 10.5% premium increase. It was noted the plan remains available only because it is still referenced in a collective bargaining agreement. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 health insurance contract renewal with Medical Associates Health Plans to provide a Medical Copay 3000/6000 health insurance plan with a 10.5% premium increase was made by John Schultz and seconded by LaDon Trost. The motion carried by voice vote.**

The committee discussed employer HSA contributions for FY2027 and the two-deposit structure in January and July. The County Administrator explained that in accordance with the current CBA's, the single-contract contribution would remain $2,000, while the family-contract contribution would increase to $3,400. The committee noted that the county has historically extended the same employer HSA contribution to non-represented employees as they do to represented employees. Members acknowledged that maintaining these contribution levels helps offset rising deductibles in the high-deductible plans and supports employees’ ability to manage out-of-pocket costs. **A motion to recommend FY2027 Employer HSA contribution amounts of $2,000 for single contracts and**

$3,400 for family contracts to be deposited in January and July was made by John Schultz and seconded by Michael Dittmar. The motion carried by voice vote.

The committee reviewed the FY2027 Premium Allocation Policy, which determines how health insurance premiums are shared between the county and employees. The draft policy reflects the current structure in which the county pays 100% of the premium for single coverage and 80% of the premium for family coverage, with employees paying the remaining 20%. The updated $3,400 family HSA contribution will be incorporated into the policy as recommended in the previous item. During discussion, members noted that employees often do not fully recognize the value of the county's substantial premium contribution, and staff referenced past efforts, such as listing employer costs on pay stubs and providing annual benefit summaries, to improve awareness of total compensation. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 Health Insurance Premium Allocation Policy with an HSA family contribution amount change to $3,400 was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.**

The committee discussed continuing to allow employees with verified outside coverage to receive a $2,000 annual assistance payment. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 Alternative Insurance Assistance Program Policy with no change was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.**

The committee discussed the Voluntary Employee Furlough Program Policy as presented. They noted its usefulness for employees needing extended unpaid leave. **A motion to recommend a FY2027 Voluntary Employee Furlough Program Policy as presented was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.**

A motion to recommend a Resolution to Establish a Surplus Equity Fund (094), Fund Description, and Proposed FY2027 Budget Appropriation of $100,000 was made by Michael Dittmar and seconded by John Schultz. The committee began discussion on establishing the Surplus Equity Fund (094), required under recent statutory changes governing surplus equity from tax deed proceedings. The County Treasurer explained that the fund must be created to comply with the new law and to provide a designated account for holding surplus equity until it is claimed by eligible former property owners. Members acknowledged that the amount of surplus equity in future cases could vary significantly, creating uncertainty about how much initial funding the county should allocate.
During the initial discussion, members questioned whether the proposed $100,000 appropriation was the correct starting point. Several members expressed concern that the amount might be higher than necessary for the first year, given that the county had not yet experienced a surplus-equity claim under the new statute. This led to the first amendment proposal. Supporters of a $50,000 amendment argued that it would still establish the fund as required while minimizing the immediate impact on the general fund. Opposing viewpoints noted that a $50,000 level might be insufficient if a large surplus-equity case arose early in the fiscal year, potentially requiring a mid-year budget adjustment. **A motion to amend the original motion to reflect a budget appropriation of $50,000 was made by Michael Dittmar and seconded by LaDon Trost. The motion to amend failed by roll call vote. Ayes – John Creighton, Michael Dittmar. Ayes: 2. Nays – Diane Gallagher, Michael Holt, John Lang, John Schultz, LaDon Trost. Nays: 5. Absent: 0.**
Following the failure of the $50,000 amendment, a second amendment was discussed to reduce the appropriation from $100,000 to $75,000. Members described $75,000 as a more balanced

figure, lower than the original proposal but still providing a meaningful buffer for potential claims. Discussion reflected a consensus that $75,000 struck a better midpoint between fiscal caution and statutory readiness. **A motion to amend the original motion to reflect a budget appropriation of $75,000 was made by Michael Dittmar and seconded by John Schultz. The motion to amend carried by roll call vote. Ayes – John Creighton, Michael Dittmar, Diane Gallagher, Michael Holt, John Lang, John Schultz, LaDon Trost. Ayes: 7. Nays – None. Nays: 0. Absent: 0.**

With the appropriation amended to $75,000, the committee returned to the main motion as amended. **The original motion as amended to recommend a Resolution to Establish a Surplus Equity Fund (094), Fund Description, and Proposed FY2027 Budget Appropriation of $75,000 carried by voice vote.**

VII. Reports

Assessments: A written report was provided and Laura Edmonds, C.C.A.O. was present to answer questions. She reported completion of the quadrennial assessment cycle, upcoming Board of Review session, exemption updates, and PTAB case work.

Grants Administrator: A written report was provided and Tammy Cahill, Grants Administrator, was present to answer questions. She reported on FY26 grant reconciliation, FY27 agreements, and federal rulemaking delays.

Treasurer: A written report was provided and Melisa Hammer, County Treasurer was present to answer questions.

Financial Reports: Written reports were provided and Angela Kaiser, County Administrator was present to answer questions. She briefly reviewed financial reports showing general fund revenues at 55.67% and expenditures at 69.16% with 67% of the fiscal year elapsed, along with cash balances and tax distribution timing.

VIII. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

IX. Committee Member Concerns

None.

X. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:18 PM by John Lang and seconded by John Schultz. Motion carried by voice vote.

Next committee meeting: Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. *Please note time change*