

REAL ESTATE TAX CYCLE COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 12, 2020

PRESENT: P. Chapman, C. Hankins, M. King, M. Walters
ABSENT: K. Novacich-Koberna
OTHERS: R. Wesley, S. Rolens, K. Wathan, J. Thompson, J. Dauderman, P. Curtin, A. Meyer,
G. Bachman, B. Cooper, L. Ogden, E. Harriss, D. Westerfield, J. Ezra, T. McRae

The minutes from the October meeting were approved by all members present.

P. Chapman voiced his gratitude and respect for the individuals and board members who have reported to and served on the Tax Cycle Committee during his chairmanship.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

TREASURER:

C. Slusser reported the fourth installment due date is Wednesday, December 9th. They have made 12 real estate distributions this year and have distributed \$350,567,359.88 which is almost 78% of taxes extended. The next Real Estate distribution is scheduled for November 27th.

COUNTY CLERK:

D. Ming-Mendoza reported they have started collecting budgets and comptroller reports. The last Tuesday in December is the last day to file a levy.

RECORDER:

P. Curtin shared the Recorder's dashboard and highlighted the revenue amounts. She said the state of Illinois received approximately \$178,000.00, the Recorder's Office generated \$53,700.00, and the County received just under \$260,000.00 from fees collected. Ms. Curtin stated the Recorder's Office processed around 5,900 documents for the month of October.

COUNTY ASSESSOR:

J. Dauderman reported they continue to work on 2019 corrections along with 2020 deeds, name changes and exemptions. He goes on to list the 2021 quad townships as well as the townships that his office will be providing assessment work for. Also mentioned was the need to hire more field crew. Mr. Dauderman said senior exemption reminders went out and stated they unintentionally sent reminders to seniors who have already filed which has caused some confusion to filers but are working through it.

BOARD OF REVIEW:

S. Rolens reported they have finished most of their residential hearings and that they are currently holding their commercial hearings. She said all filing deadlines have passed except Nameoki Township, which is today. They are correcting tax bills, processing new state exempt applications and working on evidence for PTAB appeals.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

K. Wathan reported the issue with the township printing has been identified and fixed.

PURCHASE REQUESTS:

None.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. King to approve the bills for the month. The ayes and nays being called on the motion to approve resulted in a vote as follows: AYES: M. King, C. Hankins, M. Walters NAYS: None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. Hankins to approve the Trustee Report as presented. The ayes and nays being called on the motion to approve resulted in a vote as follows: AYES: M. King, C. Hankins, M. Walters NAYS: None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Chapman gave a detailed synopsis on the Fidler contracts for digitalization of the Recorder's records. In his synopsis, he provided questions submitted to Jeff Ezra regarding the 2 Fidler agreements along with Mr. Ezra's answers. The questions are as follows:

Question #1: Given that the Recorder has asked the board to allow her to enter into this agreement previously and was refused, did the Recorder have the legal right to sign contracts without the Board's Approval? ANSWER: Yes.

Question #2: If the Recorder does have the authority to enter into such agreements can they do so if the money hasn't been officially budgeted? ANSWER: Doesn't seem wise, common sense might tell you no.

Question #3: The Recorder made a general statement at the County Board meeting appearing that she had requested a legal opinion from the State's Attorney's Office; did the Recorder see any legal advice concerning her authority to enter in the two (2) Fidler agreements prior to signing? ANSWER: No.

Question #4: Has the Recorder or her staff sought any legal advice from you or from the State's Attorney's Office regarding Chairman Prenzler's FOIA requests? If so, when? ANSWER: Yes, on October 21, 2020.

Question #5: If the Recorder had the authority to enter into the two (2) October 2nd agreements, can she do so if: (a) the cost of the agreements are not budgeted, or if; (b) they exceed her budget? ANSWER: Seemingly not in this case because the Recorder cannot automatically tap into the Automation Fund to pay for services rendered.

Question #6: If emergencies allow the Recorder to enter into unbudgeted agreements or into agreements that exceed her budget: (a) how is an emergency defined and; (b) are procedures in place for determining emergencies and for her to gain board approval? ANSWER: Although emergency is not defined, per se, county emergency procedures weren't followed.

Mr. Ezra explained that even though the purchasing and emergency ordinances do not apply to the Recorder, the request must be presented and approved by the County Board. He goes on to speak about statutes that apply to the Recorder's Office and highlighted that the board has to have a very good reason to deny the request, after presented, if the funds are being used appropriately out of the Automation Fund. Later in the discussion, Mr. Ezra explained the services rendered must be paid or Fidler has grounds to sue.

Committee members took turns expressing their opinions about the Fidlar agreements and John Thompson stated there are sufficient funds available for the Fidlar agreements in the Automation Fund along with 2021 budgeted items.

Brief discussion was held regarding the transport of records and their current location and condition.

The Resolution Concerning Fidlar Technologies' October 2, 2020 Contract Agreements with Madison County Recorder was pulled from consideration.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. King to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION CARRIED.**

*Please refer to the audio for discussion details in full.

/mds