



**Board of Commissioners of Cook County
Minutes of the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee**

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

2:30 PM

**Cook County Building, Board Room,
118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois**

ATTENDANCE

Present: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Chairman Britton asked the Secretary to the Board to call upon the registered public speakers, in accordance with Cook County Code.

Erin Bell

George Blakemore

Jessica Jackson

24-1096

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the meeting of 12/13/2023

A motion was made by Vice Chairwoman Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Stamps, to approve 24-1096. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

24-0407

Sponsored by: TONI PRECKWINKLE (President), Cook County Board Of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING COMPTROLLER

WHEREAS, the Comptroller supervises the fiscal affairs of the County by maintaining the general ledger, accounting records, financial reporting, accounts payable, payroll and garnishments; and

WHEREAS, in the case of a vacancy in the position of Comptroller, it is necessary to appoint an Acting or Interim Comptroller to perform the duties of the Comptroller and said Acting or Interim Comptroller shall have the full authority to otherwise execute the duties and responsibilities of the Comptroller until the appointed candidate for Comptroller can be confirmed by the Cook County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the current Comptroller will vacate the position on December 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to the successful operation of County government that the duties of the Comptroller continue to be carried out in an efficient and transparent manner; and

WHEREAS, President Toni Preckwinkle has appointed the Cook County Deputy Comptroller, Cyril Thomas, to serve as the Acting Comptroller; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas is highly knowledgeable of the County's financial and operational accounting and is highly qualified to manage the operations of the Comptroller's Office and assume the duties of the Acting Comptroller.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the appointment of Cyril Thomas as Acting Comptroller effective January 1, 2024, and grants Cyril Thomas the full authority to fulfill the responsibilities of Comptroller and execute the duties of the Comptroller until a successor is confirmed.

A motion was made by Vice Chairwoman Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Miller, to recommend for approval 24-0407. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

24-0632

Presented by: TONI PRECKWINKLE, President, Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED APPOINTMENT

Appointee(s): Ciere Boatright

Position: Director

Department/Board/Commission: Cook County Land Bank Authority

Effective date: Immediate

Expiration date: Three years from date of approval or until a successor is appointed and qualified.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gainer, seconded by Vice Chairwoman Degnen, to recommend for approval 24-0632. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

23-5802

Sponsored by: KEVIN B. MORRISON, FRANK J. AGUILAR, ALMA E. ANAYA, SCOTT R. BRITTON, JOHN P. DALEY, DENNIS DEER, BRIDGET DEGNEN, BRIDGET GAINER, MONICA GORDON, BILL LOWRY, DONNA MILLER, STANLEY MOORE, JOSINA MORITA, SEAN M. MORRISON, ANTHONY J. QUEZADA, TARA S. STAMPS and MAGGIE TREVOR, Cook County Board Of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION AGAINST BOOK BANS

WHEREAS, as John Milton laid out in his 1644 treatise, Areopagitica, “he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself”; and

WHEREAS, according to PEN America, from July 2022 through June 2023 there were over 3,400 instances of individual books banned, representing a 33 percent increase in bans compared to the prior year; and

WHEREAS, according to PEN American, of 1,648 unique book titles banned throughout the 2021-22 school year, 41 percent explicitly addressed LGBTQ+ themes or have protagonists or prominent secondary characters who are LGBTQ+, 40 percent contained protagonists or prominent secondary

characters of color, and 21 percent directly addressed issues of race and racism; and

WHEREAS, of the overall 2,532 bans in the 2021-2022 school year, 96 percent of them were enacted without following the best practice guidelines for book challenges outlined by the American Library Association, the National Coalition Against Censorship, and the National Council of Teachers of English; and

WHEREAS, according to the Every Library Institute, over 75 percent of Americans oppose book banning, and more than 50 percent of voters are concerned about legislation being created to regulate Americans' access to books; and

WHEREAS, according to the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) and Brookings Institution, nearly nine of 10 Americans oppose banning books that include depictions of slavery from being taught in public schools; and

WHEREAS, PRRI also reports over 80 percent of Americans oppose banning public high school courses like AP African American History because the topics of slavery and segregation are likely to make white students feel guilty or uncomfortable; and

WHEREAS, in 1969, the Supreme Court of the United States held in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969), that students do not “shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate”; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, a plurality of the Supreme Court of the United States wrote in *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982), that schools may not remove library books based on “narrowly partisan or political grounds”, as this kind of censorship will result in “official suppression of ideas”; and

WHEREAS, reading is a foundational skill, absolutely vital to learning and understanding the various and nuanced perspectives across our communities; and

WHEREAS, limiting people’s access to books does not protect them from our world's ever changing, complex, and challenging issues; and

WHEREAS, it is crucial that we protect access to books that offer teachable moments for readers of all ages and expand our understanding of people with different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois committed to that protection by passing HB2789, that adopts the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights that indicates “materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval,” as well as adopts the policy that the State of Illinois is to “encourage and protect the freedom of libraries and library systems to acquire materials without external limitation and to be protected against attempts to ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to books or other materials,”

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of

Commissioners hereby joins the State of Illinois in reaffirming its commitment to supporting the freedom of expression as protected under the First Amendment and the freedom of all individuals in the United States to read books without government censorship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that suitable copies of this resolution be presented to the Governor of Illinois, the Illinois Senate President and Minority Leader, the Illinois House Speaker and Minority Leader, Senator Laura Murphy, and Representative Anne Stava-Murray.

A motion was made by Commissioner K. Morrison, seconded by Vice Chairwoman Degnen, to recommend for approval 23-5802. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Lowry, seconded by Commissioner Anaya, that was to waive the rules. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps and Trevor (13)

Absent: Deer, Moore, Morita and S. Morrison (excused) (4)

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman



Secretary

A complete record of this meeting is available at <https://cook-county.legistar.com>.