



Kane County

KC Finance and Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

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

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

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

1:00 PM

County Board Room

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

1. Call To Order

Chairman Berman called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT	Board Member Dale Berman Board Member Bill Lenert Board Member Leslie Juby Board Member Anita Lewis Board Member Clifford Surges Board Member Vern Tepe Ex-Officio County Board Vice Chair Bill Roth Ex-Officio County Board Chair Corinne M. Pierog
REMOTE	Board Member Jarett Sanchez

Also present: Co. Bd. Members Allan*, Bates, Gripe, Gumz*, Kiou*, Linder*, Molina*, Penesis*, Strathmann*; Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson; ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock & staff Lasky*, Harris, Kash; HRM Exec. Dir. Loblillo; KCHD Exec. Dir. Isaacson* & staff Snowden*; KDOT Deputy Dir. Rickert; OEM Dir. Buziecki; SAO Chief of Civil Frank; Auditor Wegman; Environ. & Water Res. Dir. Wollnik; KCAC Admin. Youngsteadt*; Dev. Dir. VanKerkhoff; and members of the press and public.

3. Remote Attendance Requests

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

4. Approval of Minutes: None

5. Public Comment

Kane County resident and County Board Member, David Young, spoke on a passed Administration Committee meeting resolution regarding the authorization to purchase paint and related supplies through OMNIA's Sherwin Williams Contract for the Building Management Department. He voiced that he found it odd that a resolution was specific to Sherwin Williams paint and paint supplies. While conducting personal research, Young found that OMNIA Partners is an organization that brings production companies together to allow members to buy products at a discounted rate. In this matter, Kane

County would receive a 30% discount through OMNIA Partners with Sherwin Williams. However, the County already has an agreement that offers a 50% discount with the Sherwin Williams store in St. Charles, Illinois. Young questioned the purpose of entering into an agreement with OMNIA Partners when it would not save taxpayers money. He spoke on the cost differential between the County using OMNIA Partners or the Sherwin Williams store. He stated that he does not value the partnership with OMNIA Partners.

James Whittington, St. Charles, spoke on the elimination of wasteful spending to solve the budget shortfall. He stated that Kane County was formed in 1836 and everything seemed to be working until 2020. In 2020, the County received money to cover the costs of the pandemic. Whittington questioned the County's need to enter into a contract for \$127K with an outside consultant to identify ways to save money. He stated that the government is too big with too many committees with no time to go through all of the materials. He noted that he has paid approximately \$600K in real estate taxes. He asked the Committee to see his taxes as a consulting fee to the County for them to manage the financials wisely. Whittington recommended that the County form a citizen led committee to help with the financial crisis. (Committee Member Lewis arrived in-person at 1:08 p.m.) He spoke on Responsible Bidder's Ordinance (RBO) that speaks about doing business with Unions. With this, the County limited their supply of available contractors, in which prices have increased. Whittington mentioned the development of an Attrition Plan. He spoke on the need for employees that were hired for pandemic reasons.

Brian Anderson, Sugar Grove, was delighted to see a PowerPoint presentation within today's meeting agenda on SMART Goals: A How to Guide. He explained that he has had discussions with Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson on committees receiving a weekly/monthly dashboard report in order to see the budget's actual numbers. (Committee Member Surges arrived in-person at 1:11 p.m.) He spoke on ideas for County budget cuts, such as a minimum of 5% cut to all department's budget, Attrition Program, hiring freeze, delayed capital projects, prioritize all non-mandated services, early retirement, and look into the County's real estate portfolio to minimize. Additionally, he suggested that all committees go line by line within the financials in order to be prudent on saving money. Anderson spoke on the OMNIA Partners regarding Sherwin Williams paint and the projected savings for the County. He requested that ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock share a presentation regarding the County's need for the use of OMNIA Partners, rather than shopping local. Anderson referenced a published article titled, "Cost Triple, Delays Mount in Vital Tech Contracts for Cook County, Illinois Courts". He stated that this article mentions Tyler Technologies, in which Kane County has contracts with that costs the County approximately \$1M per year. He would like to know if Kane County is experiencing the same issues with Tyler Technologies as other municipalities. Lastly, he stated that the County should address the Cannabis Tax amount. He explained that a 3% increase would generate an additional \$1.5M for Kane County.

Frank Esposito, St. Charles, spoke on the FY2026 Budget and FY2025 budget adjustments. He thought today's meeting was to discuss ways the County could save

money for the FY2025 Budget. He reviewed the recommendations from the Special Finance Committee meeting. He suggested that the majority of the recommendations should be looked into further. When Esposito ran his own business, he had to tighten the financial belt when necessary. He explained that it is a requirement of the Kane County Finance Committee to watch every dollar that is spent throughout the County. He voiced that the FY2026 Budget proposal is a good starting point, but he does not understand what is happening with the FY2025 Budget. He stated that he looks forward to seeing what the Committee will decide today to help the financial situation.

Katie O'Connell, Geneva, spoke on the FY2026 Budget. She explained that as a senior citizen and a working medical professional, she needs her paycheck to continue to live in Kane County. She stated that her home's taxes increased by \$300, totaling \$9,012.42. She noted that \$6K of her taxes are allotted for school districts. O'Connell spoke on the Kane County budget and the length of meetings. She stated that the County needs to reduce expenses by \$29M. Four years ago, the County budget was \$66M. Today, it has doubled. O'Connell questioned the financial plan moving forward. She asked why Committee Member Sanchez has not been elected as chairman. She urged the County Board to reduce each department's spending. She questioned if the contract has been signed for the outside consultant to help the County manage the budget. O'Connell stated that this should be left under the purview of the committees to reduce the budget.

Michelle Bettag, St. Charles, explained that she was traveling in Michigan when she met a couple that lived in Kane County. This couple stated that they moved to Michigan and built a home with property taxes at \$1,200 per year. When living in Illinois, the couple's tax bill was \$9,500 per year. Bettag stated that Kane County is still fighting high taxes and increased spending. She explained that this is a good reminder of what the people of Kane County are thinking and living. She stated that the leadership in Kane County is a problem. She feels that County Board Chairman Pierog and Finance Committee Chairman Berman are not equipped to figure out the budget. She stated that the County needs to do something immediate, such as revising the use of union businesses only. Today, Bettag stated she wanted to speak on the failed leadership in Kane County. She spoke on the increased spending over the past four years, which has now depleted County funds. The constituents do not want to hear about an increase in taxes.

6. New Business

A. 2026 Budget Discussion

Chairman Berman introduced the FY2026 Budget Discussion. He spoke on the increased interest in this year's budget preparation. He explained that County Board Member Bates has been working with departments to better understand each of their budgets. He stated that the more information the Finance Committee has, the better prepared they can be.

County Board Member Bates provided a financial presentation. She stated that the goal to help solve the County's budget crisis is to talk to various stakeholders, including department heads and chairs of standing committees,

and to find out ways to reduce the spending and support services. Bates reviewed the feedback received from department heads, such as having special consideration for small departments. She shared ideas for helping the County's General Fund, such as having a Central Services Allocation Plan, re-allocating Grand Victoria Riverboat Funding to internal salaries, and looking into overbudgeting. She spoke on the Central Services Allocation Plan. She explained that the County's central services are Finance, Information Technologies (IT), Human Resources, and Payroll. She noted that these central services are being paid out of the County's General Fund. However, many of these department's programs are supported by Special Revenue Funds, such as grants. Bates explained that even though these programs are being funded through grants, it is still relying on services paid for by the General Fund. She recommended that because the General Fund is subsidizing these programs, they should be paid back, such as IT services. She provided examples of grant funded programs that use the Central Services, such as Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC), Kane County Health Department (KCHD), Kane County Animal Control (KCAC), and Kane County Division on Transportation (KDOT). Within the Allocation Plan, the County should have a grant application process. During the process, all administrative cost should be included in the grant application. Therefore, the costs could be reimbursed back to the General Fund. Another idea to help the County's General Fund would be to allocate Grand Victoria River Boat funds for internal programs and salaries, such as Environmental salaries, Recycling salaries, economic, and educational. Bates explained that this idea would need to be presented to the Riverboat Committee for consideration. She spoke on overbudgeting and the annual audit. She stated that there are millions of dollars that are found in the audit process due to overbudgeting. She recommended that vacant positions be listed in the budget, but no budget would be allocated until the position is filled. Bates spoke on the recommended phased budget approach. She stated that the department heads believe it would be best to phase budget cuts over the next three years. If considered, the phasing would allow for better thoughtful planning and avoid cutting critical services. Bates spoke on furloughs. She stated that furloughs cut salaries with the same amount of work needing to be done. Lastly, Bates stated that the County is in this together. All departments will need to be treated like elected official offices, and protect the General Fund. Bates presented graphs and tables depicting the FY2025 Budget. Much discussion ensued.

Chairman Berman proposed the creation of a AD HOC committee that will include Finance Vice-Chairman Lenert, Committee Member Tepe, HRM Exec. Dir. Loblillo, Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson, and ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock. This committee will work with departments to determine their annual budget. Once departments have their proposed budgets, the committee will need to go line by line to see where cuts could be made. Further discussion ensued. (Madam Chairman Pierog left at 1:48 p.m.)

The Committee reviewed the budgeting ideas that were mentioned at the May 1, 2025 Special Finance Committee meeting, such as an Attrition Program,

reallocate a portion of the RTA Sales Tax, and utilizing the interest earned. With this six recommendations, it is a potential \$20M savings per year. Lenert proposed that each of these recommendations be looked into further. Further discussion ensued.

The Committee provided consensus to direct departments to cut their General Fund actual amount by 10%. The committee agreed to establish a Finance Committee Working Group, instead of a AD HOC or Sub-Committee.

B. Reserve Policy for General Fund - General Account

KC Finance and Budget Committee

RESULT:	HELD OVER
MOVER:	Bill Lenert
SECONDER:	Clifford Surges

7. Old Business

None.

8. Reports Placed On File

None.

9. Committee Chairman's Comments

None.

10. Executive Session (if needed)

None.

11. Adjournment

RESULT:	APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE
MOVER:	Bill Lenert
SECONDER:	Leslie Juby

This meeting was adjourned at 2:47 PM.

Savannah Zgobica
Sr. Recording Secretary