

**Winnebago County Board**  
**Legislative & Lobbying Committee Meeting**  
County Administration Building  
404 Elm Street, Conference Room 510  
Rockford, IL 61101

Wednesday, January 11, 2023  
5:30 PM

**Present:**

Jaime Salgado, **Chairperson**  
Paul Arena  
Valerie Hanserd  
Tim Nabors  
John Penney  
John F. Sweeney

**Others Present:**

Joseph Chiarelli, County Board Chairman  
Marlana Dokken, Director, Chairperson's Office of  
Criminal Justice Initiatives

**Absent:**

Aaron Booker

**AGENDA:**

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Public Comment – This is the time we invite the public to address the Legislative and Lobbying Committee with issues and concerns. We ask you to limit your comments to three minutes. Personal attacks or inappropriate language of any sort will not be tolerated. We will allow a maximum of five speakers on a first come basis with sign up at the meeting. Speakers may not address zoning matters which are pending before the ZBA, the Zoning Committee or the County Board. Personnel matters or pending or threatened litigation may not be addressed in open session. An individual may speak a maximum of three times per calendar year on the same topic. This prohibition shall include the repetition of the same topic in a statement on what is purported to be a different topic. After acknowledgement by the chair, please stand and state your name. Thank you.
- D. Discuss State and Federal Lobbyist
- E. Future Agenda Items
- F. Adjournment

Chairperson Salgado called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

**Roll Call**

Chairperson Salgado yes, Mr. Arena yes, Mr. Nabors yes, Ms. Hanserd yes, Mr. Penney yes, Mr. Sweeney yes.

**Public Comment**

Chairperson Salgado omitted reading the Public Comment Section of the Agenda due to no one present to speak.

Chairperson Salgado advised Ms. Dokken has been working on a Federal RFQ and wanted the committee to be aware as it affects the Legislative & Lobbying committee.

### **Discuss State and Federal Lobbyist**

Ms. Dokken reported submitting an RFQ for a grant writer and lobbyist. Two grant writers applied for the position. The Ferguson Group applied for both the grant writer and lobbyist positions. Ms. Dokken distributed the proposal submitted by The Ferguson Group to committee members and advised our current administrator has previously worked with this group. The other applicant for the grant writer position does not have the qualifications or experience The Ferguson Group has. The Ferguson Group recommended Option 1 (p. 18) of their proposal for the Fixed Fee and Expense Options, a Tier 2 grant writer.

Chairperson Salgado gave the background for hiring the grant writer and lobbyist.

Chairman Chiarelli spoke about the need to create the Legislative & Lobbying committee and thanked committee members for their interest in serving on the committee. When discussing the addition of a lobbyist, the first intent was for a state lobbyist because of the direct connection to the State of Illinois. It evolved into the need for a federal lobbyist due to our highway system, bridges, and infrastructure within the state. Chairman Chiarelli gave examples of not receiving information on legislative bills affecting the State and County showing the need for both state and federal lobbyists. We need to identify our priorities and utilize the legislators.

Ms. Dokken reviewed The Ferguson Group's proposal options with the committee and directed the committee to page 9 of the proposal of their collective client successes. Ms. Dokken made the suggestion to hire The Ferguson Group.

Discussion followed on the grant writing services in the proposal and what the needs are of the County and the costs associated with the services. Committee members were referred to the Proposed Fee and Fee Model Options on page 18, for Tier 2 services that include 5 projects or 1 assessment. Discussion followed.

Discussion followed on the second proposal and the deficiencies that were evident in the proposal.

Chairman Chiarelli reported receiving information from other companies interested in submitting proposals for the grant writer opportunities and posed the question as to submitting additional RFQs. Discussion followed. The suggestion was made to reach out to legislators and others for additional options. The committee agreed to submit the RFQs for grant writing again and RFPs for a state lobbyist. The suggestion was made to reach out to our congressmen and senators for their recommendations at the federal level.

Ms. Dokken will publish an RFQ for federal lobbyists and state lobbyists and include the question about relationships and ask if they do grant writing as well and provide a proposal. The committee discussed providing additional structure for the requests.

Chairperson Salgado called for any other questions or discussion on the topic of RFQs and RFPs.

### **Future Agenda Items**

1. Chairperson Salgado stated the next step is to brainstorm and set up strategies for the County based on the Legislative & Lobbyist committee. The three things prioritized are 1) from a criminal and detention side, 2) highway road construction and 3) fighting blight related to neighborhood economic development. These are the three areas of priority. The committee should begin thinking strategically about this perspective to know what to ask legislators and state senators and communicate our priorities. The committee needs to be aware of what they are working on that impacts the County.
2. Notification for tracking Bills. If Bill tracking is part of the Lobbyist service it won't be needed. Otherwise, costs to set up the tracking can be looked into.
3. Build a relationship in Springfield, IL and work with the UCCI Agency that we have a membership with as they work together with surrounding counties.
4. Work with our state senators and state representatives and invite them to attend committee meetings and share what they are working on downstate. Also, there is a need to create and maintain a relationship on the Federal level.
5. Once grants are submitted and lobbyists are in place, there will be a need to attend the after-hour events and meetings in Springfield, IL.

Chairman Chiarelli reiterated the identification of the priorities, the improvement of the criminal justice system, the infrastructure system in the county and the lack of a funding source for road improvements, blight in unincorporated county neighborhoods and a landfill with a capacity that will expire in 10-12 years. These are all energy, neighborhood, criminal justice and economic development related issues.

Chairperson Salgado advised the next meeting is to invite some of the state representatives and state senators. Discussion followed.

Chairperson Salgado called for any other comments or questions from the committee members.

### **Motion to Adjourn.**

Chairperson Salgado called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Ms. Hanserd. Second: Mr. Nabors.

Motion to adjourn was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Bleile  
Administrative Assistant