

FY2026 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

10.09.2025

1504 3rd Avenue Rock Island, IL --Room 210

Dr. Luis Moreno called the FY2026 Budget committee meeting to order at 3:30pm and asked for a roll call.

Members present: Dr. Luis Moreno, David Adams, Larry Burns, Brian Vyncke, Johnnie Woods, Dr. Rodney Simmer, Chairman Brunk

Others Present - States Attorney Villarreal, Ryan Berger, Jared VanTieghem, Matt Miller, Jacob Waterman

Dr. Moreno called for public comment – no public comment

Ryan gave an update on General FY26 Budget, Ryan noted that he had nothing else to report at this time and that this should be the last budget meeting before we talk about our levies and things look positive

Dr Moreno asked if there were any changes or anything that we should be thinking about, Ryan Berger replied with not at this time

Item #4

Highway Presentation by Matt Miller

Matt Miller noted that this year, we have a list of equipment that we are looking to get, the list that you have in front of you also includes the items that we will be trading in. If you have any questions on this list of equipment, I brought Jacob Waterman here to explain the equipment needs. Mostly we are getting one tandem this year, we are looking to get our tandems on a rotational schedule again as Covid threw that off but now equipment is able to be purchased in a reasonable amount of time. We are looking at replacing one of our oldest F250s with one of those Job boxes on the back of it.

Dr. Moreno – I thought we just go two trucks

Matt Miller – we did for Jacob and I, we ordered them but we will be paying for those in FY26 due to sourcewell, national auto fleet, telling us that we would have them in 5 weeks, however the order was just placed.

Dr. Moreno – So the units 8-12 are in addition to?

Matt Miller – 12 is the truck we are selling, and unit number 18 will be in addition to yes.

David Adams – So it would be for staff

Matt Miller – Yes, we will make that one of our new mowing trucks and rotate one out, we are also looking at getting 4 new tractors in FY2025 and those will be here December 19th and we are looking at getting 4 new batwings for those tractors. We are going to trade in 2 of the tractors and two of the batwings, and we are keeping 2 old tractors and 2 batwings as backups if we ever have any problems so that we don't have any downtime or wasted time. There is a big list of tractors there that will be traded in, they are some of the mowing tractors or the ones that are not used and are sitting around. We will either trade them in or sell them on public surplus, we usually get more on public surplus,

Dr. Moreno – So you're selling the 6120E with guard rail mower, your selling this but you're not replacing it?

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Matt Miller – No, every time we have used it, it breaks, Jacob has more of an explanation about why we cannot use the tractor.

Jacob Waterman – So the guardrail mower it breaks every time we use it, The tractor would be a nice tractor to use for mowing, but it has the wrong transmission in it where you have to push the clutch in and it becomes a safety factor when going up and down hills we don't want to hit the clutch to shift, it also has a dry break system and we need a wet break system.

Dr. Moreno – how long have you had that one?

Jacob Waterman – About 2 years, and we have probably got 40 hours on it

Dr. Moreno – Do you know why we bought that one?

Dave Adams – it was over a grievance hearing regarding overspray so we decided to go to something different to settle weed whacking stuff, and now we spray the area.

Matt Miller – also the one that kept breaking on us all of the time, we actually called the company as we tried to get our money back on it and instead they just swapped it out for a new one. They were showing us videos on how to work it, and in the videos, you could see that the grass around the guardrails had been mowed with a yard tractor.

Larry Burns – So you are getting rid of a 75, 76, 58, 70, 77, and your buying a stump grinder attachment and you are trading in 48?

Matt Miller -The Stump planer attachment is for the skid steer, so when we go and cut down trees, even the smaller trees, the stumps are left behind and when our guys are mowing, it causes a lot of our tires to pop, we will be able to grind it down now

Dr. Moreno – How far can it grind down?

Jacob Waterman – 16 inches, selling 48, this is our backhoe, it is not something that we use very often, it is hard to get into places that we need to get into. So, we would like to trade this in for another Mini X, its more versatile, we have mowing attachments, guardrails, pushing trees back.

Matt Miller – With that would be that 16X7 Dump Trailer, we would be trading in one of our other trailers for this dump trailer. This would be used to transport the mini X to and from job sites.

Dr. Moreno – I know we have had this conversation in the past with large equipment purchases is that would it be more prudent to space the purchases out?

Jacob Waterman – That is our goal to get them spaced out, however our need right now, we have 2 bad batwing mowers right now, we had one down for almost 3 months this summer and we do not have a spare, we were down to 1 mowing tractor up north with nothing else, the goal is to space them out. If we get 4 we have 2 spares as a backup.

Matt Miller- The same thing happened with the tractors

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Dr. Moreno – and I understand that you get a bad piece of equipment and it only lasts you two years, but what I would like to see is when you have some time, give us a 10-year replacement plan including up to 20 years before budget time so we can start to look at that.

Jacob Waterman – We have started working on that

Matt Miller – The snippet you have in the handout there, that is just one year, and Jacob and I worked on the 10-year plan. If you would also like to see, Jacob did writeups on all of our equipment and why we would want to get rid of them or how long we can keep certain pieces of equipment.

Jacob Waterman – We do have a truck that has 450,000 miles on it but we don't need to replace it as its good for 1.5 to 2 million miles. It doesn't have the salt beating on it that our tandems experience in the daily usage in the winter time. The salt can damage the electrical systems, specifically the wiring harnesses.

Matt Miller – We are also looking at changing the manufacturers of our tandems, because the ones we have now we are not happy with the way they are manufactured, they put the computers out in the actual engine compartment instead of the chassis.

Dr. Moreno – I know that Moline built in a wash station

Jacob Waterman – We have one of those also, and every time we go out and plow they go out and wash the trucks off.

Chairman Brunk – I was just asking Brian, we see the dollar amounts here, but if Ryan could elaborate on where its coming from?

Matt Miller – This is coming out of Capital Outlay in county highway, so we are looking at roughly a 300 thousand dollar increase to the levy this year,

Ryan Berger – Just to explain a little bit more, these come out of the highway fund, and so looking at the expenses that were put into the budget for FY26 they have a fund balance currently of 907,000 and also there is more that will carry over because they are not going to spend everything that they budgeted for this year. So, if they use a million dollars of their fund balance, then they can make all of these purchases of equipment using the fund balance and the levy would only go up about 200,000. They are utilizing the part of their fund balance that they have their, part of the reason Highway has so much fund balance is that 1. I think last year we increased the levy already and 2. A while ago there were projects that were levied for that ended up being paid for out of ARPA so there is some money there so we are utilizing that savings. So, it's going to go up but roughly only 200,000 compared to this year

Matt Miller – For county bridge, we are doing two projects this year, one will be up on county highway 50 on Meredosia Road, the other will be on county highway 55, They are not complete bridge replacements, they are repairs, one will be 500,000 and the other will be 1,500,000. Dollars, that will come completely out of our fund account, but we are looking to increase the levies due to some changes that have been made this year, along with information I received from our bridge inspector, the bridge over case creek on Indian bluff road, will be due to be replaced in about 2030, its not in good shape and the cost estimate on that is about 6.9 million from Rural and Hoffman. Along with that the state changed the law this year where before, needing townships could come to us and receive 50%

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from the county and they would have to tax at a maximum rate for 2 years. They no longer have to tax at a maximum rate and they can just come to us and ask us for money so part of what I'm asking for is leaving 2.5 million dollars in our fund balance to cover whenever Milan's bridges would come do and we would have to pay our share. We want to keep that in the fund balance to have it when they come for it. Is the balance still the same Ryan?

Ryan Berger – Well there is a schedule, so we worked out a plan so next year when you see the 700,000-dollar number and the 1.2 or 1.6 on the side there, that would be added to the levy in order to build up the fund balance for that major project so that we have that by 2030. So then we added that 700,000 to the levy but when you use the fund balance, the bridge levy would probably go up about 300,000 as opposed to the full 700,000, But the strategy is hopefully as we progress, some of our other levies will be decreasing, we know which ones those are, Hope creek is one of them, so as that decreases, we would be able to build up that fund balance for this big project.

Matt Miller – I provided a linear increase but we could look at exponential increases as well If we wanted to increase more on the back end than on the front end.

Dr. Moreno – Do you have anything else for us?

Matt Miller – well we have two projects coming out of, or one project coming out of MFT but that is all fund balance

Dr. Moreno – So in summary we are looking at increasing the county highway fund by about 200,000 and the county bridge fund by about 300,000. So, a 500,000 dollar increase, did you say how much the percent increase will be?

Ryan Berger – I don't know quite yet but it is far below any maximum, I don't know yet because we would need to have that meeting to set the rates before and bring them to you, to know.

Dr. Moreno – I ask because I know that as much as possible the county is trying to no increase knowing that people are getting a 5% increase in EAV.

Ryan Berger – Some of the other things does blend together, but some of our other levies will be reducing significantly and you will probably see that at the next meeting so that it will compensate for.

Dr. Moreno – The next item on the agenda is the board of review, we received a briefing on it so give us a few minutes to read it really quick.

Dr. Rodney Simmer enters the meeting

Dr. Moreno – Any Comments questions or concerns about this before we get started?

Dr. Simmer – I know that when we were working on getting the vacant spot filled, it does seem like a large percentage increase but at the same time, most of us wouldn't want to do that job for what they make, I believe that if we need to get people and hopefully keep them, do we have any other comparable to other counties?

Chairman Brunk – We looked at various other counties and quite frankly they are all over the place, we looked at not only county population, number of parcels, average number of complaints and they are all

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over the place. Peoria county has approximately just over 30,000. Tazewell, I believe is in the mid-20s if I remember correctly, and others are in various places and that is part of the reason Mr. Grafton and I started to look at the non-union COLAs for the past 16 years and that is what brought us to this.

Brain Vyncke – I mean sadly we didn't have anything in place to do things consistently over time, had we done that it probably would have put us where it should have been

Chairman Brunk – we also discussed if there was a uniform way of handling this annually or bi-annually, the quandary is that this is not like a staffed position, when Susie leaves, Johnny comes in at the same amount that Susie left at so I'm not comfortable aligning those positions with COLA increases with regular county staff. The thought is to review this annually or bi-annually moving forward.

Johnny Woods – How much of the year are they in session?

Chairman Brunk – September – February 40/hrs. a week, they are also in the building the rest of the year but not in a full-time capacity.

Dr. Simmer – We want professionals in this position, that was the case with the realtor, she said there was no way they could do that.

Chairman Brunk – Another problem that we have is that a lot of the people that would have the time to be in here from 8:30-4:30 5-6 months out of the year tend to be retirees. A lot of people with the experience that tends to help pass the test and serve in this capacity, realtors, appraisers, lenders, a lot of those people like to be down south during the winter so there are a number of people that would decline the opportunity just because of that.

Dr. Moreno – I'm going to also guess that it has something to do with the compensation, I think it's a good start and that we can revisit this next year.

Dr. Simmer – Is it necessary that they are here that much each day?

Chairman Brunk – During session they are here that long, and it varies, as it was explained to me, some cases are more time consuming than others, they have cases where the average number was 816 complaints. They will actually drive to get eyes on the property.

Dr. Simmer – Do we have any GPS stuff so that they can look at it instead of driving?

States Attorney Villarreal – I will say that my office does handle appeals that come from board of review decisions, and we want to make sure they are doing their job right and not that they are on a timer. Things get appealed and we want to make sure that our board is doing things correctly. I think it is important to consider that there are important decisions being made that have consequences.

Dr. Moreno – anything else folks, hearing none, thank you for presenting on board of review. Are there any other offices?

Dr. Moreno – As far as approvals, Richard are you looking for

Ryan Berger – I'm looking for a general approval, there is a part of the budgeting process that says there is a committee approval and so I need to move the budget forward to the next level. Based on

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everything you have heard from the past budget meetings, are you good with them? so we can start to put levy numbers together, otherwise I want to make sure that we figure it out now vs later.

Dr. Moreno – I don't want board members to think that we did their homework for them, I like for them to do their homework as well so what we are looking at is Approval to move forward with setting the levy and is that OK?

Ryan Berger – that's fine, as long as there are no increases.

Richard Brunk – With our committee structure, our committees, do forward, either with a recommendation, which is what the intent is, because the board relies on the committees to do the homework, if we are not going to get in the weeds around this table, we might as well put it to the full body and sit up there for 6 hours. So, if there is a concern, a committee can move something forward without a recommendation, but the board is relying on this committee to make a recommendation So at this point what Mr. Berger is needing is just that the committee is comfortable with what it has been presented so that he can take those numbers and start working out the details on the levy amounts.

Dave Adams – On that, I don't have a problem with that but until I see the levies that could change my opinion,

Ryan Berger – There is another step, and maybe I need to look into this more, but you would make a formal recommendation to the board but that is different than what this phase is where you are saying that I can give you levy numbers based off of what was said in the meetings.

Dr. Moreno – Motion to approve moving forward with the levy adjustments

1st by Dr. Simmer,

2nd by Brian Vyncke.

Motion Carried

Roll call vote please

Dr. Moreno – Yes

Brian Vyncke – Yes

Dr. Simmer – Yes

Dave Adams – Yes

Larry Burns – Yes

Enyo Dewith

Johnny Woods – Yes

Richard Brunk – Yes

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Motion to adjourn: David Adams

Second: Johnnie Woods

Voice Vote

Motion carried

Meeting Adjourned at 4:06pm