

Rock Island County Finance & Personnel Committee, Dr. Luis Moreno Chairman
February 10th, 2026

1504 3rd Avenue Room 210, Rock Island, IL. 61201

Dr. Luis Moreno called the February 10th, 2026 Finance & Personnel Committee meeting to order at 8:34am

1. Roll Call: Dr. Luis Moreno, Dr. Rodney Simmer (8:35am), Kai Swanson, Bob Perkins, Brian Vyncke. Edna Sowards joined the meeting via zoom at 8:34am

Finance Chair Moreno noted that Edna Sowards is unable to attend due to her still recovering from surgery. Motion to approve: Brian Vyncke Second: Kai Swanson

Also Present: Ryan Berger, Nick Camlin, Bridgett Edgeworth, Jim Nelson, Jared VanTieghem, Captain Mindy Meyers, Karren Kinney, April Palmer, Amy Allman, Jim Grafton, Richard Brunk, Derrick Hendrickx, Drue Mielke, Erin Hughes, Patty Castro, Tammy Weikert.

2. Public Comment: NONE

3. Approval of minutes from the Tuesday January 13th Finance & Personnel Committee meeting

Motion to approve: Bob Perkins Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

motion carried via voice vote

4. Reports to the Committee

- County Auditor April Palmer thanked the committee for continuing using Baker-Tilly as our County Auditing Service.
- County Treasurer Nick Camlin reported that the County will retire the debt for Hope Creek on Friday the 13th of February in the amount of \$653,438.30 for ongoing retiree costs from when that was operating. Then all that is left is a little over \$2M in Bond and interest payments ending December of 27 of this year.
- County Clerk Karen Kinney gave a brief report on the early voting. Brian Vyncke asked about the mail ballots, Karen answered that some went out last Friday and the rest went out yesterday.
- County Finance Director Ryan Berger gave a report on changes to the budget from the IT department will be managing the same way the budget is prepared and approved. On the line item level. Now the dollars you approved, as an example for professional services need to be used and will only be used for professional services unless the office requests a transfer. Right now, the system just pulls from various lines and doesn't tell you which line it pulls money from. This will provide some budget clarity and lines won't be able to go negative any longer and it is also going to kind of clear up our future budgets because the might be lines that have too much money. There also might be lines that don't have enough. So, at the end of all of this it will be the first time we are using new money resolutions that have journals that pull directly from the system. So, I am no longer typing resolutions that information comes directly out of the system. This will reduce the possibility for errors. It will also help the Auditors Office so they do not have to look at all the resolutions for errors. On your end the system will tell you when you are out of money on a line. Just send me an email or a call to let me know you got that message and we will adjust it.

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

Second: Bob Perkins

Voice vote

motion carried via voice vote

5. Consider Delinquent Tax Resolutions: None

6. Consider Treasurer's Office Temporary Cashier Training Position

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

Second: Bob Perkins

Discussion: Treasurer Camlin informed the committee that his head cashier retiring August 22nd. I would like to bring someone in within a month, March 24th or so, to be able to train for tax season. This not only will be budget neutral but will be budget positive, we will still be sending salary money back to the county. This will be important a week after her retirement we will be taking payments for taxes with someone who knows her stuff and we can keep everything balanced.

Voice vote

Motion carried

7. Consider Renewal Agreement for Jail Medical Services Provider

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

Second: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Discussion: Captain Mindy Meyers explained that this is a one year contract renewal for our jail medical service provider Advanced Correctional Health with a 4% increase and this has already been budgeted.

Voice vote

Motion carried

8. Consider Animal Care and Control 3 part time Positions

Motion to approve: Brian Vyncke

Second: Bob Perkins

Discussion: County Administrator Jim Grafton explained that there has been a lot of discussion about Animal Care & Control I think that the request for help and this will be part-time help. We have 21 employees and 4 of those employees are part-timers. That compares to Sangamon County and they have the same number of employees. With the current staff that we have just with the benefit package not including sick time we need to cover 1,720 hours per year so that was the request for part-time help to fill in that is a full-time employee. This is unlike some of the other operations where you can go without we have to have coverage. So, that is what initiated the need for the part-time help. What I was looking at is what causes the need for additional help and that is the population out there. I have a graph that shows one year and it is a similar trend that we have had for the last three years. Early in the year the numbers are down and toward the fall in October we peak out. What is our capacity in the fall there are animals in the hallways, in the garage the fact is we have to take all of them all the strays from all the cities. We have a total of 86 dog runs, 187 cat crates. So, our census was over 503 cats and dogs in October. That means if you look at it mathematically, cleaning out litter and dog runs 7 to 10 minutes per crate or run if they are good at it and mathematically that is 6 ½ hours per person on an 8-hour shift that is where we are currently at, but in October when we were peaked out at over 500 now it will take 13 hours. So, something has to give almost like we need some seasonal help during the peak time of the year. That initiated the discussion and what is really the problem this is a cycle that we follow and why do we have low numbers in the spring. The fact is we have to take them in. Last year we brought in 1,630 cats and 1,414 dogs. A total of over 3,000 animals came in our adoptions were over 1,000 last year and we average 35 adoptions a day. We have a lot of animals coming in and a lot of animals going out. The only time we do any euthanasia if it relates to a medical issue or a vicious animal. The unfortunate thing with the vicious dog is the legal process they have to go through. That legal process consumes a lot of time for the Director and her assistant. With 21 employees that puts us a kind of a stretch when we need the people. So, the answer to the request for 3 employees last month we are ok right now we

could use a person to get them started. Erin is here to help. When you put extra pressure on the staff then you slip. People decide they don't want to show up, they are over worked. There is a niche for employees that don't want to work full time but they want to work part time. They love being around animals, but don't make me do it every weekend or 40 or 50 hours per week. That is the reason I had the ask for the part-timers. What is the measure of success at Animal Care and Control it is a service that we provide, these animals are not running at large in the other cities they pick them up at animal control and they are done. We have to house them for a period of time until they are adopted. I am looking at a variety of ways to help control the population. Now that we know we are going to get slammed in the fall lets get more aggressive in working on adoptions prior to that and hire enough help to take care of the animals that typically come in during the fall and just try to be a little more creative with adoptions. That would be promoting adoptions with an electronic sign. With some work on the website to help promote adoptions. My goal is to provide the Animal Care and Control Director with the tools that she needs to do her job. Mr. Swanson said he knows the State Code says we have to accept them but does the State Code say we have to be a no-kill other than illness or vicious. Mr. Swanson said the reason he is asking is because he has great compassion for the staff and the leadership, but as your numbers describe we are taking in three times more than we are adopting and that is unsustainable and I have compassion for the animals but by your description we have more animals than we have dog runs and kitty crates. Because we have adopted a management philosophy that says only in cases of sickness or vicious which would need to be proved over a long period of time can we actually euthanize an animal. I am glad you looked at Sangamon County, but it would also be constructive to see what Sangamon County census is. I have been here long enough to know that we say you can't really compare us to other Counties. That has usually resulted in a great deal of downstream trouble for us. Whether the subject is nursing homes, insurance for elected County Board Members or anything else like that. So, you can't really compare and I don't think that is really helpful to us with this management philosophy. There is a state mandate that we have to accept the animals, you can't use that same argument if there is no state mandate that says we are a no kill shelter. Then we get stuck with over 500 animals with only 260 spaces, or that you are routinely taken in over 3,000 animals per year and only adopting out 1,000. I appreciate the ideas about encouraging adoption but I do not think we are going to triple the adoption rates with a sign and a website and I agree we absolutely need a new website, but I do not think that is going to triple that. Those are all my thoughts and concerns. The other one is the request for part-timers to add \$84,000 to the budget and is the business model such that we can support yearly without general fund support. I want to see that we are maintaining our obligations under State Code, I want to see that we are taking care of our employees. But again, the philosophy was what is the compassion for the animals, 503 animals in 260 spaces concerns me. Mr. Grafton noted that he does have some more information on Sangamon County they have 21 employees, 85 dog kennels, 70 cat cages they also have limited hours, they only handle adoptions and redemptions. They offer nothing more and today their census is 117. Compared to ours which is 349. Mr. Swanson noted that as of December it was 474 which is still about 80 more than we seem to have capacity for. Mr. Grafton stated that he understands what Mr. Swanson is saying, but his goal is let's get a little more aggressive in the adoptions. We have been able to manage this over the years through the peak times, but we can do better moving forward. We have tons of help when it comes to QC Paws. I know that they provide a financial contribution every year, but they also provide some assistance with food, staff, marketing. We can do better without having to go to the point of euthanasia. I do understand what you are saying adding another \$82,000 what is that going to do, will there be another line on the report that says now we have to fund this

even more. We want to head back to putting Sam in a position that bot only manage the animals and staff but also finance the finances. With the help of Ryan and the Finance Department we stay on budget. Now that we know the numbers, the adoptions mathematically we can make it work. I do not know to what point we need to get assistance from the other communities, but that is what our goal will be. If we are falling short \$100,000 with our per capita model if it is .25 per capita is that going to be enough. I do not want an ask for .25 if that is not going to be enough. to me this is just a band aid for the situation we are in right now. This is obviously a priority of ours and it has taken a long time. This is not just lip service I just never knew there was so much happening there. I brought in our new maintenance guy and he noticed that the population causes other issues as it relates to HVAC systems. CBC Brunk stated I find it hard to believe that if we are aggressive promoting adoptions that we could not see a significant impact in the number of adoptions throughout the year. Let's face it websites are huge they could not figure out Rock Island County's website so they went to another County and that is where they found the animal. We all do that how many of us have gotten on a website and couldn't find something so you went to another website to complete your business. I think the website, working with the media more and social media. CBC Brunk stated that if we are aggressive and stay on it I cannot see where we will not see an increase in adoptions. When it comes to the positions as Jim mentioned this is just a band-aid and now if we can get the population down and say this is where our range is we manage that population. I fell we will see a significant impact. Brian Vyncke noted that even if we go the euthanasia route there is a cost factor there. Will we have to hire a full-time vet to be here 24/7 euthanizing animals. It is a balancing act we either overload with employees or try to reduce the numbers through adoptions. Dr. Simmer noted that he has never turned anything down for Sam that has been brought up to this board in the last 15 years because I know she has been understaffed and underfunded. This is the first time I have balked on it because in 15 years the population has doubled out there and there has been nothing more done. I do not think it is all on her I don't think it is do to the staff. I think a website would help a ton. We have to draw a line in the sand somewhere as far as what people are going to support. What are the budgets for Animal Care and Control now? Committee Chair Moreno answered around \$800K. Ms. Palmer noted that it is around \$1.5M. Dr. Simmer noted he will do whatever is needed to fix the problem but we cannot keep doing this. We need to work to get the population down to where it is manageable. CBC Brunk asked Mr. Grafton for regular updates on population, adoptions etc. Kai Swanson noted that he really appreciated Jim Grafton's work on this and Richard your leadership on this, I do not mean to discount this at all. But, looking at the numbers our census is not 503 it is 576 and the issue that we have is trying to operate a no kill shelter. That is laudable if we had plenty of resources, funds and a larger facility that had acreage yes absolutely. Dr. Simmer said a couple of years ago that we need to talk to these other communities and municipalities. Yes, we got something from Milan. We are not seeing that progress. No matter what the website no matter how good it is we have a preponderance of dogs that appear to be vicious and I know that is unfair but, I have been told by people that they want to get a dog but they skip right past Rock Island because it is all pit bulls. They could have hearts of gold, I have friends with pit bulls as pets and they are lovely dogs but, they are not going to get adopted. At the end of the day the whole County Board has to vote on this so I will vote to move this forward.

Voice vote

Motion carried

9. Consider Emergency Purchase of \$213,756.43 for FY25 Fleet Start-up Costs

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

Second: Brian Vyncke

Discussion: Finance Director Ryan Berger this tells the story of the changes and growing pains we went through with Fleet in 2025. There were a couple of things, first the County does not have any type of funds like this because it is new. Because it was new April did a lot of background work to make sure that the fund was structured the correct way and tried to explain that to me and Jim but because we are new I do not know if we fully got it until we had to do the chargeback. Until we knew what it was that had to happen. So, then basically we started late and we only had Ron for 5 months and then we had the mechanics that started probably two months after Ron. We only have a portion of the year and they have new software and they are learning the software. In the process of learning the software they are doing work on vehicles they may not be putting that billable hours into the software. So, now there is time that they are working that we don't really have documentation for making it challenging to do a chargeback to respective office. Work was being done that was not accounted for as they started late in the year. At the end of the day we have to charge back to those respective offices. Because, that chargeback number looks so high and it was high because we had a lot of unbillable time we had time that was unaccounted for in the system. We had to come up with a way to reduce that cost to the respective offices. The solution was that down time that they had would essentially be covered by the general fund. AS we move forward, down time shouldn't be and hopefully won't be covered by the general fund and it will all be charged back to those respective offices. Now some of those offices use the general fund anyway so it is basically moving money around. But, for some of those other offices like Animal Control or Probation they use different funds in those cases it does matter. So, this is basically saying we were still starting up in FY25 and we are still learning the software so this is just an additional cost to get us to where we need to be in FY26. For FY26, since we have done the chargeback we have a new process that we are going to do April has added lines to the budget for us that are specifically for Fleet. Because before in our budget that designation was never made we never really knew if it was a repair for a door or a repair for a vehicle it was just repairs and maintenance. So, in FY26 those offices will have in their budget a fleet and maintenance line and next month we are going to fund that in the amount of the budgeted fleet department. There will be money in those lines and then we will quarterly charge back to those offices. The goal would be to do this more often but this is just year 2 we are going to quarterly do that so we can keep track of things and have a better flow to move us past any additional start up costs that we might need.

Voice vote

Motion carried

10. Consider Emergency Purchase New Money Allocation for Painting of Court Services

Motion to approve: Bob Perkins

Second: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Discussion: Dr. Simmer asked what is emergency painting. Derrick Hendrickx explained a couple of weeks ago in January they received an invoice from a paint job that was done back in November of 2023 and this somehow slipped under the radar because it was sent to the former director of Court Services which was his last month it was supposed to be under ARPA funds. I came on board in December I spoke with Ryan about ARPA Funds we had other projects using ARPA Funds unfortunately we spent all that money not realizing this invoice had not been paid and was still out there to be paid.

Voice vote

Motion carried

