

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD

AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY ILLINOIS, BEGUN AND HELD AT THE CHRISTIAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN TAYLORVILLE, ILLINOIS, AND BY TELECONFERENCE ON **June 25, 2020**

ATTEST: MICHAEL C. GIANASI, COUNTY CLERK

The following proceeding had and entered at large upon the records of said Board, which is done accordingly in the following words and figures to wit;

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-07, issued by Governor JB Pritzker, this County Board meeting is being conducted by teleconference with remote participation by County Board members.

Chairwoman Becky Edwards called the meeting to order at 12:00p.m. The meeting was called at the request of the following board members: Molly Alaria, Venise McWard, Dale Livingston, Vicki McMahon, Brian Wilbur, and Tim Carlson.

ROLL CALL

The roll call by County Clerk Michael Gianasi showing all members present did signify a quorum and was declared. Craig Corzine, Linda Curtin, Becky Edwards, Mike McClure, and Clark Pearce participated remotely.

REMOVAL OF CHAIRWOMAN

A motion was made by Dale Livingston and seconded by Brian Wilbur to replace the chairperson of the Christian County Board.

Discussion:

Chairwoman Becky Edwards began by saying the issue is about wind development in Christian County. She discussed the group opposed to wind development and whether some board members were representing all of their constituents. She described the research she did regarding wind and other renewable energy sources. She also talked about the potential revenue of \$4 million and the current and projected revenue reductions that would occur due to the effects of COVID-19 on the local businesses. Becky stated it's a property rights issue and a revenue issue. Phil Schneider spoke about leadership and how the voters choose their representation. He stated that Chairwoman Edwards lost in the recent primary election and that Chairwoman Edwards should not be conducting the county business. Phil ended by stating he disagreed with Becky's statement of having heard enough.

Mike McClure sent an email to several board members stating "I thought we had more sense than this" and "this was a thinly veiled thing to control the wind farm." He served on the board under four chairmen and feels Becky has done a commendable job. "We've got a few farmers that got their nose out-of-joint over this whole deal," he continued. He stated that her term ends when the new board is seated in December and had never heard of a chairman stepping down because she did not win in a primary. He ended by saying he was "personally appalled by the stupidity of this whole thing and how this was going to make us look to the people that are already laughing at the County Board."

Venise McWard stated she agreed with Phil Schneider's comments. She mentioned the elevator situation where money should not have been spent and having to find a less expensive county website provider. She ended by stating it's not just about wind it's about leadership.

Clark Pearce spoke next and described Becky as an excellent leader. He feels this proceeding should not be happening today. "It wouldn't be happening if the Republicans on the board were mature enough to handle their positions and dissenting opinions." He continued by stating "A very few short-sighted individuals going by the name of PCC (Protect Christian County, LLC) are only concerned about their special interests and not the long-term interests of the taxpayers of Christian County." Clark said the pretext of this meeting was because of a statement Becky made claiming she was tired of listening to the anti-wind people. "Well who isn't?", he stated. Clark also stated that some people were harassing employees of the county. Clark continued, "...and to you weak Republicans who were friends of Becky, shame on you for your cowardice in not standing up for her." He talked about board members that do not remember ordinances advanced through committee and who do not read emails to know what is going on. He said many do not like that Becky will stand up for herself. "This is an obstacle for you because you have become the mob only interested in your special interest and want to do whatever you want to do. So, to get your way you eliminate the opposition rather than having a discussion, or having a vote.", he

said. He ended by stating that it was ironic a new rule from Governor Pritzker was being used to remove the chairwoman without cause.

Dale Livingston said he believed we are lacking in leadership. He said he is for part of the windmills and against part of them. "TURBINES, TURBINES," was interjected by Clark Pearce. People have called him with opinions from both sides. He continued by saying it was Becky's statement from the previous board meeting that brought him to this.

Ray Koonce called for the vote of the motion on the floor. "HUH," was interjected by Clark Pearce.

A roll call vote being called upon polled the following: Phil Schneider, Matt Wells, Brian Wilbur, Molly Alaria, Tim Carlson, Craig Corzine, Charles DeClerck, Donna Hibbetts, Ray Koonce, Dale Livingston, Vicki McMahon, Venise McWard, (12) aye; Clark Pearce, Linda Curtin, Becky Edwards, Mike McClure, (4) nay; (0) absent; The motion failed.

A motion adopted by an affirmative vote of four-fifths of the county board is required to remove the chair (55 ILCS 5/2-1003). Thirteen votes are required and twelve affirmative votes were cast, so the motion failed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairwoman Edwards called for public comments.

Jeff Nolen talked about how the zoning code could not be ignored. He described some of the testimony from the Zoning Board of Appeals hearings. He also talked about property rights for both participants and non-participants. He said there is no provision about money in the code. He ended by saying Becky is at the forefront of it and in September, she said yes it is all about the money.

Mathew Heberling commented that he is hearing our Chairwoman and countless other board members targeting out farmers. There are farmers on both side of this debate and it's more than a wind issue. He doesn't feel the board should think so negatively about the agricultural community.

Susan Wise stated she supports PCC and is not a farmer. She and her husband supplied information to the board about wind turbines. Susan said she thought Becky had stepped up to the plate. "When I originally started following the meetings, you didn't know first thing about parliamentary procedure. If it were not for Mike Gianasi sitting next to you, the meetings would not have been run.", she said. Susan continued that Becky's statement about "everyone had been heard sixteen times" did not resonate well with her. She ended by stating that the board members heard it and now it's time for the ZBA to hear it too.

Barb Miller lives and farms in the footprint of the proposed wind farm. She commended Becky for doing her research. She hopes the county can show that we're not a bunch of bullies and we can go on and do what's right for the county.

Jean Vandenbergh hopes that Becky respects the people of the whole county and is willing to listen more to the people. There are many worries in the country about health, safety, and protecting their own rights. She ended by asking that Becky listen more.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other unfinished business to come before the Board, a *motion was made by Mike McClure and seconded by Phil Schneider to adjourn until **July, 21, 2020** for the regular County Board meeting at 6:30 p.m.* A roll call vote being called upon polled the following: Phil Schneider, Matt Wells, Brian Wilbur, Molly Alaria, Tim Carlson, Linda Curtin, Charles DeClerck, Becky Edwards, Donna Hibbetts, Ray Koonce, Dale Livingston, Mike McClure, Vicki McMahon, Venise McWard, Clark Pearce, (12) aye; (0) nay; Craig Corzine, (1) absent; The motion carried.