

Kane County

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

KC Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

9:00 AM

County Board Room

1. Call To Order

Vice-Chairman Lenert called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT

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 Dale Berman

Board Member Jarett Sanchez

Also present: Co. Bd. Members Allan*, Bates, Gripe, Gumz*, Linder*, Molina*, Penesis*, Strathmann*; Treasurer Lauzen; Auditor Wegman; Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson; ITD CIO Lasky* & staff Peters; SAO staff Frank, Hunt*; Sheriff Hain*, KCHD CFO Snowden*; HRM Exec. Dir. Lobrillo; KDOT Dir. Zakosek; KCAC Admin. Youngsteadt*; and members of the press and public.

3. Remote Attendance Requests

(Committee Member Surges arrived in-person at 9:02 a.m.)

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

4. Approval of Minutes: July 23, 2025 & July 30, 2025

RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Vern Tepe

5. Public Comment

Denise Theobald, Geneva, addressed the flyers passed out to residents during property tax collection week by Kane County Speaks. She stated that these flyers entail information blaming Madam Chairman Pierog and the democratic County Board for

everyone's high taxes. (Committee Chairman Berman arrived remotely at 9:03 a.m.) She explained that property taxes have increased, but not only by the County Board. Tax increases come from all taxing bodies, such as schools, towns, park districts, fire districts, et cetera. Theobald stated that Kane County Government receives less than four percent of residents' property tax bill. She added that of the four percent, over 70% is already spoken for as mandated by the State. She stated that to suggest that the County Board is the reason residents' tax bill is increasing, is not honest. She noted that the flyer insinuates just that. She explained that if a resident's tax bill is \$10K, less than \$400 is given to the County. Additionally, she added that residents' property tax bills have increased due to their property values rising, even when the tax rate stays flat. Theobald stated that the flyer claims the County Board has poor oversight and out of control spending. However, the four percent that is given to the County provides public safety, State's Attorneys, Courts, health department, child services, restaurant inspections, senior programs, election security, Veteran's Services, road and bridge repair, farmland protection, fair wages for staff and elected officials, et cetera. She hopes everyone could agree that this is a lot for their tax bill. She explained that the County's tax rate held steady for 12 years, but costs due to inflation and tariffs and allocation from the federal government have been frozen, which shifts the burden onto the counties. Meanwhile, other taxing bodies have continually made small Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments to keep up with inflation. Kane County has not made a CPI adjustment in 14 years. The current tax increase is a small increment.

Kane County resident, Jenine Mehr, spoke on the Kane County Budget shortfall. She stated that there have been discussions for the County to utilize \$4M out of the Capital Spending Fund. She explained that this is not extra money for the County to use at will, but dedicated for long-term capital needs, such as roads, bridges, building repair, equipment replacement, and technology upgrades. These funds are the backbone investments that keep County government functioning and protect tax payers from costly breakdowns. Mehr explained that this fund was created to provide stability and ensure that critical infrastructure would not be neglected. She stated that under Lauzen's prior leadership, a citizen falsely complained that the County would not maintain projects supported by the fund. Ironically, the County is now talking on raising that very fund due to fiscal mismanagement of the County's General Fund. Mehr stated that this is the very thing the Capital Spending Fund was designed to prevent; the temptation to raid it in times of fiscal crisis. Once the County sets the precedent, it will continue until the County will not have the reserves needed to keep up with buildings, roads, and systems. Mehr stated that this short-term fix could create a long-term liability. She explained that the responsible course is not to weaken a fund that protects tax payers, but to restore fiscal discipline where spending has occurred, such as offering early retirement, imposing a hiring freeze, and eliminating frivolous consultant contracts. She stated that tax payers created the Capital Spending Fund so that future generations would not pay the price for today's neglect and using it now as a bandaid for the General Fund, is short-sighted, irresponsible, and unfair to the citizens of Kane County.

6. Treasurer's Report (C. Lauzen)

A. Monthly Report

Treasurer Lauzen stated the monthly report was on file. He responded to the inaccurate assessments. He stated that County receives four percent of the property tax installment, which is approximately \$250M. He addressed the inaccurate information that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has not been increased in 14 years. He stated that this was true for 12 years, but over the last two years, the County Board has voted to increase the CPI. Referencing the Monthly Treasurer's Report, Lauzen spoke on the County's Account Assets. He stated that the cost value of the County's investments are approximately \$437M. He added that the investments earned \$1.75M in interest July 2025. Referencing page seven, Lauzen presented the Actual Performance Interest Earned Fiscal Years 2023-2025 graph that depicted the two and a half year earnings on County funds. Referencing page eight, he presented the Interest Earned Fiscal Years 2021-2025 graph, which shows the pattern of the annual interest earned. He stated that year-to-date, the County has collected \$13.6M. The projected amount of interest earned is approximately \$20M. Referencing page nine, Lauzen shared the Cumulative Interest Earned Fiscal Years 2021-2025 graph. The Cumulative Interest Earned is \$61.2M, which represents one-half of an annual General Fund budget. On page 10, Lauzen presented the Kane County Weighted Average Demand and Investment Yield graph. He stated that the County continues to be above the benchmarks. Referencing page 11, he presented the Kane County Portfolio Analysis as of July 31, 2025. (Madam Chairman Pierog arrived remotely at 9:11 a.m.)

B. Amending the Kane County Financial Policies Regarding Investment Policy

Treasurer Lauzen explained that this resolution is a housekeeping amendment that states that the Kane County Financial Policy needs to reflect the change in the State Statute. The amendment would state that the County will not directly invest in corporate securities maturing more than 5.25 years from the date of settlement.

County Board Member Bates asked for clarity on the purpose of this resolution. Lauzen replied that it is per State Statute. Vice-Chairman Lenert explained that this is to comply with State Statute, in which the County cannot buy bonds that would mature later than 5.25 years after they are issued. Discussion ensued.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Clifford Surges SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

Treasurer Lauzen explained that he prepared a resolution that was a petition for the candidacy of Gwen Henry for the office of Executive Trustee at the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). He stated that Henry has been serving as the DuPage Treasurer for 19 years. He noted that this resolution is up for consideration and that it is good for the County to have friends on the IMRF nine-person board. He explained that six years ago, IMRF was going to lower the actuarial assumption from 7.5% to 7.25%, which would have cost the County hundreds of thousands on payroll. He stated that Henry invited others to speak against lowering this to keep the standards high. Lauzen explained that this is the best funded ratio of any major pension fund in Illinois. He provided Henry's professional background. He stated that Henry is highly competent to hold office of Executive Trustee. He noted that the resolution has been prepared and would like the Committee to consider it. Lauzen addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Discussion ensued.

Lauzen presented the Treasurer's Office's FY2026 Budget. He shared the office's organizational chart. The chart shows a team derived of 11 full-time positions, four seasonal positions, and one vacant position. He shared guotes from the "Polonius" Financial Advice of his Son, Laertes". He shared the graph depicting the Actual Performance Interest Earned Fiscal Years 2023-2025. He spoke on the property tax installment amount collected by townships of \$1.6B. He stated that the County is fortunate to have Supervisor of Assessments Armstrong and County Clerk Director of Tax Extension and Vital Records Emerson for their expertise. Lauzen stated as the Board is figuring out the annual budget, they should account for the \$20M of interest income. If the County chooses to utilize 60%-70% of the \$20M in the General Fund, the fund would gain \$4M to \$6M. Lauzen stated that if the County uses the resources that they have, the considered budget cuts may not need to happen. He addressed the equity in pay. He pointed out that the Treasurer's FY2026 Budget does not ask for new programs or office growth funding, but does ask for staff to receive equitable pay in relation to other County offices/departments. He spoke on the issues of County staff being hired by other departments/offices due to additional pay. He requested that his office receive the same as other offices/departments. Referencing the 2015 to 2024 Payroll Report, he listed the salary growth that has occurred in various departments/offices throughout the County. He shared the FY2026 Budget revenues, which are \$1,439,840. He stated that the FY2026 expenses are \$1,394,437. Lauzen shared the FY2026 revenues and expenses for the Tax Sale Automation Fund that is

overseen by the Treasurer's Office. He noted that this fund is zeroed out at the end of the year through the Accounting Department.

7. Auditor's Report (P. Wegman)

A. Monthly Report

Auditor Wegman stated the monthly report was on file. No additional report was made.

B. Approving July 2025 Claims Paid

Vice-Chairman Lenert stated that this resolution is to approve the July 2025 claims paid in the amount of \$12,099,140.33.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford Surges, and Vern

Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

AWAY: Dale Berman

C. Auditor Office's FY2026 Budget Presentation (not attached)

(Madam Chairman Pierog arrived in-person at 9:27 a.m.)

Auditor Wegman presented the Auditor Office's FY2026 Budget. She shared the office's mission statement. She presented a graph depicting the Auditor's Office Budget for FY2024 to FY2026. She stated that the numbers on today's presentation will change because she is currently working with the Finance Department on the FY2026 revised budget that will be submitted to the County Board for their consideration. She explained that the original FY2026 Submitted Budget was less than the FY2025 Actual Budget. She stated that the revised FY2026 Budget will be less than FY2026 Submitted Budget due to cutting additional expenses. Wegman stated that the FY2024 Actual Budget was \$282,428.27. She noted that the Auditor's Office returned approximately \$30K to the County's General Fund, due to the inability to fill a vacant position. She explained that the original FY2026 proposed budget was \$396,125, that included four full-time positions, two part-time positions, one intern, and one elected position. She stated that the FY2026 revised budget will change the positions to three full-time, three part-time, one intern, and one elected. She noted that the wage request has been reduced by \$5,270. Additionally, moving a full-time position to part-time will save \$9,750. Wegman stated that with the

staffing adjustments, approximately \$10,233, will be reduced from the General Fund. She explained that with the changes to the revised FY2026 Budget, the Auditor's Office was able to reduce their originally proposed budget by 5.962%. She stated that this revised FY2026 Budget is as low as she can go without negatively impacting the roles of the office. She explained the implications that would occur, if the Auditor's Office's staff was reduced even further. Wegman addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Discussion ensued on the possible use of artificial intelligence (AI) to run the various reports and audits.

Wegman addressed the changes made within the Auditor's Office since FY2024, such as the implementation of Resolution 24-194: Authorizing Revision to the Kane County Departmental Purchasing Policies and the raise of approximately \$23K in FY2025 and FY2026 for the Elected Auditor. She shared a graph that depicted the amount of invoices that are received by the Auditor's Office. She explained that there has been a lower amount of invoices being received. However, the total dollar amount has increased. Wegman addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Discussion ensued.

8. Finance Director's Report (K. Hopkinson)

A. Monthly Finance Reports

Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson stated the monthly financial reports were on file. She explained that the Finance Department has been looking into the use of artificial intelligence (AI). She stated that a few weeks ago, staff attended a meeting with Tyler Technologies. At the meeting, Tyler Technologies stated that they will be offering, as part of the accounting software package, Al Accounts Payable. She explained the process with utilizing AI for Accounts Payable. She noted that AI will not get it 100% correct on the first try, but it is designed to learn and become more accurate. She stated that best practice is to have an actual person review the reports, but the data entry could be eliminated. Hopkinson explained that the Finance Department has been utilizing AI to help develop a policy and procedure manual. In general, the Finance Department has been looking into certain technology features within the current software. She provided an example of how the new technology features address efficiency. She noted that the number one cost when trying to change to a new technology is the cost of implementing it. Hopkinson thinks that it would be a good idea for the County to see cost benefits on different types of technologies that could be greater than the initial investment.

Hopkinson stated the FY2024 Audit of the financial statements have been completed. The report has been posted to the Finance Department's website. Hopkinson stated that the audit partner from Baker Tilly will attend the September County Board to present the results. She explained that the audit of the County's federal grant monies would be completed later today and the audit of state grants would be done by the end of the week. She stated that when these audits are completed, they will be posted on the County's Finance webpage.

Hopkinson spoke on the General Fund - General Account from August 27, 2025. She stated that to date, the County's revenue in the General Fund - General Account is lower than expected due to timing of the property tax installment. She highlighted areas of concern within the FY2025 Budget, such as licenses and permits, which is \$700K under budget. Hopkinson explained that the FY2025 commodities expense is over budget due to the Sheriff's Office's food line item for detainees. She stated that the Contractual Services and Salaries and Wages are under budget. She reminded the Committee that the FY2025 budget for the General Fund - General Account states that \$27.5M be used of the fund balance. To date, the County has expended \$24M of fund balance. Hopkinson spoke on the General Fund - General Account's Contractual services. She highlighted those departments/offices with larger differences than expected at this time of the fiscal year.

B. Finance Department's FY2026 Budget Presentation

Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson presented the Finance Department's FY2026 Budget. She shared the Finance Department's organizational chart. She stated that staff oversees Purchasing, Accounting, Payroll, and the Grant Administrator. She listed the functions and responsibilities of each entity of the Finance Department. Hopkinson addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Discussion ensued.

Hopkinson continued with the Finance Department's Budget Comparison from FY2021 Actual through FY2026 Budget. She spoke on the Grant Administrator position and the inclusion within the Finance Department. She stated that because the Grant Administrator position focuses on assisting the Development Department, Environmental and Water Resources Department, and Workforce Development, the Finance Department submitted an application to the Riverboat Grant Committee to see if this position could be funded by the Riverboat funding. Additionally, this position could be reimbursed through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Grant due to it's help on the grant submittal. Hopkinson stated that the FY2026 Budget reflects the changes in the structure of the department with the change in salaries and wages to contractual consulting for the addition of the outsourced consulting. She added that the annual audit fees are stable. She noted that the audit fluctuates year to year due to the actuarial evaluation. Hopkinson addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Much discussion ensued.

9. New Business

A. Kane County's FY2026 Budget Presentation (not attached)

This agenda item was held until a future meeting.

The Committee moved to agenda item 9B: 25-277: Authorizing Expense Budget Amount to be Used for the 2026 General Fund General Account Budget.

B. Authorizing Expense Budget Amount to be Used for the 2026 General Fund General Account Budget

Vice-Chairman Lenert thanked Committee Member Tepe, Fin. Exec. Dir. Hopkinson, HRM Exec. Dir. Lobrillo, and ITD/BLD Exec. Dir. Fahnestock for their work on trying to find solutions for the FY2026 Budget. He stated that the Committee would be using Committee Member Juby's recommendation that had about a million dollar difference from Exhibit A. He noted that the recommendation is not perfect and may need to be altered. He stated that the key to this resolution is to define the total amount of the expense budget to be used in FY2026, which is \$124,766,071. He explained that in approving this resolution for the expense amount of \$124,766,071, the County will use this number to base the FY2026 Budget off of. He stated that the Finance Department would like to stay firm with this number for all departments/offices. Lenert added that all County Board Members received an e-mail from Hopkinson that explained where the County is at in the budget process and what they are looking to do moving forward. Referencing Exhibit A, he explained that the table shows exactly what each department will need to get down to financially for the FY2026 Expense Budget.

Committee Member Juby stated that when she first presented her recommendation, it was a balanced budget using zero reserves. She referenced the comment made by Lenert that departments/offices will be penalized the recommendation. However, the County Board did not agree that the FY2024 Actual Budget was the FY2026 benchmark. She explained that between today and yesterday, there were three budget presentations that were over by approximately \$468K than allowed. If offices/departments continue to do this, the County will have to use more reserves. She suggested that the County uses the budget reserve for the departments that cannot do this without losing the services that they offer. She stated that she does not advocate to use the FY2024 Actual Budget, but do use the FY2025 Budget. When the County has individual offices/departments that are unable to fulfill their statutory obligations or services provided, they would deal with those on a case by case basis. Much discussion ensued.

Committee Member Surges motioned to amend this resolution to change the 7.99% to 11%, Juby seconded. Discussion ensued. Motion failed by a 1-5 vote.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, and Vern

Tepe

NAY: Clifford Surges

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

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

Committee Member Juby stated that if the Committee votes for this, it looks as if they are approving a new tax. However, if the Committee votes against this, it looks like the County will support the loss of revenue. Juby explained that this is a current tax that every municipality has. However, instead of the Grocery Tax being given to Springfield, the revenue would stay within the County. Juby noted that surrounding counties and municipalities have supported establishing and imposing a Grocery Tax that would support a revenue stream that the State has taken away. Discussion ensued on concerns on how this money will be utilized throughout the County.

The motion failed by a 3-3 vote. This resolution will not move forward to the Executive Committee.

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

MOVER: Leslie Juby SECONDER: Anita Lewis

AYE: Dale Berman, Leslie Juby, and Vern Tepe

NAY: Bill Lenert, Anita Lewis, and Clifford Surges

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

County Board Member Bates requested that this ordinance be added to the Executive Committee meeting agenda.

D. Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with the State of Illinois, Department of Human Services - Juvenile Justice Council Grant

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

E. Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with Montgomery County for Juvenile Detention Services

Committee Member Tepe clarified that Court Srvs. Exec. Dir. Aust presented all of the following intergovernmental agreements at the Judicial Public Safety Committee. He added that these are expense increases to these communities to adjust for the fact that Kane County's costs have gone up.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

F. Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with Mason County for Juvenile Detention Services

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

G. Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with Shelby County for Juvenile Detention Services

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

H. Authorizing an Intergovernmental Agreement with Carroll County for Juvenile Detention Services

Committee Member Lewis stated that the County is lucky to have a Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) with services that serve Kane County's needs and others.

Committee Ex-Officio Roth spoke on Court Srvs. Exec. Dir. Aust's ability to be creative in lowering expenses by passing the cost onto other counties/municipalities.

Vice-Chairman Lenert commended Aust and JJC Superintendent Davis on their excellent work. He noted that the County should be proud of the program and work that is conducted at the JJC.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Anita Lewis

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

KC Executive Committee

I. Authorizing a Food Services Contract Extension for the Juvenile Justice Center

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

J. Authorizing Opioid Response Community Implementation Projects

Committee Member Juby stated that the Opioid Crisis is horrific. She is glad to see the use of settlement funds being utilized that directly affects constituents. She congratulated the Kane County Health Department and all community partners for their due diligence.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Anita Lewis, Clifford

Surges, and Vern Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

K. Approving County Board Personal Expense Voucher Reimbursement Request

Vice-Chairman Lenert stated that this Personal Expense Voucher (PEV) was submitted by Committee Member Lewis. He explained that after her personal review of the PEV, he noticed that Lewis did not ask to be reimbursed for meals. Additionally, Lewis shared a hotel room with County Board Members Bates and Strathmann in order to try to control expenses.

KC Executive Committee

RESULT: MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE

TO: KC Executive Committee

MOVER: Vern Tepe SECONDER: Leslie Juby

AYE: Dale Berman, Bill Lenert, Leslie Juby, Clifford Surges, and Vern

Tepe

ABSENT: Jarett Sanchez

ABSTAIN: Anita Lewis

10. Old Business

County Board Member Gripe stated that the financial budget process to this point has been a partisan effort. During the process he has learned two things: leadership has stepped up to work together in order to make things better for everyone in the County and that the responsibility of the budget is being taken seriously. He appreciates this and hopes the residents will also. Lastly, Gripe stated that what County Board Members Bates, Lewis and Strathmann did on their trip, proves that even if money is allocated, it does not mean it has to be spent, which is an important precedent.

Committee Member Surges stated that he appreciates the condor that is had at these meetings and that everyone is treated with respect. He noted that the Board is stronger as a collective, rather than individually.

County Board Member Bates thanked everyone for their hard work on the FY2026 Budget.

11. Reports Placed On File

RESULT: APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOVER: Vern Tepe

12. Committee Chairman's Comments

None.

13. Executive Session (if needed)

None.

14. Adjournment

RESULT: APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE

MOVER: Anita Lewis SECONDER: Leslie Juby

This meeting was adjourned at 10:57 AM.

Savannah Zgobica Sr. Recording Secretary