

**JO DAVIESS COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
JUNE 10, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER: Jo Daviess County Chairperson LaDon Trost called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 in the Jo Daviess County Board Room, Jo Daviess County Administrative Offices in Galena, Illinois.

ROLL CALL was answered as follows: Present – Dianne Allendorf, Peggy Bastian, John Creighton, Michael Dittmar, Steve Endress, Diane Gallagher, Lynn Gallagher, John Grizzoffi, Joseph Heitkamp, Michael Holt, John Lang, John Schultz, and LaDon Trost. Present: 13. Absent – Jacob Ambrosia, Daisha Boehm, and Robert Heuerman. Absent: 3. Vacant: 1.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizens' comments at this time.

Jacob Ambrosia entered the meeting at this time.

READING OF PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE INTO THE MINUTES

Jo Daviess County Transit Director/PCOM Nicole Hermsen read the meeting notice that was published in the Galena Gazette newspaper on May 28, 2025 regarding the Public Hearing for updating the service area plan to better service the residents of Jo Daviess County through general public transportation by Jo Daviess County Transit, to be held on June 10, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the County Board Room in the Jo Daviess County Administrative Offices, 219 Kelly Ln., Galena, Illinois.

OPENING OF PUBLIC HEARING

Chairperson Trost opened the public hearing regarding the proposed service areas serviced by the Jo Daviess County Transit System at 6:33 p.m.

Jo Daviess County Transit Director/PCOM Nicole Hermsen read the following written statement provided by Melinda Dalgarn, Director of The Mop Shop:

Good evening. I appreciate the opportunity to address the Board regarding issues concerning transportation, specifically that provided by Jo Daviess County Transit. I serve as the Director of The Mop Shop located at Lord of Love Lutheran Church in Galena.

Established in 2014, The Mop Shop provides cleaning supplies to residents of Jo Daviess County who self-identify as being in need. Records show that, to date, volunteers have registered 1,865 clients and family members from 10 communities within the County. As a non-501(c)(3), we rely exclusively on the generosity and goodwill of friends, family, banks, businesses, churches, civic organizations, social clubs, athletic leagues and youth groups. The support we have received since we opened our door has been remarkable.

Please let me provide some background information. In December of 2013, my twin sister Missy and I were in what was then the Galena State Bank. As we looked at the angel tree we were surprised and quite frankly saddened by the number of people, both men and women, aged mid-20s to mid-80s, who requested cleaning supplies for Christmas. We thought that just shouldn't be.

Missy and I agreed that we had the time, the means and a deep desire to reach out and address the needs of those less fortunate. Although we'd resided in Galena for just over two years, we'd visited often for over a decade. We were fairly confident that the special community we called home would support efforts to help those in need. Never did we imagine the extent of the community's generosity or the impact The Mop Shop would have on the quality of life of individuals living within Jo Daviess County. The support we have received has been incredible, frequently unexpected and always unsolicited.

Every year, I compile a book that includes photos and text that highlight the year's activities. On our fifth anniversary and again last year as we celebrated our tenth, I invited clients to share their thoughts on The Mop Shop. These are just a few of the comments I received:

"I certainly am thankful for The Mop Shop. It helps me be able to keep my house in shape and my allergies under control. This is a great ministry. It encourages people to be more aware of their surroundings. Thanks from the bottom of my heart. " Darlene

"When I first came to Galena, I had nothing. The Mop Shop provided me with items so I could prepare my home and give it a welcoming feeling. "

"The Mop Shop has been a life saver for me. Being retired, funds are difficult. The pleasure of the team of wonderful ladies has been a bonus for me. Thank goodness and blessings to you all. " Nia

Most of our clients are retired; many have health issues, others no longer drive and some are physically impaired. Jo Daviess County Transit has been a godsend for that population. I have been advised that 224 clients have ridden with JDC Transit in the past year. That's more than double the ridership from 2024! That number is expected to increase in the months ahead.

While clients come for cleaning supplies they frequently stay for coffee, cookies and conversation. It is a social event for them with benefits that should not be overlooked or dismissed.

We know that older adults experience loneliness due to loss of a spouse or friends, decreased mobility or difficulty accessing social activities. The National Institute on Aging reports that social isolation and loneliness are risk factors for depression. And research shows that depression is the most common mental illness among the elderly. It can manifest in various ways, including feelings of sadness, loss of interest, changes in appetite or sleep as well as physical symptoms like fatigue and headaches.

It is worth mentioning that, during the past two years, The Mop Shop has reached out to other social service agencies. We now provide product to clients at Riverview Center and the Jo Daviess County Housing Authority as well as families in local schools. We also partner with Kreider Services to lend a hand to clients no longer able to visit The Mop Shop due to health constraints. Kreider Services makes monthly deliveries to clients in Elizabeth, Stockton, East Dubuque and Scales Mound.

We're all familiar with the adage, "It takes a village. " The Mop Shop is a prime example of that! We couldn't do what we do without our dedicated donors and volunteers. The spirit of collaboration that exists in this County is second to none. If everyone gives a little, the results can exceed all expectations!

The Mop Shop looks forward to serving the County for another decade ... and beyond! I ask you to support our efforts and those of other agencies that assist individuals in need.

Thank you.

Claudia Johnson, present electronically, Manager of the Elizabeth Food Basket, made the following verbal comment:

The Food Basket was established in 1997 due to an outcome from a tragic lack of nutrition. Until 2017 we survived as a totally donation-based organization. In 2017, we became a 501(c)(3) entity and as such being tax exempt, we were able to purchase food from River Bend Food Bank and St. Stephens, which is now part of River Bend Food Bank. Jo Daviess Transit provides very cost-effective means for our clients who no longer drive or don't have reliable transportation to get to the food basket. That way they can access food in a grocery style store setting to maintain their nutrition and health. Having this food access then allows them more funds to pay rent, utilities, and any other services they might need. The Transit is very easily scheduled by phone, which is a bonus, as a majority of our clients are over 65 years of age and are not familiar with computer or phone application functions. If this service would decrease or disappear, due to the lack of funding, it would then nutritionally and health wise, effect our elderly clients who would not be able to get to the food basket, so that they could get food and in the case of The Mop Shop, cleaning supplies. We are here to continue to support the Jo Daviess Transit and allow them to service our clients who come to the food basket. Thank you.

CLOSURE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Chairperson Trost closed the public hearing at 6:40 p.m.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizens' comments at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Diane Gallagher and seconded by John Lang.
The motion carried by voice vote.

Chairperson Trost adjourned the meeting at 6:41 p.m.