

COUNTY BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2022

LIVE WEBINAR

Illinois Local Government Legislative Update

January 20, 2023

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

University of Illinois Extension in
coordination with the IACBM

Registration information coming soon!

State conference proves valuable and informative for county officials

The Illinois Association of County Officials (IACO) Fall Conference returned to the city of Normal this November for three days of learning and networking. This year's event attracted more than 500 government officials and private-sector partners. The conference provided county officials a variety of opportunities to learn about and discuss key local government issues and priorities.

"Those of us who attend IACO have a strong connection," said Erin Cartwright-Weinstein, Lake County Clerk of the Circuit Court. "We continuously build on those relationships at every event and meeting. The opportunity to connect in an educational yet relaxed environment allows us to become more than acquaintances."

Sessions focused on such significant topics as how to navigate intergenerational communication in an ongoing challenge of recruiting and retaining employees, successful procurement strategies for the public sector, and mitigating the risk of payment fraud to ensure the integrity of accounting systems.

County board members and commissioners met in a separate meeting on November 22 focused on legislative initiatives and considerations for the 2023 Policy Platform. Executive Director Kelly Murray and Legislative Director Taylor Anderson provided members with a head start on learning more about the issues that promise to be top legislative priorities for the new Legislature and Governor. "It was great brainstorming with peers," said IACBM President Michael Holliday.

Members received detailed information from Heartland Greenway on the proposed Navigator CO2 pipeline project in addition to an informative analysis on property tax exemptions in Illinois. The property tax is a source of constant discussion and policy debate not only at the state capitol, but locally.

See page 3 for more highlights

Pictured: William Hadley, Stephenson County Chair; Michael "Doc" Holliday, IACBM President and Madison County Board Member; and Samuel Newton, Stephenson County Vice-Chair.



Accelerate Illinois Accepting Applications

The Illinois Office of Broadband is accepting applications for all 2023 cohorts of *Accelerate Illinois*. County officials interested in applying can read the NOCO at <https://dceo.illinois.gov/connectillinois/accelerate-illinois>.

Accelerate Illinois provides assistance for county and regional-level broadband infrastructure deployment planning. This 14-week community engagement program is designed to help communities prepare for historic state and federal broadband infrastructure funding.

The application window will run through Friday, December 16. Cohort communities will be notified the week of December 19 and the first 2023 cohort will begin weekly meetings in the second full week of January 2023.

Questions? Contact Robbie McBeath, Accelerate program leader at (847) 328-3040 or rmcbeath@benton.org.



“There are large gaps in access to public EV charging stations throughout the suburbs of Cook County, specifically in traditionally underserved communities on the south and west sides,” said County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Cook County announces \$5.5 million to increase electric vehicle charging infrastructure and accessibility

Four-year initiative will bring up to 75 charging stations to underserved communities

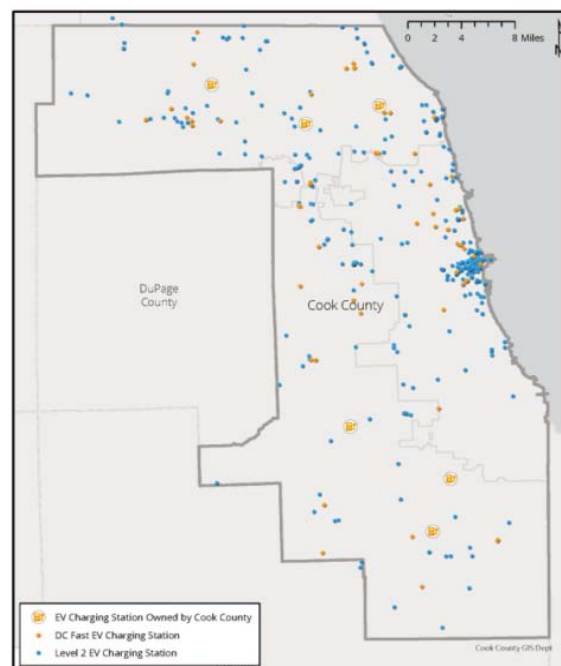
Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle announced \$5.5 million in funding for the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Program, an initiative led by the County’s Department of Environment and Sustainability and Bureau of Asset Management, to increase the number and access to public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout suburban Cook County.

The goal of this four-year initiative is to install up to 75 dual port public EV charging stations. Cook County will cover the cost of the EV station hardware, construction, installation as well as networking and warranty fees for the first five years.

“Gas powered vehicles may have a cheaper initial price but can wind up costing more over the lifetime of the vehicle,” said Deborah Stone, Chief Sustainability Officer and Director of the County’s Department of Environment and Sustainability. “Without access to a charging station, an electric vehicle is not a feasible option for residents, especially those who can’t charge at home. This program will help change that.”

The County is seeking input from municipal leaders, residents, business owners and community organizations to find the most suitable locations for the public charging stations. Examples of public charging station locations could be a city hall, public library, community center, house of worship, housing complex, shopping complex or any other location that would offer convenient access to charging. Station locations within disinvested communities will be prioritized.

The County is providing funding for the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).



Visit www.cookcountyil.gov/EVcharging

DuPage County launches crime data portal



Calls for Services
53,528
Year to Date

2021 Crimes
4,653
Reported on 2021

DuPage County has launched a Transparency and Crime Statistics Portal, which will provide crime data from the DuPage County Sheriff’s Office. The portal, which can be found at dupagesheriff-transparency-dupage.hub.arcgis.com, pulls records from the Police Records Management System and is currently only pulling data from the Sheriff’s Office. The data provides an overview of crime data in a particular area but does not give specific addresses or information about victims.

“This important initiative will provide residents with accurate local crime data, while also highlighting the critical work law enforcement provides in keeping our communities safe,” said Judicial and Public Safety Committee Chairwoman Julie Renehan.

While the portal only has Sheriff’s Office data, the County will look at expanding the portal to be available to municipalities.



Illinois Association of County Officials

FALL CONFERENCE

November 21-23, 2022 • Normal, Illinois



Members Bill Knupp, Henderson County Board; Matthew Meyers, Lake County Administrator; and Lisa Thompson, Fulton County Board.



Taylor Anderson, Legislative Consultant, reported on Veto Session and new laws taking effect in 2023.



Immediate Past President Scott Schwerer, McDonough County Chair and Second Vice President Richard Brunk, Rock Island County Chair.



Members Donald Little, Jersey County Chair, and Sharon Schallhorn, Bureau County Administrator.



"Thank you for your public service," said newly elected IACO President Melissa Hurst, Coles County Circuit Court Clerk. "I hope you utilize the IACO meetings as a way to enhance your experience as a county board member."



"Will County is open for business. We are going to continue working together to bring good-paying jobs to all of our communities. The growing clean energy industry presents an opportunity to diversify our economic landscape."

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant
Will County Executive

Will County focuses on attracting green industries

Will County leaders are calling attention to an increased focus on attracting green industries to the local economy. This follows several coordinated initiatives to attract the clean energy industry to Will County, including energy storage and transportation.

"We recognize that green jobs are the future," said County Executive Bertino-Tarrant. "Will County elected leaders and local stakeholders have been working hard over the last few years to attract industries to our communities. We're positioning the county for a clean energy revolution that will significantly boost our economy."

The Will County Board recently voted to allow for battery energy storage facilities to open in unincorporated areas, empowering a growing clean energy industry to grow in Will County. Battery energy storage facilities store energy produced by renewable energy sources during periods of low-cost or over-production, to be later distributed to community electric grids when there is an increased need for power.

This zoning amendment makes Will County one of the first local governments in Illinois to allow for these facilities. The amendment to the zoning ordinance classifies battery energy storage facilities as minor utilities that are permitted in industrially zoned areas.

"This simple change in zoning helps keep Will County at the cutting edge of the clean energy industry," said Will County Board Land Use and Development Committee Chair Tyler Marcum. "I'm excited to see more and more energy companies opening their doors or moving to Will County in the near-future."



Companies specializing in energy storage are projected to grow following the 2021 State of Illinois Climate & Equitable Jobs Act, which calls for the state to move towards 100% clean energy by the year 2050. The State of Illinois has also initiated a Coal-to-Solar Energy Storage Grants Program to provide incentives for companies to install energy storage facilities at the sites of former coal plants.

The County has also recently initiated an Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan to build upon state and regional initiatives to create transition plan to zero emission vehicles. The plan aims to identify locations for electric vehicle charging infrastructure and to support the increased demand for electric personal, commercial, and freight vehicles.

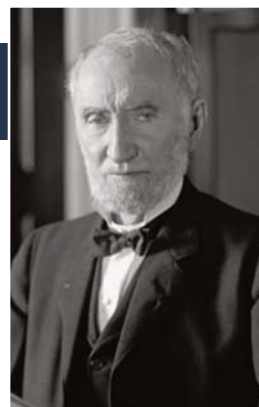
The plan will identify a strategy to address barriers for electric vehicle ownership, including for residents and communities with lower incomes, lower levels of home ownership, and gaps in charging infrastructure.

"The Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan is a significant step to ensure that Will County's infrastructure is prepared for the green economy," said Will County Board Public Works and Transportation Chair Joe VanDuyne. "Our coordinated efforts are creating forward-thinking opportunities to bring new jobs to Will County and prepare us for a more energy-efficient future."

These initiatives coincide with an increased effort by the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) to attract green industries to Will County. The CED has noted recent successes, including the growth of energy efficient production companies opening their doors in Will County. Both Lion Electric in Joliet and Hyzon Motors in Bolingbrook are projected to bring nearly 1,500 jobs to the region. Will County is also home to two of the largest rooftop solar arrays in the Midwest, the Magid array in Romeoville and the IKEA array in Joliet.

Vermilion County seeks to honor Joe Cannon

The **Vermilion County Board Property Committee** has voted to officially rename the County Administration Building as the Joseph G. Cannon Building. On March 4, 1923, *Time Magazine*, placed the profile of Cannon on the cover of its first volume, issue number one, on the first day of his retirement after forty-six years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives. On March 4, 2023, the Centennial of that retirement, the Vermilion County Board is expected to honor the U.S. Congressman from Illinois who served as Speaker of the U.S. House from 1903 to 1911. The Joseph G. Cannon Building issue is expected to come before the full County Board Monday, on an amended agenda of the reorganization meeting, now that this action has been taken by the committee.



Franklin County begins school resource officer program



Franklin County Sheriff David Bartoni, School Resource Deputy Ron Howard, Chief Deputy Kyle Bacon, and Patrol Lt. Kevin Royce.

The Franklin County Sheriff's Office has formed a School Resource Officer Program. The goal is to maintain a safe learning environment and build positive relationships with students, parents, educators and school administrators.

In a post the sheriff's office said, "We believe that positive police presence in schools will greatly reduce violence, acts of physical aggression, and other safety related issues."

Numerous school facilities and municipal police departments throughout Franklin County have already established School Resource Officer Programs, however, not all Franklin County Schools have dedicated SRO's.

The goal is to work in cooperation with the schools with a program already in place and expand SRO services to those rural schools not currently covered.

The Sheriff's Office hopes that in the coming months and years, every Franklin County School has a full time SRO placed within each learning facility.

Deputy Sheriff Ron Howard was recently hired to serve as the first School Resource Deputy and he has been tasked with assisting in the establishment and growth of the program. Deputy Howard previously served as a West Frankfort Police Officer and recently retired after 29 years of service.

Source: News3 WSIL, www.wsiltv.com



McHenry County ROE relocating

The McHenry County Regional Office of Education (ROE) will move to a new location in the City of McHenry effective December 14.

The ROE will relocate from the County Administration Building in Woodstock to a 3,100-square-foot rented office at 408 S. Route 31. The new and larger facility will allow the office to incorporate a Pearson testing lab in order to administer GED exams, state teaching licensure exams, and about 200 other industry exams.

"Previously, county residents who needed a test administered through a Pearson testing center had to travel to surrounding counties. This is another positive component in attracting and serving the educators of McHenry County," Regional Superintendent Diana Hartmann said.

The county's Finance Department will move into the 2,000-square-foot space at the Administration Building the ROE will be vacating.

Madison County Sheriffs Office preparing for body cameras

Madison County is getting a new tool to fight crime. The Madison County Board approved the Sheriff's Office request to purchase 89 body cameras, equipment, software and licensing for just over \$535,000 from Axon Enterprises, Inc. The 5-year contract would be paid at approximately \$107,000 per year, and is budgeted.

"Body cameras are about accountability for both law enforcement and the public," Deputy Sheriff Jeff Connor said. He added that body worn cameras would create greater transparency for sheriff deputies and comply with the state's SAFE-T Act.

While some aspects of the SAFE-T Act are controversial to law enforcement, the majority of police and sheriff departments support the inclusion of body cameras. However, some have concerns about cost. The cameras themselves are not cost-prohibitive – the expense comes from the storage of data and the ability to process it.

Capt. Joseph Halbrooks said the department tested three different systems before selecting Axon. Among the advantages – the cameras automatically turn on in the presence of other Axon cameras and when either a Taser or the officer's sidearm are pulled. In addition, the data can be downloaded using Wi-Fi hotspots. When used correctly the cameras would capture footage before the deputies make initial contact with suspects and would continue recording until the end of the interaction. Another advantage of this system is it will allow the department to easily process images, specifically redacting images to exclude faces when applicable, and computer screens along with other personal information.

"Body cameras are considered a valuable evidentiary tool for prosecution of certain types of criminal cases by supplementing deputies' court testimony with audio and video records of an incident," Connor said.

"I think what we'll find and what is being seen nationwide is that the overwhelming majority of the time, these cameras show law enforcement officers are doing things right."





Lake County officials celebrate storm sewer improvement project

The Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and City of Lake Forest came together to celebrate the completion of the Burr Oak Area Storm Sewer Improvement Project.

The completed work, while out of sight, brings flood mitigation relief to homes and businesses in downtown Lake Forest. Grant funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the City of Lake Forest was utilized to construct storm sewer system upgrades and underground storage facilities to help protect residents and businesses in the area from flood risk.

"We are excited to celebrate the completion of the Burr Oak Area Storm Sewer Improvement Project," said Lake Forest Mayor George A. Pandaleon. "This very important investment in the City's infrastructure will help reduce flooding for over 300 residents and businesses in the immediate area. The StormTrap underground detention tank holds 847,000 gallons during peak storms and by doing so, protects one of Lake Forest's treasured natural resources, our ravine system."



The new StormTrap provides increased capacity for stormwater detention, improved stormwater quality and flow control. This helps to mitigate many harmful effects of high-volume stormwater runoff, such as erosion and flooding. It also eliminates the need for above ground ponds, thereby creating more usable land.

"We give special thanks to former County Board Member (and former Mayor) Mike Rummell, current County Board Members Paras Parekh and Paul Frank, County Board Chair Sandy Hart, the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, State Representative Bob Morgan, and State Senator Julie Morrison for their help in securing a grant for roughly half of the \$5.4 million project cost," Pandaleon said.

"Thanks to the combined efforts of the Stormwater Management Commission's effective floodplain and stormwater management and flood hazard mitigation activities, and those of local partners like the City of Lake Forest, flood damage has and continues to decrease in our area." County Board Chair Sandy Hart said. "The additional benefits of managing rainwater runoff includes decreasing pollutants in our water systems and ground-water replenishment."



The completed work will have a significant impact on several roadways and businesses currently susceptible to street flooding including Western Avenue, a major roadway in the area.

"Bringing the Burr Oak Area Storm Sewer Improvement Project to reality has taken incredible teamwork, collaboration and funding," said County Board Member Paras Parekh who represents District 12. "I am thrilled that this long-awaited project is complete as I am sure the businesses and residents in the area are as well."

In May 2022, Lake County welcomed Illinois Governor Pritzker to announce \$30 million in grant funding to complete regional stormwater infrastructure projects, including this completed project in Lake Forest. The funding was used to support 14 projects and provide stormwater management benefits to more than 2,300 properties and 25 roadways most effected by flooding across Lake County.



“How do you manage employees working from home and how do you know they are working? Policies, that’s your answer. You need rules. Don’t go all in at the outset.”

Dave Ryan, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Rogers HR Consulting / CIRMA

County employees working from home

Everyone has heard the old proverb; “Necessity is the mother of invention.” Most of us have now returned to our offices, buildings and facilities as have most of our staff. While there may be a few stragglers out there, it seems to be the thought that most government work is “high touch” and better done in person.

Even if that is true, is it possible that some work, some jobs, some tasks could continue to be done from home? What have we learned through the pandemic and how can we apply this to our workplace?

Recruiting is something that most organizations struggle with today. So could we make some employees more content by letting them work from home occasionally, during certain periods or on certain planned days. Understanding that the smallest of small offices will most be unlikely to do much of this remote working because each person provides represents a higher percent of the staff.

So, for those who did have employees work from home regularly or occasionally, what worked well and what didn’t work. You must take stock of this in your planning. Many organizations feel that much finance work can be done off site. This includes payroll, receivables, payables, or other repetitive processes. Another area that fared well for remote work was planning and economic development. There are also accounts of agencies that implemented inspection and/or permitting processes using video technology. It would seem likely that these might be some area to investigate if there is an interest in undertaking remote work.

Won’t board members and other elected officials balk at this? How do we manage those employees and how do you know they are working? Policies, that’s your answer. Yes, spoken like a true fan of bureaucracy; you need rules. Don’t go all in at the outset. History tells us that pilot programs are a wonderful thing and that we can learn from them. **Said another way, start small.**



Can we possibly cover all eventualities in a policy? Probably not but we can try. **Next month we will have a sample work from home policy for members who are contemplating this matter.** This should help you develop a site-specific plan for your county if you choose to do so. In the meantime, here is a bullet-point list of things to contemplate and plan for, if you intend to move ahead with a Remote Work Policy.



- Consider purchasing only laptop computers (they can go with the employee)
- Investigate your communication system and moving calls around (to remote locations)
- Discuss this with managers and supervisors, can they manage in this environment?
- Review IT Network security for off-site access (including all systems)
- Does your county office have enough bandwidth for all these needs
- Customized audio and video equipment for employees (headsets and cameras)
- Hours (Flexible or inflexible) exact times or not
- Consider a statement requiring proof of childcare (as remote work is not a substitute for day care)
- Managers should contemplate on-site visits to check for proper workspace and safety concerns
- Contemplate a “Cameras On” policy for on-line meetings
- Workman’s Compensation issues (if injured at home)
- Contemplate providing partial remuneration for home internet
- Access to and proper management of On-line file storage and sharing (Box, One-Drive, Dropbox)



Peoria County breaks ground on new Health and Human Services building

Peoria County and city leaders officially broke ground on the future Peoria County Health and Human Services Campus. The new campus will stand on the same spot on Sheridan Road and include more agencies and organizations.

Board member and Chairperson of the County Health Committee, Sharon Williams said the groundbreaking was several years in the making.

"Today is probably the work of about a year of analyzing data and looking at various locations," said Williams. "And maybe we looked at 30 different locations before we decided that it needed to remain where it was."

The new facility will house the Peoria City/County Health Department, Coroner's Office, Regional Office of Education, and



Sustainability and Resource Conservation Department. Health Department offices will relocate to various areas throughout the community during construction next year.

"Between American Rescue Plan Act funds, our Health Fund reserves, and additional grants and allocations, I am pleased that we will be able to undertake this massive project without raising property taxes," said Andrew A. Rand, Chairman of the Peoria County Board.

Sharon Williams, added, "This is a transformational project to be undertaking. The aging condition of our Health Department and Coroner's Office was to the point of creating barriers to effective service delivery. By co-locating these departments and consolidating multiple Regional Office of Education offices into a new facility, we will be able to modernize these workspaces to serve our community more efficiently and effectively."

She expects construction to begin in late 2022/early 2023 and be finished by late 2023. The final architecture and building design is still in -progress.

NEWS & UPDATES



Effingham County officially adopted a no-kill policy that makes firm its commitment to not euthanize animals, except as a last resort when they are so sick or injured there is no other humane option. As reported by *Effingham Daily News*, the resolution, which the Effingham County Board passed, comes after decades of advocacy from local groups and individuals. Board member Heather Mumma (*left*) drafted the resolution, which has been a goal of hers since she discovered her passion for animal rescue years ago. She was joined at the meeting in reading the resolution by Effingham native and no-kill resolution advocate Mary Ellen Eversman (*right*), who has long dedicated her life to helping animals in need. "If the County Board can agree on this resolution, then we can stand a little brighter as a county and as a people," Eversman said.

Photo by Nick Taylor, www.effinghamdailynews.com.

Some communities in **St. Clair County** will have a new countywide warning system for dangerous weather. The county approved a \$2.49 million contract with Acoustic Technology, Inc. Systems to replace 79 existing sirens across the county in addition to installing 43 new ones. Funding for the sirens will come from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) relief funds. Officials are expecting the sirens to be installed by the end of May or early June, according to Herb Simmons, director of the St. Clair County Emergency Management Agency.

The **Kane County** Animal Control Department is currently booked up until early 2023 for people looking to surrender pets. The economy, inflation and return of in-person work are primary reasons why more people are giving up their pets. The county shelter has to keep at least 10% of its cages open for strays.

