



**State of Illinois**  
**PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD**

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MICHAEL I. O'MALLEY  
*Executive Director & General Counsel*

**Minutes of the**  
**Property Tax Appeal Board**  
**January 12, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.**  
**Springfield & Des Plaines, Illinois**

- 1. Roll Call:** Chairman Kevin L. Freeman, Jim Bilotta, Sarah Buckley, Dana D. Kinion, and Robert J. Steffen.  
  
**Staff:** Michael I. O'Malley, Executive Director and General Counsel, Steven Waggoner, Chief Administrative Law Judge, James J. Moffat, Chief Fiscal Officer & Human Resources Manager, David Suarez, Chief Information Officer, Michael Bullock, Public Service Administrator, Dianne Lerman, Recording Secretary.  
  
**Guests:** 4 Call-in connections that failed to identify themselves

Chairman Freeman convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed the Board Members and members of the Management Team to the Property Tax Appeal Board Meeting. The meeting was held via electronic means with Board Members present in each of the PTAB Offices.

- 2. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Mr. Bilotta moved to approve the Board Minutes of December 8, 2020, as presented. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- 3. Adoption of Amendments to the Agenda**

Chairman Freeman moved to Adopt the Agenda as presented. Mr. Bilotta seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Jim Bilotta  
*Frankfort*

Robert J. Steffen  
*South Barrington*

Dana D. Kinion  
*Springfield*

Sarah Buckley  
*Chicago*

#### **4. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. O'Malley reported on remote hearings; he said while we continue to schedule virtual hearings, we have yet to have one proceed to a hearing. All the cases set for hearing have settled.

Mr. O'Malley provided an update on case 11-24443-C-3 - 401 North Wabash Venture, LLC (Trump Tower). He stated there is nothing new to report. The OEIG investigation is still on-going as far as PTAB knows. We do not have a timeframe for the completion of the OEIG investigation. He stated that he will email the OEIG Office to see if the case is still pending and if they have any objection if PTAB moves forward with the matter. If there is no objection, he will add it to next month's agenda so PTAB can start moving forward on the case. Chairman Freeman and the Board agreed this is an appropriate protocol to move forward.

Mr. O'Malley provided an HR/Fiscal Update. He reported we had hired a new employee in the Springfield office. Jeramie Strode has joined PTAB to work as our new mailroom clerk. He replaced Dan House, who moved up to an appraisal specialist position. Jeramie was previously employed at the Illinois Department of Revenue and is also a member of the Illinois National Guard. We welcome him to PTAB. He further reported we have posted for the position of Office Coordinator. We are hopeful we will get a few internal applications for this position. However, we will always consider all qualified applicants, internal or external, for this posting.

Mr. O'Malley reported CMS had informed us that we must competitively bid for the Chief Administrative Law Judge position. According to CMS, Steve Waggoner, who has been the only person to hold this position at PTAB, was placed in this position without competitively applying to it. The desired qualifications and questions are in development for this posting. Mr. Moffat then explained the new interview process for the State of Illinois. Trained PTAB personnel will conduct the interviews along with hiring monitors. He reported there is currently a hiring freeze, and the position has been extended on the current term.

Mr. Moffat reported on the new Comprehensive Employment System. He provided information regarding the new CMS interview process and the scoring of the interviewers. A new computer system was implemented and took effect on January 1, 2021 and will go live on January 19. He stated the Comprehensive Employment Plan would have the oversight of the OEIG Hiring and Employment Monitor. They will oversee all hiring sequences involving term employments.

Mr. Moffat stated he anticipates completing the hiring of the Chief Administrative Law Judge at the end of April.

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Mr. O'Malley provided the Fiscal Report. He stated as previously discussed, the Governor's Office had asked all State agencies for a 5% reduction in spending this fiscal year. PTAB was advised that it is exempt from this requirement because of our agency's size and relatively small budget in total, i.e., less than \$10,000,000. Even though we are exempt from this reduction, we may still see a 5% savings for the State in our actual expenses because we held off hiring for much of the fiscal year. He further reported we may have to make cuts next year but are hopeful for an exemption due to our size and backlog. But we need to prepare or plan cuts that may come due to State budgets.

Mr. O'Malley provided an IT Update. He reported Dave Suarez had completed the annual report, which was submitted to Revenue for printing. There is not anything new to say on our e-filing push. Funding is the major obstacle. He suggested the best path forward is to self-fund through filing fees. PTAB will need to lobby the General Assembly to direct the funds raised through filing fees to be directed into PTAB's operating fund rather than the general fund.

He reported that Dave Suarez and his team would start updating the Microsoft SQL from the 2012 version to the 2019 version. The SQL update is to the PTAB 2000 system that will interface with our e-filing system at some point. We will also start working on upgrading the PCs throughout the agency. While not a top priority, it is recommended by DoIT. It is necessary for virtual hearings if we keep doing them after COVID. He reported getting laptops for our ALJs would create a problem with VPN access.

Mr. O'Malley reported we would begin having monthly supervisor meetings this January. The purpose is to keep everyone up to date on general operations and improve communication between the two offices. We will hold our next all-staff meeting in mid-February.

Mr. O'Malley reported that on January 4, 2021, our Regulatory Agenda was published. He stated he plans on moving forward with some changes as quickly as possible. Virtual hearings and allowing communications via email to the clerk would be the most ideal and create efficiency. Board members' presence at PTAB offices during board meetings was discussed and will be considered for inclusion.

Mr. O'Malley reported the Statements of Economic Interest would have to be filed with the Indexing Department. Additional information regarding this will be sent via email.

The Board Member schedule for onsite Board Member attendance at the respective Springfield and Des Plaines offices for the year 2021 was reviewed and discussed.

Mr. O'Malley reported that in an abundance of caution, he sent an email to staff closing the Springfield Office based on reports of possible planned armed protests at the Springfield Capitol. Chairman Freeman thanked Mr. O'Malley for taking the initiative.

Chairman Freeman reported a story that appeared in the Sun-Times over the weekend about the former Executive Director filing a lawsuit against the Sun-Times newspaper. Mr. O'Malley said he sent an email to all staff cautioning them and on what to expect moving forward and advised everyone that subpoenas may follow.

Mr. O'Malley concluded the Executive Director's report. The next board meeting is set for 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 09, 2021.

Chairman Freeman moved to approve the Executive Director's Report. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

## 5. Discussion of Motions

- a. Adam Parker Center Ethanol Co. LLC: #19-01764-I-3 (St. Clair)  
Macy's: #19-01975-C-3 (St. Clair)

Mr. Steffen moved to grant the St. Clair County Board of Review a 60-day extension in each appeal. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- b. BIG MTV LLC: #19-01923-C-3 (Jefferson)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the Jefferson County Board of Review a final 60-day day extension. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- c. Edward Randerson: #19-02559-F-1 (Marshall)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the Marshal County Board of Review a final 60-day extension. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- d. Rick & Brenda Humphrey: #19-00407-F-2 (Lee)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the Lee County Board of Review a final 60-day extension. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- e. McDonalds USA, LLC: #19-03061-C-2 (McHenry)  
Jayson and Megan Rishling: #19-03281-R-1 (McHenry)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the McHenry County Board of Review a final 60-day extension in each appeal. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

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- f. Terry Michaels Tower Sites: #19-09130-I-1 (Ford)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the Ford County Board of Review a final 60-day extension. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- g. Jacub & Jennifer Cavka: #19-00688-R-1 (McHenry)  
Susan Wittum: #19-03350-R-1 (McHenry)  
Ronald Thornton: #19-03583-R-1 (McHenry)  
Bonnie Bremer: #19-03588-R-1 (McHenry)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the McHenry County Board a final 60-day extension in each appeal. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- h. Chicago Title Land Trust CTLT 8002373064: #19-02082-R-1 (Kane)

Mr. Bilotta moved to grant the Kane County Board of Review a final 30-day extension. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- i. Graymont Cooperative Association: #19-02029-I-3 (Livingston)  
Graymont Cooperative Association: #19-02030-I-2 (Livingston)  
Graymont Cooperative Association: #19-02031-I-1 (Livingston)  
Graymont Cooperative Association: #19-02032-I-3 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02034-I-2 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02035-I-2 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02036-I-1 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02037-I-2 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02038-I-2 (Livingston)  
Prairie Central Cooperative Inc: #19-02039-I-1 (Livingston)

Mrs. Kinion moved to grant the Livingston County Board of Review a 90-day extension in each appeal. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- j. Elwood Energy LLC: #19-00356-I-3 (Will)

Mrs. Kinion moved to grant the Will County Board of Review a 90-day extension. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- k. TF Peoria IL LLC dba Sears Store No 1321: #19-01303-C-3 (Peoria)

Mrs. Kinion moved to grant the Peoria County Board of Review a final 90-day extension. Chairman Freeman seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

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- l. Brian Monticello: #19-03639-R-1 (DuPage – Milton)

Mr. Bilotta moved to reinstate the appeal and notify the Milton County Board of Review. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- m. Margaret A. Kedzierzawski: #19-09423- R-1 (McHenry – McHenry)

Mr. Steffen moved to deny the request to reinstate the appeal. Mr. Bilotta seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- n. Shaikh A. Chhabra: #19-09440-R-1 (McHenry – Grafton)

Mr. Bilotta moved to deny the request to reinstate. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- o. Grand Tower Energy Center LLC: #19-02536-I-3 (Jackson – Grand Tower)

Mr. Steffen moved to grant the intervenor a 90-day extension. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- p. Exelon Generation Company LLC: #19-02497-I-3 (Ogle -Rockvale)

Mrs. Kinion moved to grant the Motion to Stay the 2019 appeal until resolution of the pending 2012 appeal of the same property. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- q. Byron Community Unit School District #226: #19-02613-I-3 (Ogle – Rockvale)

Mrs. Kinion moved to grant the Motion to Stay the 2019 appeal until the resolution of the 2012 appeal on the same property. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- r. David Showalter: #16-25517-R-1 (Cook)

Mr. Bilotta moved to rescind the decision issued on July 21, 2020 and dismiss the appeal. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- s. Marquardt School Dist No 15: #18-04883-I-3 (DuPage)

Mr. Freeman moved to grant the Intervenor/owner a final 90-day extension.  
Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

- t. John Hillman: #16-20300-R-1 (Cook - Oak Park)

Mr. Bilotta moved to rescind the decision issued on August 18, 2020 and grant the request to withdraw the appeal. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

## **6. Attachments**

As to Attachment A, Mr. Bilotta moved to approve the attachment. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0

As to Attachment B, Mrs. Kinion moved to approve the attachment. Chairman Freeman seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

As to Attachment C, Mr. Bilotta moved to approve the attachment. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0 with Chairman Freeman recusing.

As to Attachment D, Mr. Steffen moved to approve the attachment. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0 with Mr. Bilotta recusing.

As to Attachment E, Chairman Freeman moved to approve the attachment. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0 with Mr. Steffen recusing.

As to Attachment F, Chairman Freeman moved to approve the attachment. Mr. Bilotta seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0 with Mrs. Kinion recusing.

As to Attachment G, Chairman Freeman moved to approve the attachment. Mr. Steffen seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0 with Ms. Buckley recusing.

As to Attachment Z, Mrs. Kinion moved to approve the attachment. Mr. Bilotta seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

**Workload Report**

The PTAB closed 1,594 appeals for the month, and the backlog count is 87,888 cases pending as of 12/31/20. Mr. O'Malley reported the backlog continues to climb.

**7. Other Business**

Chairman Freeman moved to approve the Minutes taken in Executive Session under Other Business at the December 8, 2020 Board Meeting. Mrs. Kinion seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

**8. Adjournment**

Chairman Freeman thanked the Board and staff and reported the next meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2021.

There being no other business to discuss, Chairman Freeman moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m. Mr. Bilotta seconded the motion, and it carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael I. O'Malley  
Executive Director and General Counsel

MO/dl