



Kane County

KC Executive Committee

Meeting Minutes

Government Center
719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. A
Geneva, IL 60134

PIEROG, Allan, Bates, Gumz, Juby, Kious, Lenert, Lewis, Linder, Molina, Sanchez, Strathmann, Surges, Tepe, Williams and ex-officio Roth (County Vice Chair)

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

1:00 PM

County Board Room

*****SPECIAL MEETING*****

1. Call to Order

Chairman Pierog called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT	Chairman Corinne M. Pierog Board Member Deborah Allan Board Member Michelle Gumz Board Member Leslie Juby Board Member Chris Kious Board Member Anita Lewis Board Member Michael Linder Board Member Cheryl Strathmann Board Member Vern Tepe Ex-Officio County Board Vice Chair Bill Roth
REMOTE	Board Member Jarett Sanchez Board Member Clifford Surges
ABSENT	Board Member Mavis Bates Board Member Bill Lenert Board Member Myrna Molina Board Member Rick Williams

Also present: Co. Bd. Members Gripe, Penesis*, Young; Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson; ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock* & staff Lasky*, Peters; SA Mosser* & staff Frank; KDOT Deputy Dir. Rickert*; Auditor Wegman; KCAC Admin. Youngsteadt; and members of the press and public.

(Committee Member Sanchez arrived remotely at 1:02 p.m.)

3. Remote Attendance Requests

Chairman Pierog announced the remote attendance requests for today's meeting. She asked the Committee if there were any objections to Committee Member Sanchez and Surges attending today's meeting remotely. There were no objections.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Pierog asked Committee Member Strathmann to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Approval of Minutes: None**6. Public Comment**

Kane County resident, Steve Leffler, (Committee Member Allan arrived in-person at 1:03 p.m.) stated he is participating in one-month of no driving. He explained that as he has been riding his bike, he has noticed that a gallon of gas is under \$3.00. He spoke on the proposed increase to the County's Gas Tax. He explained that the average driver travels 12K miles per year, and receives about 25 miles per gallon, which equates to approximately 480 gallons per driver every year. Leffler stated that if the Gas Tax is increased by three cents per gallon, it would equate to \$14.40 annually per driver (Committee Ex-Officio Roth arrived in-person at 1:04 p.m.) to fund Kane County's Judiciary and Public Safety partners. He noted that those who do not like the proposed increase, to ride a bike and save the money.

Brian Anderson, Sugar Grove, spoke on the Gas Tax. He stated that he understands the need for the increase, but is confused by the information shared. He explained that some of the Gas Tax funding goes back to the Kane County Division of Transportation (KDOT), not into the County's General Fund. Currently, the County's Motor Fuel Tax is at five cents, with a proposed increase of three cents. Anderson stated that Kane County will have one of the highest Gas Taxes in the State. He explained that those that live in Elgin, Aurora, Geneva, St. Charles, North Aurora, South Elgin, or Carpentersville pay a City Motor Fuel Tax. Therefore, these areas are being taxed a State Motor Fuel Tax, a City Fuel Tax, and a County Motor Fuel Tax. Anderson stated that the County Board is not doing the hard work. He noted that it is too late in the year now to accomplish the necessary work due to a balanced budget being presented at next month's County Board meeting. However, Anderson stated that in the new year, the County faces a new financial disaster due to the depletion of County reserves. He spoke on Resolution TMP-25-1212 that was presented at the last Transportation Committee meeting regarding the \$1M expansion project at Randall Road and Hopps. He stated that the County needs to pause this project. He added that this project is based on the County's 2050 Plan. Anderson stated that the County's current population is 513K, and continues to shrink. Within the 2050 Plan, it is estimated that the County's growth will increase to 800K by 2050. However, the County is seeing a decrease in the population. Anderson stated that pausing the expansion project would save the County \$7M.

Yvonne Dinwiddie, Batavia, explained that she read through the County's proposed FY2026 Budget and the additional taxes on groceries. Additionally, she read in the newspaper that Governor Pritzker is dismissing the Chicago Bears' property tax break. Dinwiddie explained that in Kane County, \$554,261,455 of the property tax revenue goes to Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts. She added that new TIF Districts are being proposed, such as the Shodeen one in Campton Hills and the Crown one in Sugar Grove. Dinwiddie explained that if the County wants to balance the budget, they should make TIF Districts a line item, start understanding what TIFs actually do, and how they are abused. She stated that County residents cannot afford any more taxes. She added that every time taxes are increased for each family, home bills go up. It is cumulative. This is all increasing, while income continually decreases. Dinwiddie stated

that if residents cannot afford to live in a place due to high taxes, then what will the future hold? She urged the County Board to cut back and to live within their means.

Michelle Bettag, St. Charles, explained that she has been attending County Board meetings for three years, and month after month she has seen nothing but spending. She spoke on the salary increases for elected officials. She stated that numerous County residents have been saying that the County has a problem with overspending and that it is enough. But, the County Board continues to do so. Bettag spoke on the votes supporting the \$8.3M worth of machines the County purchased, the \$110M Government Building, \$40M County Health Building in Elgin, \$50K Climate Action Plan, and nearly \$1M spent on plans for a Government Center that was never addressed. She stated that the County has a proposed 60% increase to the County's Motor Fuel Tax up for a vote. She explained that 18.4 cents on the Motor Fuel Tax comes from the Federal Government, and 48.3 cents comes from the State of Illinois. This puts Kane County as the third highest county out of 102. Bettag added that 98 counties out of the 102 do not have a Motor Fuel Tax. She stated that as the County Board compares Kane County to the other collar counties, they will see that the County is one of the highest taxed counties in the country. She spoke on the Retail Sales Tax Referendum that was included on the Consolidated Election that could have raised \$51M for public safety. She noted that there has been talks of putting this back on the ballot. However, the tax did not get approved last time, and it will not be passed. Bettag stated that the County has a spending problem, and they are continually affecting those that need their services and help the most.

Carl Dinwiddie, Batavia, endorsed the comments that were said by the previous speakers. In his experience as a federal employee for 45 years, he worked for ten different chairmen in Washington. He stated that one of these chairmen told him that the most dangerous thing in Washington is putting a microphone in front of a politician. He stated that as a citizen, the most dangerous thing in America is for all government bodies to reach into his pocket, pull out his wallet, and take whatever money they want. He noted that the residents of Kane County cannot afford more taxes. He explained that the number one issue for numerous residents is their property taxes. As he has spoken to several Batavia residents, he learned that many of the elderly have to work in order to afford to live in Kane County. Dinwiddie stated that failing the plan is planning to fail. He stated that this budget deficit should have been solved. (Committee Member Surges arrived remotely at 1:17 p.m.)

Kane County resident, Ginger Romano, questioned the distinction between the Grocery Retailers' Occupation Tax and the Grocery Service Occupation Tax. She requested a list of grocery stores/businesses that would be charging the Grocery Tax in unincorporated Kane County. She thinks that townships will annex their unincorporated areas into their municipalities, so that they can receive the tax revenue. She noted that there are not a lot of businesses in unincorporated Kane County that is taxable. While listening to the last Legislative Committee meeting, Romano heard that the State of Illinois wants to implement more taxes, such as a Delivery Tax, to take citizens' hard earned dollars. She questioned if the Committee has reviewed State Statute 55 ILCS 5/5-106.9 of the Grocery Tax. She informed the Committee that the revenue collected

from the Grocery Tax is deposited into a Grocery Fund and a Trust Fund. She questioned where the money is actually going. Romano spoke on her husband's career in the trucking industry. She explained that the owner of the trucking business needed to shut down because they were unable to afford to operate in Illinois. She added that a lot of trucking businesses either do not start their business in Illinois, or they end up moving it to another state where they are not taxed.

Denise Theobald, Geneva, voiced her appreciation to the County Board on their hard work on the budget deficit. She stated that no one wants taxes, but the revenue is needed. She explained that the proposed Gas Tax would cost approximately \$15.00 per year per driver, and proposed Grocery Tax would cost an additional \$66.00 per year per household. She stated that these taxes would be included at the truck stop and paid for by purchasers from outside the County. She explained that the County has been looking into the budget cuts and the people that would be affected by the proposed budget. She stated that these solutions, such as these proposed taxes, would help close the budget gap. She believes these taxes and the Sales Tax Referendum were good ideas to lessen the financial burden to Kane County residents. She explained that the Sales Tax Referendum would have placed a \$.75 tax on every \$100.00 spent. She noted that the proposed Sales Tax would have only applied to retail goods, restaurants, and gasoline. Theobald explained that many who would pay this tax would have come from outside of the County. She understood that the measure was not clearly presented to the community and that the tax was misled in many ways. However, this does not mean the County cannot try again. Theobald stated that the County must prepare, present the facts, and show the public why this is a responsible solution. She explained that residents will ensure that opponents will not mislead the public. Regarding the claims that the County Board is overspending, she stated that if the proposed budget cuts are painful, then it would suggest that the budgeted funds are necessary. She explained that there is room to trim excess spending, but fiscal responsibility means preparing for the future and generating revenue and meeting inflation needs. The County needs to make sure the community remains safe and supported. Theobald stated that there are many factors behind the budget deficit, but how the County got to this point does not matter. She called out the constant sabotaging of select elected officials and Board members for political purposes and the need to find common ground. She explained that the County Board and elected officials need to put the County and its people first and look at all the financial solutions. She concluded with taxes are not liked, but they are needed.

Kathy Showalter, Geneva, stated she has lived in Kane County since 1971. She has raised three boys and has nine grandkids that all reside in Kane County. Currently, she explained that her middle child and family had to move in with her. As a active senior, she walks around her neighborhood regularly. She has witnessed numerous children coming back home to live due to financial strains. She added that the County is taxing their residents out of Kane County. She understands that budget cuts need to be made, but are not being done. Showalter stated that the County's budget is way over what it should be. She explained that every resident runs their households on a budget. If they do not have the funds, they go without. She urged the County to think about budgets. She added that a lot of the elderly of Kane County are hurting. She asked the

Board to not raise the taxes.

7. Monthly Financials (K. Hopkinson)

None.

8. Old Business

None.

9. New Business

A. Authorizing an Increase in the County Motor Fuel Tax

Committee Member Tepe explained that Committee Member Lenert and himself led a working group who collected input and received help from County Board members and three department heads: ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock, HRM Exec. Dir. Loblillo, and Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson. He stated that as of today, the Committee needs to vote to place the FY2026 Budget on display. He explained that Lenert and himself have been working on the County's General Fund, which is the fund that funds salaries and is under the County Board's control. As such, Lenert and himself have been working with departments and elected officials. Tepe stated that they have received cooperation in reducing their budgets for FY2026. As of today, he explained that the Committee is being asked to approve the FY2026 Budget as it has been submitted. However, in order for the Committee to approve the budget this additional revenue from the Motor Fuel Tax is needed. Tepe explained that this resolution is proposing a three cent increase to the County's Gas Tax. He stated that this increase would bring in \$6.5M in revenue that would be allocated to the Kane County Division of Transportation (KDOT). Tepe explained that the County Board has already agreed to reduce KDOT's portion of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Sales Tax for public safety. He stated that their suggestion is to take another \$4M from KDOT's RTA Sales Tax to the County's General Fund, which will net \$2.5M from the Gas Tax to KDOT. He explained that KDOT's FY2026 Budget is slim to the point that there is concerns about resurfacing the roadways in the future. He stated that the additional \$4M that will be allocated to the General Fund would help negotiate with the key elected officials on budget changes and recommendations in the coming weeks. Much discussion ensued.

County Board

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	County Board
MOVER:	Vern Tepe
SECONDER:	Michelle Gumz
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Jarett Sanchez, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe
NAY:	Clifford Surges, and Bill Roth
ABSENT:	Mavis Bates, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, and Rick Williams

B. Establishing and Imposing a County Grocery Retailers’ Occupation Tax and a County Grocery Service Occupation Tax for the County of Kane

Committee Member Juby explained that it is her understanding that this Grocery Tax is the continuance of the tax that was repealed by the State of Illinois. She assumed that if an establishment has been charged the State tax before, then this will allow them to continue. However, if they did not have the tax before, a new tax will not be imposed.

Committee Member Kious asked where most of this revenue would be generated. Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson stated that the tax is imposed on items that are considered a grocery. She explained that any retail establishment could impose the tax, such as grocery store and gas stations. Hopkinson addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Much discussion ensued.

County Board

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	County Board
MOVER:	Michelle Gumz
SECONDER:	Chris Kious
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Jarett Sanchez, Cheryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe
NAY:	Clifford Surges, and Bill Roth
ABSENT:	Mavis Bates, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, and Rick Williams

C. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Public Defender’s FY2026 Budget

Chairman Pierog explained that agenda items C, D, and E were postponed until the next Finance Committee meeting scheduled for October 29, 2025 at yesterday's Special Finance Committee meeting. Additionally, agenda item F failed at yesterday's Special Finance Committee meeting and should not move forward.

SAO Chief of Civil Frank explained that since these items were placed on today's agenda, they will need to be addressed. He advised the Committee to read each one aloud, and as long as there is no motion, the resolution would fail.

This resolution failed due to lack of motion.

D. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Court Services FY2026 Budget

This resolution failed due to lack of motion.

E. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Judiciary’s FY2026 Budget

This resolution failed due to lack of motion.

F. Amending Ordinance 24-216

This resolution failed due to lack of motion.

G. Adopting the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Appropriations and Budget

Committee Member Gumz motioned to amend this resolution to change the "Passed by the Kane County Board on" date from October 22, 2025 to November 10, 2025, Kious seconded. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

County Board

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	County Board
MOVER:	Vern Tepe
SECONDER:	Chris Kious
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe
NAY:	Michelle Gumz, Clifford Surges, and Bill Roth
ABSENT:	Mavis Bates, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, and Rick Williams

H. Approving the FY26 Budget to be Placed on Public Display
County Board

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	County Board
MOVER:	Michael Linder
SECONDER:	Michelle Gumz
AYE:	Deborah Allan, Michelle Gumz, Leslie Juby, Chris Kious, Anita Lewis, Michael Linder, Jarett Sanchez, Cherryl Strathmann, and Vern Tepe
NAY:	Clifford Surges, and Bill Roth
ABSENT:	Mavis Bates, Bill Lenert, Myrna Molina, and Rick Williams

10. **Executive Session (if needed)**

None.

11. **Committee Reports**

None.

12. **Adjournment**

RESULT:	APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE
MOVER:	Bill Roth
SECONDER:	Cherryl Strathmann

This meeting was adjourned at 1:57 PM.

Savannah Zgobica
Sr. Recording Secretary