



# Kane County

## KC Finance and Budget Committee

### Meeting Minutes

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

LENERT, Sanchez, Juby, Lewis, Surges, Tepe, ex-officios Roth (County Vice Chair) and Pierog (County Chair)

**Tuesday, October 21, 2025**

**1:00 PM**

**County Board Room**

**\*\*\*SPECIAL MEETING\*\*\***

**1. Call To Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Board Member Bill Lenert Board Member Leslie Juby Board Member Anita Lewis Board Member Vern Tepe Ex-Officio County Board Vice Chair Bill Roth Ex-Officio County Board Chair Corinne M. Pierog
<b>REMOTE</b>	Board Member Jarett Sanchez
<b>ABSENT</b>	Board Member Clifford Surges

Also present: Co. Bd. Members Allan, Garcia\*, Gumz\*, Kious\*, Linder, Penesis\*, Strathmann\*; Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson; Court Srvs. Exec. Dir. Aust & staff Tsang, Starkovich; Court Admin. O'Brien & staff Mathis; KDOT Deputy Dir. Rickert\*; ITD CIO Lasky\* & staff Peters; SAO Chief of Civil Frank & staff Shepro; Public Def. Conant; HRM Exec. Dir. Loblillo; KCAC Admin. Youngsteadt\*; and members of the press and public.

**3. Remote Attendance Requests**

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

Committee Member Surges did not attend today's meeting.

**4. Approval of Minutes: None**

**5. Public Comment**

Kane County resident, Steve Leffler, spoke in support of the resolution authorizing an increase in the County Motor Fuel Tax. He explained that the average driver who travels 12K miles a year and receives 25 miles per gallon, would pay approximately \$15.00. With respect to the proposed Grocery Tax, he stated it would cost the average household approximately \$66.00. Leffler explained that in exchange for the increases, the County would be able to find the requested budget cuts for the Public Safety and

Judiciary partners.

Kane County resident, Ginger Romano, stated the County continues to spend as if they are still receiving American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. However, the County Board is now wanting to dig further into residents' pockets and impose increases and new taxes. Romano requested the County take a look at PACE and the bus system. Each time she passes a bus, she stated it is empty, which is a waste of energy, gas, and maintenance. She suggested the County provide Uber vouchers to residents that need public transportation. Additionally, she recommended that a tax be imposed on all electrical bikes and electric vehicles that use the County roadways. Romano spoke on the Grocery Tax. When conducting her own research, she found that the money raised by the tax goes to the State into several funds, one being a Trust Fund. She questioned where the money is actually going. Lastly, she explained that 75% of the County residents who voted on the tax referendum, said no. She questioned why the County Board is not listening to their constituents.

Brian Anderson, Sugar Grove, spoke on agenda items 6B: Authorizing an Increase in the County Motor Fuel Tax and 6C: Establishing and Imposing a County Grocery Retailers' Occupation Tax and a County Grocery Service Occupation Tax for the County of Kane. In doing his own research of the surrounding collar counties, he has come to understand the reasoning for the increase and the strategy. As a concerned tax payer, Anderson stated that he has not seen the vital budget cuts that have been proposed. He questioned why the County Board has not made the tough financial cuts. He explained that the County has approximately 500 non-union employees. He questioned why a hiring freeze and/or a vacancy freeze has not been implemented, or why the non-critical capital projects have not been suspended or deferred. While looking into the County's real estate, he stated there are 39 buildings, of which six to eight of them could be sold. As a curious tax payer, Anderson understands the hard decisions that the County Board needs to make. However, he stated it would feel better if the budget cuts were being made. He spoke on the financial cliff the County will face in FY2027, due to the County not making the necessary budget cuts. Lastly, he recommended that the Judiciary and Public Safety partners be spoken to about the non-essential cuts that could be made.

Michelle Bettag, St. Charles, explained she has continually watched over the last three years, and the out-of-hand spending of proposals of new large projects with Covid Relief and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. She stated that large amounts of revenue has been received by the County through interest earned and/or assessed values on real estate. She explained that the Director of the Board has seen the increase in expenditures, but has continually placed large projects on agendas for additional spending. As residents, we have asked the County to stop the spending and expending reserves, yet the County continues to hurt those that need the help the most. Bettag recommended the County rescind the Responsible Bidders' Ordinance (RBO). She cannot understand why the County has this ordinance in place. She explained that the RBO is costing the County additional money. She questioned if the County Board did not see the fiscal cliff. She urged the Board to look at the County's expenses and make the necessary budget cuts. Bettag stated that County residents

are paying attention to those County Board members who are voting for tax increases and new taxes.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. FY2026 Budget Presentation**

Chairman Lenert thanked all department heads and elected officials for their cooperation and help in agreeing to a balanced budget that will be placed on public review. He stated that the proposed FY2025 Budget is \$126,954,783. He explained that all department heads have complied with the Allocation Resolution 25-277. Out of the 14 elected officials, the County has agreements with nine. Lenert explained that the other five have agreed to the allocation per Resolution 25-277, with the understanding that future discussion and resolution will continue, even after the FY2026 Budget is approved. After his 11 years of service on the County Board, he has always seen an annual budget be adjusted and/or amended. He explained that what is being asked today is a vote to move the motion forward to the Executive Committee for approval per State Statute. Lenert explained that the current discrepancy between the County Board's allocation and what was agreed upon is \$7,985,154. Under certain conditions and the results of the votes made today, the County has agreed upon reductions of \$5,180,226 of the discrepancy. Lenert stated that the balance to be negotiated remains \$2,804,928. He explained that today's motion is to put out a balanced budget where revenues and expenses are equal for the public's review. He noted that this will not be the final number and adjustments will be made. However, the County needs to allow the public to view the FY2026 Budget in order to show that they are in compliance with reducing cost and accomplishing a balanced budget without reserves. Lenert added that there is a possibility that zero to \$4M could be used from reserves. He stated that the Committee received handouts at today's meeting regarding all of the projected cash balances for all funds. He explained that this was handed out to ensure that none of the fund balances go below zero. The other handout shows the breakdown of the different expense allocations that the Board allotted, what the department heads and elected officials proposed, and the resolution on the agreements. In summary, all department heads are in compliance, nine elected officials are in compliance, and five elected officials are still in negotiations.

### **B. Authorizing an Increase in the County Motor Fuel Tax**

Committee Member Tepe explained that Chairman Lenert and himself have been working diligently on the FY2026 Budget. He stated that they have continued to approach this year's budget with the "All in this together" motto. The key thing is that the County Board, department heads, and elected officials work together to do a better job at resolving the financial gap. Tepe stated that everyone is in agreement that some of the cuts that need to be made are not good, especially those made to the Kane County Division of Transportation (KDOT). He noted that KDOT is at risk in their ability to repave roads. He explained that an increase to the Gas Tax could potentially raise \$6.5M, which would be allocated to KDOT. Secondly, Tepe spoke on the negotiations needed with departments and elected officials where an increase is needed to their

budget beyond the established numbers. Moving forward, he explained that \$4M out of the \$6.5M will be used to increase the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) tax that is allocated to the County's General Fund. In total, this will provide the County with the majority of the funds needed to match the negotiations.

Referencing the third WHEREAS clause within this resolution, Madam Chairman Pierog questioned if it included diesel vehicles. She requested the answer be made available before the approval of the County Board. Discussion ensued.

KC Executive Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Executive Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anita Lewis
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

**C. Establishing and Imposing a County Grocery Retailers' Occupation Tax and a County Grocery Service Occupation Tax for the County of Kane**

Chairman Lenert explained that it is hard to understand the amount of revenue this Grocery Tax could potentially bring to the County. He stated that this Grocery Tax would be for the unincorporated area of Kane County. He spoke on the difficulties of retaining an actual revenue number. He stated that the tax revenue could be \$40K to \$400K.

KC Executive Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Executive Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anita Lewis
<b>AYE:</b>	Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>NAY:</b>	Bill Lenert
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

**D. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Public Defender’s FY2026 Budget**

Chairman Lenert stated that the next three resolutions authorize a budget adjustment for the Public Defender’s Office, Court Services, and the Judiciary. He explained that all three elected officials have been spoken with and have agreed to postpone the votes until the next Finance Committee meeting on October 29, 2025.

KC Finance and Budget Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>HELD OVER</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Finance and Budget Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Leslie Juby
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

**E. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Court Services FY2026 Budget**

KC Finance and Budget Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>HELD OVER</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Finance and Budget Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Leslie Juby
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges
<b>AWAY:</b>	Bill Roth

**F. Authorizing a Budget Adjustment for Judiciary’s FY2026 Budget**

KC Finance and Budget Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>HELD OVER</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Finance and Budget Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Leslie Juby
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

**G. Amending Ordinance 24-216**

Chairman Lenert stated that his resolution would amend Ordinance 24-216: Amending Sec. 2-73 Salaries: Elected Officials, where the County Board approved a 20% pay raise for County Board members. He explained that this resolution would rescind the 20% raise, which would not go in affect until December 1, 2026.

Committee Member Juby suggested that this resolution be moved to the next Finance Committee meeting and be moved forward, accordingly. Discussion ensued.

SAO Chief of Civil Frank stated that this resolution cannot be legally done. He explained that a resolution cannot amend an ordinance and it cannot be amended to an ordinance due to the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Therefore, nothing can be done with this resolution at today's meeting. Additionally, the County Board cannot change salaries on elected officials in the middle of their term. Therefore, language is needed that states that this will take affect after election.

Committee Members Tepe and Lewis rescinded their motion and second. This resolution did not pass due to lack of a motion. Discussion ensued.

**H. Adopting the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Appropriations and Budget**

SAO Chief of Civil Frank stated that an amendment is needed to change the "Passed by the Kane County Board on" date to November 10, 2025.

Committee Member Tepe motioned to amend this ordinance to change the "Passed by the Kane County Board on" date to November 10, 2025, Lewis seconded. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

KC Executive Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Executive Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anita Lewis
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

- I. Approving the FY26 Budget to be Placed on Public Display

KC Executive Committee

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE</b>
<b>TO:</b>	KC Executive Committee
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anita Lewis
<b>AYE:</b>	Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Jarett Sanchez, and Vern Tepe
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Clifford Surges

7. Old Business

None.

8. Reports Placed On File

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe

9. Committee Chairman's Comments

Chairman Lenert thanked all department heads and elected officials for their cooperation and making necessary cuts.

10. Executive Session (if needed)

None.

**11. Adjournment**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Vern Tepe
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Anita Lewis

This meeting was adjourned at 1:39 PM.

Savannah Zgobica  
Sr. Recording Secretary