



# County Services Committee Minutes

Lee County, Illinois

Sep 11, 2023 at 9:00 AM CDT

Old Lee County Courthouse, Third Floor Boardroom, 112 E 2nd St  
Dixon, IL 61021

## I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m., by Chair Jack Skrogstad.

## II. Committee Member Roll Call: Chair Jack Skrogstad, Katie White, Ron Gascoigne, Reed Akre

Danielle Allen submitted her resignation in August because she was moving out of the County. Katie White and Ron Gascoigne were absent. Jack Skrogstad and Reed Akre attended in person. Keane Hudson was appointed to the committee to satisfy quorum requirements and attended in person.

Also present: Tom Kitson and Mike Koppien (Board Members), Dave Anderson (County Engineer/Highway Department), Charley Boonstra (State's Attorney), Jennifer Boyd (Assessor), Sami Elarifi (GIS Coordinator), Greg Gates (LOTS), Paul Gorski (IT Administrator, left the meeting shortly after he arrived due to wireless connection issues), Alice Henkel (Renewable Energy Coordinator), Jeff Hilden (Facilities Director), Nancy Petersen (County Clerk and Recorder), Wendy Ryerson (Administrator), Chris Tennyson (ROE Regional Superintendent), and Becky Brenner (Board Secretary) all attended in person.

## III. Public Attendees

No members of the public were in attendance.

## IV. Approval of the Minutes from the Previous Meeting - (August 14, 2023)

Minutes from the August 14, 2023, County Services Committee Meeting were approved without modification.

## V. Transportation/Solid Waste

### A. Monthly Report

Dave Anderson walked the committee through the written report that he submitted detailing information from the Highway and Solid Waste Management Departments. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

## VI. Assessor's Office - GIS Department

### A. Assessor's Office

#### 1. Monthly Report

Jennifer Boyd walked the committee through the written report that she submitted detailing information from the Assessor Office. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

2. Action Item

a. Board Action Request Form - Request for CIAO Compensation

Jennifer Boyd explained that she was requesting a budget adjustment for the Assessment Office in the amount of \$16,480. This adjustment would allow for a \$2.00 an hour increase for those employees in the office that received their CIAO Certification. The certification would equip the employees to more efficiently handle the township work that the office has had to absorb. To ease the effect on the general fund, \$18,600 allocated for DEVNET website fees and PAMS maintenance and website fees would be shifted from the general fund to the GIS fund.

**Motion** to move the Assessor's CIAO Compensation request to the Finance Committee for consideration. **Moved** by Reed Akre. **Second** by Keane Hudson. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. GIS Department

1. Monthly Report

Sami Elarifi walked the committee through the written report that he submitted detailing information from the GIS Department. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

VII. County Board

A. Administrator Report

There was no report from the Administrator on behalf of the County Board.

VIII. County Clerk's Office

A. Monthly Report

Nancy Petersen walked the committee through the written report that she submitted detailing information from the County Clerk and Recorder's Office. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

IX. IT Department

A. Monthly Report

Paul Gorski walked the committee through the written report that he submitted detailing information from the IT Department. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

X. LOTS

A. Monthly Report

Greg Gates walked the committee through the written report that he submitted detailing information from LOTS. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

XI. ROE

A. Monthly Report

Chris Tennyson walked the committee through the written report that he submitted detailing information from ROE. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

B. ROE Report of Officials Acts FY23

Chris Tennyson explained that he is required by state statute to submit the Officials Acts Report to the County Board each year recounting activities and achievements within the office. The report will be included in the September County Board agenda packet.

XII. Veterans Assistance

No report from Veterans Assistance.

XIII. Zoning / Planning

A. Monthly Report

Alice Henkel walked the committee through the written report that she submitted detailing information from the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission. This report will be attached to the minutes and included in the September County Board agenda packet.

There were no action items coming from the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Commission.

1. Petitions Going to the Zoning Board of Appeals - None
2. Petitions Coming From the Zoning Board of Appeals - None
3. Petitions Going To the Planning Commission - None
4. Petitions Coming From the Planning Commission - None

XIV. Unfinished Business

There were no items under Unfinished Business.

XV. New Business

There were no items under New Business.

XVI. Executive Session

There was no request for an Executive Session.

XVII. Adjournment

**Motion** to adjourn at 9:33 a.m. **Moved** by Reed Akre. **Second** by Keane Hudson.  
**Motion** carried unanimously by voice vote.

The next County Services Committee is scheduled for  
9:00 a.m., on Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Respectfully submitted by:  
Becky Brenner - Board Secretary

Lee County Highway Department  
Report to the County Services Committee – AUGUST 2023

The following represents a report of notable Highway Department activities and explanations of requested board actions:

**Status of Current Projects**

1. County/Township Crack Fill – Not started
2. Township and County Seal Coat – Complete
3. Bradford Twp. HMA – Complete
4. Dixon Twp. HMA – Complete
5. May Twp. HMA – Complete
6. Palmyra Twp. HMA – Complete
7. South Dixon HMA – Widening complete. Waiting for HMA
8. Sublette Twp. HMA – Complete
9. Viola Twp. HMA – Complete
10. County Shoulder Stone – Complete
11. Nelson Road Bridge Deck Patching - Complete
12. Rockford Road FDR and HMA – Complete
13. Brooklyn Road Box Culvert – Bottom slab complete, walls and top slab to be placed week of 9/11/23.
14. Steward Road Curb and Gutter for ICC/BNSF light and gates project - Complete

The projects above represent approximately \$5,000,000 and involve 30 individual projects.

**Other:**

**Board Action Items:**

*None*

**Solid Waste**

Electronics will be accepted until November 3. The program will shut down for the winter and reopen in April.

ASSESSMENT OFFICE/GIS DEPARTMENT  
COUNTY SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT  
September 7, 2023

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1. 2023 assessment work (Quadrennial Townships: Alto, Reynolds, Viola, Willow Creek; Brooklynn, Wyoming):
  - a. Processing commercial work – all townships
  - b. Some commercial field inspections still need to be done
  - c. Working on land values for the quadrennial townships
  
2. Focus on how to work more efficiently and accurately with equity to the taxpayers is continuing:
  - We had our Kickoff meeting with TrueRoll which is the Homestead Tax Exemption Audit Platform that I mentioned last month. This was a zoom meeting that the entire assessment staff was able to sit in on and they are very excited about getting this platform in the future.
    - We provided the county tax roll to TrueRoll
    - TrueRoll is preparing the data and our platform should be ready soon (end of September approximately).
    - Initial training will take place in the coming weeks; follow up after BOR wraps up in January/February to process full list.
  
3. Board Action Request: Budget Adjustment/Compensation for Employee CIAO Certification

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Boyd, CCAO  
Supervisor of Assessments

**GIS Department Report**  
**September 7, 2023**

- Updating and maintaining the parcel data, land use, and zoning layers.
- Updating and maintaining the 911 Flex Map to the most recent information supplied by the 911 Center to meet robust public safety quality standards.
- Farm values have been calculated and exported to the land records software, Devnet, for the quadrennial reassessments of District 4.
- I've handled scanning and printing requests from several county departments.
- Maintenance has been carried out on the large format printer to maintain its condition and performance, including replacing the new print head, maintenance cartridge, and ink cartridges.
- Working on the new ArcGIS Enterprise deployment project with Cloudpoint Geospatial:
  - Rebuild the main Portal for ArcGIS contents and the GIS web applications.
  - Move some of the dashboards from the previous deployment to the new deployment.
  - Modify and validate the Python scripts used for the daily automated data publishing.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sami Elarifi  
GIS Coordinator



COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER  
REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 11TH COMMITTEE MEETING

I have a new hire, her name is Hollie Peterson her start date was September 5<sup>th</sup>. She is Starting her training in Vital Records side and evidently, she will be trained in Recording and Then Election. Please stop by and say hi!

The new beneficiary forms went out via email from Penny. We are still missing several. Please get these to my office ASAP. The deadline was the end of August.

I need to stress to all departments that when one of your employees retires or resigns Penny Needs to know to remove this person from the county insurance/life insurance programs.

**September 5<sup>th</sup> was the first day to circulate** petitions for established party candidates seeking nomination. The Election office has packets available for pick up, or you can find the petition forms online at SBE website. **The first day you can file is Monday November 27th. Last day to file is Monday December 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**General Primary is March 19, 2024. General Election is November 5, 2024.** Lee County Board 10 Seats up for election. 2 Seats in District 1 (Koppien and Gascoigne) Signature requirements Are: a minimum of 14 signatures. 3 in District 2 (White, Mimini, and Akre) will need minimum. of 14 signatures, 4 in District 3 (Hudson, Naylor, Wilson, and Pearson) -will need a minimum of 11 signatures, and 2 in District 4 (Freil and Skrogstad) will need a minimum of 14 signatures.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Petersen".

Nancy Petersen  
Lee County Clerk & Recorder



*IT Department*  
*Paul Gorski, IT Director*  
www.leecountyil.com

September 7, 2023

## IT Board Report

1. New Courts keycard reader upgrades are expected to be installed in first week of October. This project has been delayed due to scheduling conflicts for the vendor, but the vendor assures me this work will start in October.
2. Cybersecurity training is ongoing until staff has completed the training. Staff who have not completed the training will be reminded to do so later this month.
3. IT continues to support the Karpel court case management system upgrades in the State's Attorney and Public Defender offices. The Public Defender's office has completed its training and is using Karpel now. Thank you to Kevin Lalley for arranging the use of EMA/EOC space for this training.
4. IT completed network wiring work in the EMA Emergency Response Trailer to make networking connections more reliable.
5. The air conditioning unit for the LEC jail area IT server room has been repaired, thank you to Jeff Hilden, Greg Saunders and maintenance staff for effecting repairs.
6. Our BEST Inc. intern Fernando Castro Jr. has completed his service with the county and moved on to further his IT Cybersecurity education. I thank BEST staff for their assistance in placing Mr. Castro in my department. Fernando was an excellent an employee and I wish him the best luck in his future. The BEST partnership benefits the county, the interns, and the community, preparing local residents for good jobs. I encourage our department heads to investigate BEST-placed intern opportunities when appropriate for their departments.
7. We have other items on our to-do list, contact me with questions.

Thank you.

Paul Gorski  
IT Director  
Lee County, IL  
815-285-8166  
pgorski@countyoflee.org



**Report to County Services Committee of Lee County Board**  
September 11, 2023 | 9:00 AM

**1) DEVELOPMENTS**

**a) Visit to LOTS by Congressman Darin LaHood**

- i) On Thursday, August 31, 2023, Congressman Darin LaHood visited Lee Ogle Transportation System touring the facility as well as sitting down for an update on public transportation locally.
- ii) Congressman LaHood has presented a \$2.9472 capital construction project proposed by LOTS to the House Appropriations Committee for an expansion of the administrative building. Additional offices as well as the construction of a new conference room has been proposed.
- iii) The funding request from LOTS, one of 15 submitted by Congressman LaHood, was submitted under Congressman LaHood's 2024 Community Funding Project Requests.

**b) Hydrogen Fuel Feasibility Study**

- i) LOTS is working with the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign on a feasibility study proposal to the US Department of Transportation that will assess the potential use of hydrogen (and its local production) in public transportation vehicles.
  - (1) An application has been submitted to the Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Grant program of Build America program of the US DOT.
  - (2) Total funding request for the 18-month project is estimated at \$360,000
  - (3) Award announcements for this funding are expected by no later than October.
- ii) The proposal will also be submitted to the Illinois Center for Transportation for funding consideration.

**c) Pending Agreement with Dixon Family YMCA**

- i) Operational Staff are working with the Dixon Family YMCA on an agreement to transport middle school students from Reagan Middle School to the Y on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- ii) The arrangement will be modeled after the existing agreement LOTS has with the Dixon Park District

**d) Reagan Mass Transit District**

- (1) The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is reviewing the Definitive Agreement, which outlines the transition of assets to RMTD.
  - (a) State's Attorneys for Lee and Ogle Counties have already reviewed and given consent to the content.
  - (b) Once finalized, the Definitive Agreement will be presented to the Lee County Board and Ogle County Board.
- (2) RMTD held an initial meeting with Region 1 Planning Council, Winnebago County Board, Rockford Mass Transit District and Rural Transit Assistance Center regarding public transportation services for "rural" Winnebago County.
  - (a) Initial draft budget for public transportation services was sent to Region 1 with a follow-up meeting held on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, in Rockford.

**e) City of Rochelle Feasibility Study / Technical Assistance Grant (Awarded) from IDOT**

- i) Lee County / LOTS reviewed proposals for the Technical Assistance Grant for Rochelle and chose RLS Associates as the successful bidder. IDOT has given their concurrence on this choice.
  - (1) The expected timeframe for completion of this Technical Assistance/Feasibility Study 6-9 months with completion anticipated by summer of 2024.
  - (2) Focus of the Feasibility Study is to consider the development of a fixed route for public transportation in the City of Rochelle.

**f) City of Dixon Feasibility Study / Technical Assistance Grant (Awarded) from IDOT**

- i) Lee County / LOTS reviewed proposals for the Technical Assistance Grant for the City of Dixon and chose RLS Associates as the successful bidder. IDOT has given concurrence on this choice.

- (1) The expected timeframe for completion of this Technical Assistance/Feasibility Study 6-9 months with completion anticipated by summer of 2024. This feasibility study will run concurrently with the Feasibility Study of the City of Rochelle.
- (2) Focus of the Feasibility Study is to consider the development of a fixed route for public transportation in the City of Dixon.

**g) Budget/Contracts for FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)**

- (1) Executed contracts for State Fiscal Year 2024 are as follows:
  - (2) Contractual amounts for FY 2024 are as follows:
    - (a) 5311 Contract: \$282,700 \*
    - (b) 5311F Contract (I-88): \$1,100,000 \*
    - (c) 5311F Contract (I-39): \$929,606 \*
    - (d) DOAP Contract: \$1,555,840
- \* These are being combined into a single contract by IDOT

**h) Ride Data for SFY 2024 (July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023)**

	July, 2023	August, 2023	Total for Period
<b>RIDES</b>	<b>7,074</b>	<b>7,254</b>	<b>14,328</b>
<b>SERVICE HOURS</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>2,179</b>	<b>4,077</b>
<b>MILES OF SERVICE</b>	<b>49,905</b>	<b>63,372</b>	<b>113,277</b>
<b>FUEL COST</b>	<b>\$20,236.98</b>	<b>\$25,392.26</b>	<b>\$45,629.24</b>

**i) Vehicle Procurement**

- (1) LOTS collaboration with IDOT on a federal proposal to the Low/No Emission Grants.
  - (a) LOTS will procure two (2) electric buses via this proposal
- (2) LOTS has submitted the order for two (2) electric vehicles to the Michigan Department of Transportation. IDOT promoted this relationship, as it does not currently have electric vehicles on its state vehicle contract, although they will likely add EVs in the near future.
- (3) LOTS will also likely be the recipient of several “standard” fuel vehicles via a second federal grant – Buses and Bus Facilities – that IDOT wrote and were awarded funding for.

**j) Vehicle Disposal Approved by IDOT**

- i) IDOT has given its approval for the disposal of nine (9) existing vehicles of LOTS/Lee County
- ii) This disposal means LOTS/Lee County will have direct control over these vehicles, several of which are beyond repair and will be sold for junk.
- iii) The other vehicles may continue to be used in the system and/or sold out right with the profits going to operational needs of the system.

**k) Architectural/Engineering Firm / Oregon facility construction**

- i) Pre-award concurrence has been received from IDOT. Larson and Darby, an architectural firm out of Rockford has been secured for the A&E process.
- ii) Architectural and Engineering firm will provide two (2) design options for Oregon facility
- iii) This project is part of LOTS application under REBUILD Round 1

**l) Architectural/Engineering Firm / Addition to Dixon Facility**

- i) An architectural and engineering firm – Willett Hoffman – was selected for the addition project on to the Reagan Transit Center.
- ii) Project includes development of new offices at Reagan Transit Center and secured file room/storage room. Geothermal and Solar technologies will be incorporated into complex
- iii) This project is part of LOTS application under REBUILD Round 2

**2) OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL RELATED DEVELOPMENTS**

**a) Capital Funding / REBUILD Round 1**

- i) Application includes Construction of new Oregon location
- ii) Furnishings and equipment for Oregon facility
- iii) Implementation of video surveillance cameras into 17 of LOTS’ buses and minivans (completed)
- iv) Three (3) new buses (Ford transit type vehicles)

**b) Capital Funding / REBUILD Round 2**

- (1) Notice of State Award being processed by IDOT
- (2) LOTS Proposal will allow for the following:



- (a) Two electric vehicles for use in the LOTS system
- (b) Three (3) new offices at Reagan Transit Center and secured file room/storage room
- (c) Develop new Conference Room between Reagan Transit Center and Mechanical Bay
- (d) Geothermal and Solar technologies will be incorporated into complex

**c) Capital REBUILD Round 3**

- i) IDOT announced that Lee County/LOTS will receive \$62,500 for the purchase of 2 service vehicles
- ii) The original proposal included the following:
  - (1) Add 72-feet onto the existing bus barn at Reagan Transit Center,
    - (a) This will provide for an additional twelve (12) slots for buses
  - (2) Add another bay onto the existing mechanical building
  - (3) Purchase service vehicles including one for maintenance

**REAGAN**  
**MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT**



## **Regional Office of Education Report**

**September 2023**

### **Regional Office of Education Health Life Safety**

We have begun our health life safety inspections last week. We will be inspecting all 24 school districts and 73 buildings in total. The state requires that each of the 4000 public school buildings and school related buildings in the state is inspected annually to assure compliance with the minimum standards necessary to ensure the health and safety of public school students in Illinois, according to Building Specifications for Health and Safety in Public Schools. By law, school districts must maintain public schools to the minimum standard. Annual inspection results from each building are available at the Regional Office of Education. A summary report is filed annually with the Illinois State Board of Education as required by law.

Every 10 years all public school buildings must be resurveyed by an architect licensed by the State of Illinois. All work necessary to bring the building into compliance with minimum standards is noted. Upon completion of outlined work, compliance is verified by the district and architect in a report filed with the Regional Office of Education.

The Regional Office of Education is also responsible, through the Regional Superintendent of Schools, for statutory compliance with established standards in the construction and remodeling of public school buildings. The Regional Superintendent assures school board approval by resolution of construction plans, review of construction plans for code compliance, issuance of the building permit, and upon review, issuance of school occupancy permits. Further, the Regional Superintendent assures code compliance for temporary/mobile classroom units throughout the region.

### **Professional Learning & Educational Services**

<b>Current Programs - Office of Professional Learning &amp; Educational Services</b>
Induction & Mentoring

Community Partnership Grant
Education Pathway Endorsement
Manufacturing & Agriculture Endorsement Programs
Elevating Special Educators
School Improvement & Strategic Planning
School Improvement Cooperative (instructional coaching, training, networking)
Social Emotional Learning/Trauma/Youth Mental Health First Aid/TRS I-A
Early Childhood Professional Learning
Family Education & Engagement

**Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: School Improvement**

**Professional Learning**

- Science of Reading Cohort through LETRS is preparing to launch for 2023-24. We have 84 teachers and administrators who will participate in the cohort.
- Summer learning and institute support has wrapped up. Professional Learning staff are accepting registrations for fall learning.

**Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Community Outreach**

- Our first community baby shower was held on Saturday, July 8th in Dixon
- Over 1100 backpacks with school supplies were distributed to families in Lee, Ogle & Whiteside counties on Wednesday, July 26th and Tuesday, August 8 as part of our new School Supply Closet.
- Our Back to School Bash was held Saturday, August 5th. The event featured free backpacks and school supplies for students, a photo booth, back to school books, a Kindle giveaway, and access to representatives from our community and social service agencies. In total, 122 children and parents attended the event.

- ROE 47 Family Engagement staff participated in the Paw Paw Back to School event on Saturday, August 19th. The team facilitated family-child interactions through several BlockFest stations, giant connect 4, and a family photo booth. Information on ROE 47 programming and services was also provided to families and caregivers.
- Our Family Engagement staff has interacted with thousands of families this summer at community events and festivals. Children have really enjoyed playing giant Connect 4, coloring, blowing bubbles, and engaging in block play.

## Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Social Media

The department's social media presence continues to grow. Like our page on Facebook (Regional Office of Education #47) and download our ROE47 App for weekly teacher talks, instructional tips, news, giveaways, updates & more! Follow us on Twitter @RegionalOffice47

Want to hear from educators & students in the classroom? Check out our Teacher Talks on YouTube!

## Upcoming Events

# TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY SERIES

### SERIES SESSIONS:

- **SESSION 1:**  
Understanding & Leveraging the Power of Blockfest  
August 31, 2023  
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **SESSION 2:**  
Discovering & Developing Your Style of Leadership  
November 30, 2023  
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **SESSION 3:**  
Designing & Building a Strong Team Culture  
February 29, 2024  
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **SESSION 4:**  
Defining & Recapturing Healthy Classrooms  
June 18, 2024  
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Gain valuable insights on topics essential to the health and success of your individual schools and districts

Administrators will receive:

- Tailored coaching that is focused on helping build practical leadership strategies to support teachers, students, and families
- Partnerships to encourage your journey
- Immediate implementation steps for transforming your district

**24 PD Hours; Administrator Academy Credit available**  
**Cost: Free for Ed Pathway Partner District Administrators;**  
**\$500 co-op members; \$1000 non co-op members**  
**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, JULY 14**

To register for this series, please visit [roe47.org](http://roe47.org) and click on the [Workshops](#) link at the top of the page.

Academy leader **Tom Toney** is the founder of KUEST Student Leadership, a non-profit organization focused on developing systems, resources and training for empowering students and educators. Over the last thirty years, Tom has authored more than twenty student leadership and character development books, manuals and resources. As a certified DISC Personality Consultant, Tom coaches businesses and teams through his online CAB University system.




**Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Professional Learning Events**

Check out ALL of our opportunities [HERE](#)

**August Participants - 169**

Wednesday, August 2

New Teacher Networking @ SVCC

Thursday, August 3

Behavioral Threat Assessment Team Training @ SVCC

Monday, August 7

Attendance Support Program Training @ SVCC

Tuesday, August 8

Short-Term Substitute Teacher Training @ 9:00 am

Mentor Teacher Training for Pathways @ Amboy High School

Wednesday, August 9

LETRS Kickoff Session @ SVCC

Tuesday, August 29

LETRS Check-In Session @ 3:30 pm

Thursday, August 31

Transformational Leadership Academy Series @ SVCC

**August in Photos**



BACK TO SCHOOL BASH!  
AUGUST 19, 2023



### Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: NEXUS

Our Nexus team has been working with our participating school districts to prepare the new and returning staff for the next school year to support our families. We have been presenting in front of some teachers and staff at some of our districts to educate our teachers on the support we are offering. Even though we haven't hit Labor Day just yet, we are already planning on the support and the logistics of supporting our families over the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday seasons. It may seem early, but it takes a lot of planning and preparation to support families in this way over three counties, but we are blessed to be a part of their time. We always seek food and holiday gift donations to bless our families who work so hard with us throughout the school year.

## Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Student Attendance Support

Our Attendance Team is now fully assembled. We are meeting with individual school districts and did a three-county training in August. We have also met with one of our three counties Assistant State's Attorney's Office to talk about the court process and how we can work more effectively. We hope to get meetings scheduled with the remaining two counties within the next month. Our Attendance Support Program is gathering research on evidence-based practices to help our students reach attendance goals in a non-punitive and trauma-informed approach. We ask our communities to unite to support students' attendance needs and struggles. Chronic absenteeism is not just a school issue or an ROE issue. It is a more significant systemic issue that requires all hands to support our children in understanding the importance of attending school and how it can impact their learning. We know students miss school for various reasons, and it will take our community to support it.

### Parents as Teachers First Years

It's only the end of August and we are already almost fully enrolled! What a change from a from the COVID years when we had a hard time finding families who wanted to participate. The marketing and recruitment efforts of the last several years have paid off with more community agencies aware of our program and making referrals to us.

We have settled into our new space and are planning an open house in September for our families to show them our offices and our newly organized lending library. If you have not seen our space yet, feel free to stop in for a tour. We want it to feel welcoming and friendly and tried to set up a space that families would feel comfortable visiting.

#### *In Other Early Childhood News...*

Early in 2023, the Sauk Valley STARS Early Childhood Education Coalition/ROE team finished up our Community-Based Planning for Expansion project with Illinois Action for Children and as a final wrap-up, some of the planning committee met with a video team from Illinois Action for Children to record our thoughts on the process. Check out the following short videos summarizing the project.

- Overview of the Community-Based Planning Project: <https://youtu.be/JvHMEEU3IRk>
- Sauk Valley STARS: <https://youtu.be/YiQqjHysokE>

The Sauk Valley STARS Early Childhood Education Coalition/ROE team also spent the last year working with the Illinois Birth to Five Region 47 Action Council to develop a needs assessment for our three county service area. The Early Childhood Regional Needs assessment has been released and is available for dissemination.

If you would like to set up a meeting to discuss the Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessment or need digital resources for social media or a newsletter, we encourage you to reach out to Abby Hoskins, the Regional Manager for Region 47. Her email address is [ahoskins@birthtofiveil.com](mailto:ahoskins@birthtofiveil.com). We are interested in connecting with as many community members

as possible to gather feedback on the report and would love to have your input. Abby will also be willing to present the information learned through the needs assessment to a larger group such as the county board.

The full report and a 2-page infographic can be found here:

Website (to full report and infographic): <https://www.birthtofiveil.com/region47/#report>

PDF Links:

Report:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61ba6b3017614378f01ce468/t/64baca7761744d40e7488f01/1689963141353/Region\\_47\\_Needs\\_Assessment.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61ba6b3017614378f01ce468/t/64baca7761744d40e7488f01/1689963141353/Region_47_Needs_Assessment.pdf)

Infographic:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61ba6b3017614378f01ce468/t/64c3ecfb43f01c62f8045ea7/1690561787380/47+Infographic.pdf>

## **Education Outreach Program**

August has come in as fast as it has gone! Just as many school districts are feeling the urgency, we at the Education Outreach Program have had many requests to get classes started up for our students as well!

With classes in full swing, we are introducing our students to our Whiteside County Teacher, [Jill Marciniac](#). Jill comes to us after retiring from Dixon High School as a Special Education Teacher who helped many students, both in school and through her outreach and tutoring. With her knowledge also comes a love for making connections with youth and young adults and we know she will thrive in this program! Jill is available and holds class every Tuesday and Wednesday from 8am to 4pm.

These young adults are busy studying for GED testing, working with the Business Employment Skills Team (BEST, Inc.) developing resumes and attending Sauk certification programs all with the help of our program. We look forward to our 7 new intakes following through with the process and guiding them to their success story.

## **McKinney Vento Homeless Program**

The beginning of the school year brings its own unique opportunities. Identification is key. Grant funding allows for much support to help our students have the tools to allow for the best possible educational success. All district staff play a key role in making that happen. Therefore, having the entire district staff aware and informed is a vital key for the success of this program and the students we are serving.

## Regional Center for Change



### August/September At a Glance

- Theme for the Month of August/September "We are Family"
- September is Suicide Prevention Month
- Let it Begin! Door Decorating Contest "We are Family" Doors judged on Thursday, September 28th
- Friday, September 29th Assembly at 8:30 am
- Enrollment as of 9/01/23
  - Total Options = 42
  - Total RSSP = 14
  - TOTAL = 56

### Moving Hearts - Weekly award given to a special staff member

*Mom!!!! One word and I bet most of you think of the same person, Angie! My Moving Heart for this week is Angie, the mom of the school! She loves fiercely and will do anything for our students! Attending events outside of school, messaging with students when they are struggling, crocheting things for young mothers and staff. She does it all! Angie's story is personal and she will do anything for her school kids and her own children! Way to go Angie you are a moving heart!*



**MONTHLY ZONING AND PLANNING REPORT**  
September 11, 2023 – County Services Committee

**ACTIONS COMING FROM THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – None**

**ACTIONS GOING TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – None**

**ACTIONS COMING FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION – None**

**ACTIONS GOING TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION – None**

**OTHER ACTIONS FROM THE ZONING OFFICE –**

- Petition 23-P-1616, by Petitioner Wiggins Solar, LLC, PPN# 18-08-11-400-014, requesting a Special Use for a Community Solar Energy System, in South Dixon Township, was previously sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals to be heard starting August 3, 2023. On August 3, 2023, the Zoning Board of Appeals moved to continue the hearing to September 7, 2023 due to Petitioner having an issue meeting the notification requirements. On September 7, 2023, due to a scheduling issue on behalf of the Petitioner, the Zoning Board of Appeals moved to continue the start of the hearing to October 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.
- Petition 23-AP-1617, by Petitioner Greg Castello, PPN# 15-07-20-180-002, an appeal of the Zoning Administrator's final decision and determination of a zoning violation dated May 30, 2023 in Nelson Township, was previously sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals to be heard on August 3, 2023. On August 3, 2023, on the agreement of both the Appellant Greg Castello and the Zoning Office, the hearing was continued to September 7, 2023, to allow both parties time to prepare for a hearing. On September 7, 2023, the Zoning Board of Appeal again moved to continue the hearing to October 5, 2023, on the agreement of both parties, to allow time to clarify the initial violation and for the Appellant to appropriately respond.
- Shady Oaks Wind 2, LLC has remobilized their contractor to the project site to energize the substation and circuits. The turbine supplier will be mobilized when the substation is energized to start operating the 22 turbines. They plan to commission and test the week of September 12<sup>th</sup> and the commercial operation date is set for on or before October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Shady Oaks Wind 2, LLC petitioned the County for a special use permit for the purpose of constructing and operating a wind energy system under Petition No. 20-P-1552. The County Board voted to approve the petition, with conditions, under Ordinance No. 07-20-006, on July 11, 2020.

- Petitioners Crawford 1 Solar, LLC and Crawford 1A Solar, LLC are in contact with the Zoning Office about the requirements necessary to apply for a building permit. Petitioners petitioned the County for a special use permit for the construction and operation of a co-located community solar energy system under Petition Nos. 22-P-1598 and 22-P-1599. The County Board voted to approve Petition No. 22-P-1598, with conditions, under Resolution No. 2022-12-004, on December 27, 2022. The County Board also voted to approve Petition No. 22-P-1599, with conditions, under Resolution No. 2022-12-005, on December 27, 2022.
- A third-party engineer from Chastain & Associates, working on behalf of the County, has been deployed to the GSG Wind repower project site. The Zoning Office is receiving weekly status updates regarding the project progression and ordinance compliance. Copies of the weekly reports can be found in the “Collective Information for September Meetings” folder in OnBoard. Petitioner GSG Wind, LLC petitioned the County for a special use permit for the purpose of a complete repower of an existing wind farm. The County Board approved this petition, with conditions, under Resolution No. 07-22-008, on July 21, 2022.
- On September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, the Zoning Office will be closed as Renewable Energy Coordinator Alice Henkel will be attending the Illinois Renewable Energy Conference in Bloomington-Normal, while Zoning Administrator Dee Duffy is on vacation. The conference is presented by Strategic Economic Research and sponsors include some familiar names such as Recall Strategies, Invenergy, Leeward Renewable Energy, Enel and SunPower by Legacy Solar. The conference will provide insights into industry trends; opportunities to network with clean energy policy makers/industry leaders/contractors/educators/students; information how new state and federal clean energy legislation will grow renewable energy in Illinois; and information how to equitably grow the clean energy workforce. A copy of the agenda can be found in the “Collective Information for September Meetings” folder in OnBoard.
- Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act (505 ILCS 5). Since 1980, landowners in Illinois have had a tool available to them that can help preserve farmland for at least 10 years. The Illinois Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act allows one or more landowners to voluntarily place their land into a protected district, often called an “ag area,” with the approval of the local county board. Although it is only one tool in farmland protection, it can offer some assistance in maintaining farmland for farming purposes. Ag areas may also help protect farmers from some aspects of the encroachment of nearby development and possibly assist them in responding to any complaints from residents new to the rural area. A copy of the “Ag Areas Introduction” flyer from the Lee County Farm Bureau can be found in the “Collective Information for September Meetings” folder in OnBoard.
- The Zoning Office has processed thirty-six (36) building permits for the month of August.
- Total permit fees collected in August - \$6,529.50