

Rock Island County Finance & Personnel Committee, Dr. Luis Moreno Chairman  
January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026

1504 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Room 210, Rock Island, IL. 61201

Dr. Luis Moreno called the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Finance & Personnel Committee meeting to order at 8:34am

1. Roll Call: Dr. Luis Moreno, Dr. Rodney Simmer, Kai Swanson, Edna Sowards, Bob Perkins.

Member absent: Brian Vyncke

Also Present: Ryan Berger, Nick Camlin, Bridgett Edgeworth, Jim Nelson, Jared VanTieghem, Captain Mindy Meyers, Karren Kinney, April Palmer, Amy Allman, Jim Grafton, Bridgette Edgeworth, Kate Anderson-Fuhr

2. Public Comment: NONE

3. Approval of minutes from the Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup> Finance & Personnel Committee meeting

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

motion carried via voice vote

4. Reports to the Committee

County Auditor April Palmer reported that the offsite Audit with Baker Tilly is underway and they will be on premises on March 5<sup>th</sup> for a few days

County Treasurer Nick Camlin reported that we had our tax sale two weeks ago. Through the property tax cycle has been a struggle because of the Supreme Court ruling that part of the tax sale rulings were unconstitutional and we were one of the last counties to do this with the help of Austin Carlson from the States Attorney office came up with an agreement form that indemnified the County. The reason the County had to do this was the Supreme Court ruling that former owners can get compensation for the equity they had in their home, even if they did not pay their property taxes. So, now the mechanism is who is going to get sued for that money and we have made it very clear it is not the County, we do not get any of that money so you are not going to get your equity from us.

The States Attorney Office came up with an agreement that tax buyers purchased signed and agreed to take on that responsibility. I subsequently got calls from the States Treasurers Office and they wanted to know how we did it and if any tax buyers showed up for the tax sale and the sale was perfectly aligned with last year and the year before.

County Clerk Karen Kinney gave a brief explanation about the election cycle mailing.

County Finance Director gave a report on changes coming on the new money resolutions. Next month you are going to see three resolutions. A resolution approving emergency purchases, a resolution that is going to approve budget amendment requests and a resolution approving grant and settlement expenses. Attached to those resolutions is just going to pulled directly from the system.

County Sheriff Darren Hart reported that he had toured the new Federal Courthouse with all the Chiefs, Chief Justice Sara Darrow and our SWAT teams just to get a lay of the building and try to understand if there are any concerns there. Sheriff Hart also noted that this year will be a little different in the sense of projects that weren't completed. The money that was sitting in the Sheriff's Office budget from last year that have now returned to the general fund that were not expended so I can think of three or four

projects this year that were underway and not completed and we were not invoiced for those completed projects so those funds went back into the general fund and they have already been levied for we will at some point be coming to the County Board asking to pay those bills from money not in our existing budget line because in years prior we had amendments and that money would just follow our budget to fix those projects. So, you will hear us coming through for a new resolution of money however it is money that has already been levied for just sitting in the general fund waiting for those projects to be completed. I can think of the Jail restoration project, \$200,000 for Jail windows. I just want people to realize that when we come ask for \$200,000 or \$300,000 those are not new monies for the budget. Those are monies that were already levied and are already sitting in the general fund. Dr. Moreno noted that they started doing that 3 to 5 years ago just to keep a clean balance, we knew money would be coming through and we would take care of it. Dr. Simmer asked if when these requests come through will they be earmarked for projects that have already been levied for? Mr. Berger stated he will work with the Sheriff to make sure they are explained properly.

County Administrator Jim Grafton gave an update on a project to update the sign at Animal Control. We currently have a sign out there that hasn't been addressed for years. So, I want to update it to a sign with an electronic message board on it. What I would like to do is update the existing sign with the logo on the top and the electronic sign on the bottom. We will be able to better communicate to our patrons about what is happening at Animal Control, whether it is help needed, adoptions. Our goal is by promoting our Animal Control to reduce our population. That is the cause of many of our problems. I have two quotes they will come up with some concepts and I will bring them up to the board next month. Dr. Simmer asked if this sign will be visible from the intersection. Dr. Moreno expressed some concern about visibility due to the trees. Mr. Grafton said he would have the trees trimmed back to increase visibility.

Motion to approve: Dr. Bob Perkins

Second: Edna Sowards

Voice vote

motion carried via voice vote

#### 5. Consider 6 Delinquent Tax Resolutions:

1. Permanent Parcel Number: 09-19-114-001 Tax Payor ID#: (06) 5427 HA

2. Permanent Parcel Number: 09-26-302-005 Tax Payor ID#: (06) 839 HA

3. Permanent Parcel Number: 09-28-401-002 Tax Payor ID#: (06) 6413 HA

4. Permanent Parcel Number: 17-17-104-010 Tax Payor ID#: (07) 12369 SM

5. Permanent Parcel Number: 17-17-206-006 Tax Payor ID#: (07) 2724 SM

6. Permanent Parcel Number: 17-19-107-003 Tax Payor ID#: (11) 2088 LT 3 Ralph R Carvers 2<sup>nd</sup> SUBD

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 6. Consider Award of Farm Lease Bid Proposals

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 7. Consider Violence Reduction Strategy Project Proposals

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson

Second: Bob Perkins

**Discussion:** States Attorney Dora Villareal explained that this is a joint effort by the Sheriff's Department and the States Attorney's Office to implement a strategy that was launched in 2021 in Davenport, the City of Davenport and their Police Department as well they have had success with this strategy. It is

essentially using Court partners, probation, County Board, Municipalities, Schools as a way to both figure out who are committing violent crimes. Going into and try to intervene prior to any more violence being committed. Most of the time this is geared toward repeat offenders that we are seeing as well as some juvenile crime. Family resources actually has a team that goes and tries to stop additional violence, whether it is shootings or just violence occurring. Recently in Iowa they have had a pretty significant reduction in shots fired and in homicides that have occurred since implementing this program. It is nationwide so, what makes this unique for our County is that we have multiple law enforcement agencies. So, we have a lot of law enforcement agencies and for Davenport this was a little more streamlined, because it was the City of Davenport, Bettendorf and Scott County Sheriff's Department. For us it will be a little more difficult because we have 7 law enforcement agencies to ensure all the correct communications are centralized in one spot. Speaking with the Chiefs and the Sheriff having it centralized at the County would be the best place. So, what we are trying to do is use the same consultant chief strategy officer she will be the same one that implemented this for the City of Davenport and she is willing to help us establish this strategy for a 15-month contract. We are hoping that it will be something that will be used by future States Attorney's, future Sheriffs, Police Chiefs and Police Departments. What is essentially happening although we all have access the same database that tells us who is being arrested and who has warrants out for their arrest, we don't necessarily have an alert to let us know that Rock Island is investigating that same suspect for armed robbery and at the same time Moline or East Moline Police Department might be out investigating a couple of burglaries and it happens to be the same suspect. So, although we know what is happening it is not getting communicated sometime that this is the same person that all these agencies are looking for. We don't realize this until they come to our office looking for charges and Oh wait there are other investigations pending with this individual. So, we are trying to get all that information all streamlined through the County. Sheriff Hart noted that they have been asked from the Judges as well to help inform them better of a person that has been committing crimes and what have we done to work with this individual to understand that crime is not the avenue to go and if so that person needs to be incarcerated not more chances, and that is what I get asked more often about is that Illinois has taken a very aggressive stance on pretrial release and allow individuals to not be incarcerated. It is time to look at all the pieces together and understand there are some people that need to be incarcerated. They have not followed the rule of law and they need to not be out committing more property crimes, more stolen vehicles, more gun crime. We understand a burglary and weapons are being stolen, then they are being sold and used out on the street for a robbery or a homicide. I think the biggest thing we are looking at here is a collaborative effort. There are seven agencies that we can look at together and I think this strategy will serve us well. That way Rock Island County can say we are doing everything we can to look at crime to make this a safe community to live in. SA Villareal said that is something we are seeing a lot of, people being released for a violent crime and after being released need to be encouraged to stop. With this initiative we will be able to go to our Judiciary and ask them to please keep these people incarcerated because the refuse to stop committing crimes. This is an initiate the City of Rock a year or so ago and I think that is them being by themselves, not having the buy-in from all the other agencies and we are all working together. The best position is for the County to be the agency to look at and we would have the ability to look at the pieces and we have the offices to have them to work out of. Instead of this person being at the Moline office the fear is that person really is the Moline Police Department crime analysis individual and really all the Chiefs have said that the County should do this. Sheriff Hart said he is trying to be innovative with our approach to crime in this County where people will want to come and live. Chairman Brunk aske based on conversation that Dora to look at other funding options so what you are looking for this month is a commitment from the Board to move forward with the agreement with a consultant and the strategy understanding that general fund money may be needed to cover this consultant and the strategy expense. SA Villareal said in speaking with the consultant she is out of town

and will be flying in tomorrow and she did put together a power point presentation that I think we can put on for the board at COW tomorrow night. It does appear that Mr. Grafton's idea that we could take some of our opioid funds to use for this. Also, Ms. Ott will be able to look if there might be some additional federal funding we might be able to apply for to possibly supplement the cost. We are here asking for the contract for the Strategy and \$145,000 to fund this. We anticipate coming back to the Board and requesting the position of Criminal Analyst. Kai Swanson stated that he was fully on board with GVI because of how well it has worked in Davenport and the prospect of getting this in Rock Island County I am also on board with that. Mr. Swanson asked about the cost benefit of hiring this consultant and the resources they have been working with the Davenport PD and RIPD to get this off the ground. I do not know what kind of grants they will find because of this consultant. I am looking for reassurance that we can't do this by working with the established protocols in use by Davenport PD and family resources already set. SA Villareal said that Family Resources is a part of this and they are able to assist the Illinois Quad Cities at no extra cost they already have the staffing but, when Davenport launched their GVI they used the exact same Consultant, she was just hired as a City employee during that time. Mr. Swanson said they kind of have a template now and I am just wondering if our contract with them if it recreates any wheels. SA Villareal answered not necessarily, they will need someone day to day putting this together meaning the Sheriff and I do not have the time or the staff to allocate to this getting every single law enforcement agency on the same page, what they need to do and the next step and the timeline that is where they used Ms. Ott in Davenport. Dr. Simmer said he is also in agreement. I like the idea that the County is going to take the lead in this initiative in the Illinois Quad Cities. SA Villareal noted that the contract is for 15 months but it is really from month to month.

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 8. Consider Actions Necessary to Address the Animal Control Fund Balance

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Second: Edna Sowards

**Discussion:** Finance Director Ryan Berger this plan will also forgive previous loans in the amount of \$239,000.00 along with an additional transfer from the General Fund totaling \$509,476.31 is needed to get the animal Control fund balance close to zero. This might not get us all the way because the budget for FY26 may have revenues might not meet expectations to get back completely to zero. Dr. Simmer thanked the committee because for the 15 years he has been on this committee it is about time we get this cleared up.

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 9. Consider 3 Additional Part-time Positions at Animal Care and Control

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Second: Edna Sowards

**Discussion:** Kai Swanson informed the committee that he cannot support this. Mr. Swanson then stated until we have a different paradigm. I am all in favor to erase the debts for about the tenth time since I have been here to fix a broken system at Animal Control with another band aid. This is essentially what this is going to be and then with the very next motion to add to the negative fiscal pressure on this operation. Before we do this, we are looking at the situation in the wrong way, at the last meeting it was discussed are we taking on taking on more animals than we can control and delaying Euthanasia. I know that is harsh, I would like an analysis of how many animals can we care for based on the current staffing. Because what we have been saying is just add more staff and the guess what-the census goes up and the problem gets exasperated. I think we need to look at the situation differently and I hate to say it as

an animal lover myself and before a judicious decision can be made on this we need to challenge the management of the operation to say “this is your current staff what census can you manage”. Now we have heard before that will make the volunteer group to stop supporting them. The all-volunteer group has not come up with a quarter million dollars to bail them out every so often. I think that is a flawed argument. There is a limit to what we can do and simply doing the same thing and getting the same result doesn’t work. I am glad to hear that people came out and made a lot of adoptions. Frankly, if word gets out that this is no longer a no kill shelter, I think that my spur more interest in humanitarian adoptions. So, I do not want to quash this at all, but I just want to float to the committee a motion to delay to a date certain, meaning the next meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee this is a motion to defer until the next meeting of this committee by which time I hope we can find out so0pme more information about how this is actually operated. If the committee doesn’t like it then that motion will die for lack of a second but, I would like to make the motion regardless. **Dr. Simmer withdrew his initial motion.** Dr. Simmer then stated that he was thinking that the three people coming in were to get rid of the volunteers, but I do like your (Kai Swanson) thought let’s get an assessment of where we are at with that. Dr. Simmer stated that he agreed with that rather than just hiring more people. Mr. Swanson said that Dr. Simmer could keep his main motion my thought is just that all my motion does is not to act on this now just delay it until the February meeting hoping that we get additional information. Edna Sowards said she would like to discuss it also. Dr. Simmer seconded Kai Swanson’s Motion. Committee Chair Moreno said ok now we can have discussion on Mr. Swanson’s motion to delay the motion until the February meeting. CBC Brunk noted that Mr. Grafton is working with Sam Wiley at animal control and in the briefing even at current staffing levels, paid time off is causing the issues we have now. So even at current staffing levels they are having trouble covering the shifts. So, I am not quite sure what additional information will provide. Mr. Grafton added in Sam’s defense, the purpose of this is because, like you said we have been doing the same thing over and over. The problem we are running into we can’t get full time people to stick around because they are just overworked. Then again it gets back to the population and how much they are dealing with. The short-term solution is let’s bring in some staff that we can work them fewer hours and get more out of them and it will kind of take the pressure off of those folks who are being overworked. Sure, this does not address the problem but, again getting back to a way of reducing the population is get the word out, push the adoptions, bring the population down. It is part time help, they do not have health insurance benefits. It is just another market that we can apply for the applicants to help fill a need where people are just being overworked. Committee Chair Moreno asked if we have an issue with full time people getting burned out? Mr. Grafton answered yes. Mr. Swanson noted he very much appreciated Mr. Grafton’s take on this but, as you indicated this also kicks the can further down the road, because of the Population. If you look at the one constant at Animal Control it is population pressure and that is the one thing we have decided not to address, and by doing this bringing people on who do not expect to work for three months until their PTO thing is resolved and the population gradually goes up they are permanent positions they are going to stay there and we are not going to be able to get rid of them easily and none of us likes to cut staff. I still think that this will be a persistent, malignant, chronic problem until the population issue is addressed and by do this we have removed the interest in reducing the population by acceding to this request. Committee Chair Moreno wanted to add, Jim is it feasible to run an animal shelter with just the thirteen full time employees and one-part timer you feel we need even if we get to the population that we think we need with the personal time, vacation time, sick days is that still the ideal number. Mr. Grafton answered that will satisfy the current needs. As far as can we handle more, I doubt it. Mr. Moreno said if we got to the

number where we need to be what is that number of employees that are needed? Mr. Moreno noted we do not have that number right now. Mr. Swanson stated that his point was given the number of employees that we are committed to right now what is the rational number of animals that can be handled. Dr. Simmer noted we talked about this many time, what is a humane number of employees to handle the number of animals in there. We are way over that with 300 to 400 cats, 150 dogs that place is not designed for that what is the true maximum capacity. Hopefully we can get the population down to where we have 75 cats and 50 dogs. I heard from my daughter that your hours are stupid with all the cleaning and feeding required. That take two because you always want somebody watching. What is the ideal number of animals to employees required. Mr. Moreno asked Mr. Grafton if this is a sufficient amount of time to get the information requested. Mr. Grafton said we would get a population history. Mr. Swanson noted that he very much sympathizes with Sam, because the reason people run out of PTO comes back to the census, her philosophy is absolutely laudable, but philosophy has to meet reality in effective management. Mr. Moreno stated he thinks what we are talking about here is we are trying to fix a problem or not to continue down the same path. Mr. Moreno asked Mr. Swanson to repeat his motion again. Mr. Swanson said his motion is to delay the issue until the next meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee in February. This motion was seconded by Dr. Simmer.

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 10. Consider County Administrator Service Agreement

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson Second: Bob Perkins

**Discussion:** CBC Brunk noted that this agreement is identical to the one we had like this last year with the exception of the compensation and it will reflect the hourly rate increase of the non-union employees.

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 11. Consider the purchase of a Behnke 16' 20K dump trailer

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer Second: Kai Swanson

**Discussion:** Dr. Simmer asked if this was for Highway. Answer was yes.

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 12. Consider 2026 General County Letting – Stone Bid Award

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer Second: Kai Swanson

**Discussion:** Mr. Grafton noted that the low bid awards went to River Stone and Mill Creek

Voice vote

Motion carried

#### 13. Consider Auditing Services for 2025 thru 2027

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson Second: Bob Perkins

**Discussion:** County Auditor noted that the quote received from Baker Tilly is an increase that is a normal industry standard 3% to 3½% increase per year.

Voice vote

Motion carried

14. Consider Appropriation Resolutions for Funds and Transfers of Appropriations for FY2025

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson Second: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Voice vote

Motion carried

15. Consider Appropriation Resolutions for Funds and Transfers of Appropriations for FY2026

Motion to approve: Bob Perkins Second: Edna Sowards

Voice vote

Motion carried

16. Consider Claims for FY2025 in the Amount of \$1,285,545.61

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson Second: Bob Perkins

Voice vote

Motion carried

17. Consider Claims for FY2026 in the Amount of \$996,082.90

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer Second: Edna Sowards

Voice vote

Motion carried

18. Consider Treasurer's Disbursements for FY2025 in the amount of \$736,439.42

Motion to approve: Kai Swanson Second: Bob Perkins

Voice vote

Motion carried

19. Consider Treasurer's Disbursements for FY2026 in the amount of \$1,582,166.36

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

Motion carried

20. Consider Board Member Per Diem Mileage Report

Motion to approve: Dr. Rodney Simmer Second: Kai Swanson

Voice vote

Motion carried

21. Closed Session if needed—None

22. Consider Action as necessary based on Closed Session- None

23. Committee member opportunity for brief comment (no decisions will be made)

24. Adjourn

Motion: Kai Swanson Second: Dr. Rodney Simmer

Voice Vote

Motion carried

The Rock Island County Finance & Personnel Committee meeting adjourned at 9:21 am

The next Finance & Personnel meeting will be held on 10 February 2026 at 8:30AM

Respectfully submitted by Jim Nelson, Rock Island County Administration