

**Board of Commissioners of Cook County**

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL



**Journal of Proceedings**

**Thursday, October 5, 2023**

**10:00 AM**

**Special Meeting:**

**Presentation of the FY 2024 President's Executive Budget Recommendation**

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

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 MOOORE  
JOSINA MORITA  
KEVIN B. MORRISON  
SEAN M. MORRISON  
ANTHONY JOEL QUEZADA  
TARA S. STAMPS  
MAGGIE TREVOR

**KAREN A. YARBROUGH  
COUNTY CLERK**

*Journal of Proceedings*

*Board of Commissioners*

*October 5, 2023*

Board met pursuant to law and pursuant to the following call:

September 25, 2023

The Honorable Karen Yarbrough Cook County Clerk  
69 West Washington Street, Fifth Floor Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE for October 5, 2023, at 10:00 A.M.  
to be held by remote means and will be able to be viewed at [cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings](https://cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings).

Dear Clerk Yarbrough:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County to be convened on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at the hour of 10:00 a.m. the Special Meeting will be an in-person meeting for the County Board and will be able to be viewed by the public at [cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings](https://cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings).

At said meeting, the President's recommended Cook County Budget Resolution and Annual Appropriation Bill for Fiscal Year 2024 will be presented to the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

Instructions for how to attend this meeting and participate in public comment will be provided on the Cook County webpage at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MHS9PPD>. The proceedings will be able to be viewed at [cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings](https://cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings) on October 5, 2023, starting at 10:00 a.m. Written public comment or live (virtual) testimony on any of the items listed on the Agenda will be accepted at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MHS9PPD>. Written testimony will also be accepted at [cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov). Written comments prior to the start of the Special Board meeting will be posted at <https://cook-county.legistar.com/Calendar.asp> and may be read aloud or summarized at the meeting. Three minutes per comment will be allowed.

On or around 8:45 a.m. Central Time on the morning of the meeting, a Microsoft Teams link and phone number to join the meeting will be sent to all live (virtual) speakers. You may not log into the meeting until the scheduled meeting time. You may not forward the link to anyone. To reduce the chance of meeting disruption, MEETING PARTICIPANTS WHO FORWARD LINKS WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE MEETING, AS WILL THOSE WHO RECEIVED THE FORWARDED LINK. Speaking order is to be determined by the Chair. You will have three (3) minutes to make your statement. Once your statement is completed, you will be removed from the meeting. Once removed, you will still be able to follow the proceedings for that day at: <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings>

Copies of the Agenda for the October 5, 2023 Special Board Meeting of the Cook County Board of Commissioners and items to be considered at this meeting will be made available electronically on the Cook County website at <https://cook-county.legistar.com/Calendar.asp> Please issue the Notice of this Special Meeting and Agenda as required by law.

Very truly yours,

Toni Preckwinkle  
Cook County Board President

**COPY OF LETTER SENT TO ALL COMMISSIONERS**

September 27, 2023

President and Members  
Cook County Board of Commissioners

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Toni Preckwinkle, President of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, has directed me to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at the hour of 10:00 a.m. The Special Meeting will be an in-person meeting for the County Board and will be able to be viewed by the public at [cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings](https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings).

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Very truly yours,

Karen A. Yarbrough  
County Clerk

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The following Legal Notice appeared in the Chicago Tribune Newspaper, Monday, October 2, 2023, through Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Toni Preckwinkle, President of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, has directed me to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at the hour of 10:00 a.m. in Room 567 at 118 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60602. The Special Meeting will be able to be viewed by the public at [cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings](http://cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings).

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Copies of the Agenda for the October 5, 2023, Special Board Meeting of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, and items to be considered at this meeting will be made available electronically on the Cook County website at <https://cook-county.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Very truly yours,

KAREN A. YARBROUGH, Cook County Clerk and

Clerk of the Board of the Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois

**OFFICIAL RECORD**

President Preckwinkle in the chair.

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 10:00 A.M., being the hour appointed for the meeting, the President called the Board to order.

**QUORUM**

County Clerk Karen A. Yarbrough called the roll of members and there was found to be a quorum present.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Commissioners Aguilar, Anaya, Britton, Daley, Deer, Degnen, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry Miller, Moore, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps, and Trevor (16)

**Absent:** Commissioner S. Morrison (1)

**REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

**In accordance with Cook County Code Section 2-102(i) Remote Participation in Meetings, a motion was made by Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Britton, to allow for remote participation in meetings. The vote of yeas and nays being as follows:**

**Yeas:** Commissioners Aguilar, Anaya, Britton, Daley, Deer, Degnen, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, Moore, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps, and Trevor (16)

**Nays:** None (0)

**Absent:** Commissioners S. Morrison (1)

**The motion carried.**

**Commissioner Aguilar, Moore, K. Morrison, and Stamps participated remotely.**

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Authorization as a virtual public speaker shall only be granted to those individuals who have submitted in writing, their name, email address, phone number, subject matter, and organization (if any) to the Secretary 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Duly authorized virtual public speakers shall be sent a link to virtually attend the meeting and will be called upon to deliver testimony at a time specified in the meeting agenda. Authorized public speakers who are not present during the specified time for public testimony will forfeit

their allotted time to speak at the meeting. Public testimony must not exceed three minutes; the Secretary will keep track of the time and advise when the time for public testimony has expired. After each speaker

has completed their statement, they will be removed from the meeting. Once removed, you will still be able to follow the proceedings for that day at: <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings> or in a viewing area at 69 W. Washington Street, 22nd Floor Conference Room D, Chicago, IL. Persons authorized to provide public testimony shall not use vulgar, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate language when addressing the Board; failure to act appropriately; failure to speak to an item that is germane to the meeting, or failure to adhere to the time requirements may result in expulsion from the meeting and/or disqualify the person from providing future testimony. Written comments will not be read aloud at the meeting but will be posted on the meeting page and made a part of the meeting record.

**PRESIDENT**

**23-4949**

**Sponsored by:** TONI PRECKWINKLE, President, Cook County Board of Commissioners

**EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION**

**Department:** Office of the President

**Summary:** Executive Budget, Cook County Budget Resolution and Annual Appropriation Bill for FY2024.

Good morning.

I'd like to start off with a quick story.

This time last year, Bella Magaña of Tinley Park, was worried about her family's finances.

She and her husband had full-time jobs but had no way of covering both their mortgage and mounting childcare expenses.

She had recently given birth to their first child — not long after Congress had failed to renew the child tax credit.

I know this sounds far too familiar for many Cook County residents.

And as many parents know, childcare expenses can sometimes cost more than what a full-time job can cover.

So, on a hope and prayer, Bella applied for our Cook County Promise Guaranteed Income pilot through the Bureau of Economic Development. She is now one of our 3,250 participants receiving \$500 a month for two years.

Let me put that into perspective. More than 230,000 people applied for our program. Nearly a quarter of a million people.

This program doesn't make life perfect. But now, life is just a little bit better, a little bit easier, for Bella and her family.

That's what we do here at Cook County. That's why we're here.

We seek to make life a little better for all of Cook County — and that's whether you're a lifelong resident or newly arrived.

Our commitment. Our PROMISE to you — is action.

It never wavers.

Bella represents so many Cook County residents, so many parents, who just want to provide for their family. Our thanks go to her for participating in this vital program.

One of the distinct privileges I have as President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners is to address you all today about our budget.

The budget reflects our shared values, is a blueprint for our future, and is a testament to our commitment to the well-being of our residents...without raising taxes or fees!

It's a document that speaks to the services we provide, the communities we support, and the dreams we aspire to realize.

It's a critical instrument in shaping the future of Cook County, and today, I will share what makes it one of the most bold and transformative budgets since I took office over a decade ago.

We've worked diligently to make Cook County a place of innovation, resilience, and opportunity. Our investments in healthcare, public safety, small businesses, housing, and infrastructure are paying off. But, as we all know, progress is not achieved overnight, and there's still work to be done.

And through a pandemic, inflation, economic uncertainty and numerous other regional and global challenges, I can confidently say today that the financial condition of Cook County is strong.

Our proposed \$9.14 billion dollar budget is balanced, and it leaves room for prudent reserves for our long-term programs.

Over time, the County has made difficult but necessary choices to meet our fiscal obligations and it continues to pay off.

For starters, we've decreased our outstanding debt by over \$700 million in the last decade.

Cook County has also seen its bond rating upgraded — twice.

I want to thank our CFO, Tanya Anthony, and our finance team for all they have done to make this possible. This recognition is proof that local governments can both invest in our communities and be responsible stewards of our residents' tax dollars.

We're also proud of the recent pension reform legislation passed by the state legislature.

This was made possible by collaborating with House Speaker Chris Welch, Senate President Don Harmon, as well as State Senator Robert Martwick, State Representative Marcus Evans, the County Pension Fund, our finance and legal teams, and various other stakeholders.

Through this work, we now have our pension contribution schedule codified in state statute. And, as a result, we're on track to reach a 100% funded pension system in the next 35 years.

Yes. This is a big deal. And shows a promising future.

I want to thank my entire intergovernmental affairs team for their excellent and years-long groundwork in helping to secure this landmark legislation.

We are in a strong position because we've been faithfully living within our means, doing more with less and creating structural budget solutions year after year.

We're also continuing to turn hardships into historic investment.

This includes managing the nation's largest publicly funded guaranteed income initiative, putting millions of dollars toward assisting small businesses, and providing funding to help residents abolish medical debt.

Because of our judicious management over the years, we have the capacity to sustain pandemic-era programs even after we've spent down our federal ARPA funds.

We've developed a thoughtful plan that sets aside \$167 million in County funds to preserve vital programs in a financially responsible manner. This is an important step toward building on the good work of providing important services to our residents.

We're spending ARPA funds with transparency and accountability — hallmarks of my administration. Our new website is [arpa.cookcountyil.gov](https://arpa.cookcountyil.gov). Thanks to our Bureau of Technology, it has up-to-date reports and information on hundreds of millions of dollars and numerous programs we are carefully managing.

One pillar that you will see on our new website is what we call "Safe and Thriving Communities."

When it comes to public safety, I'm proud of the work the County and the Justice Advisory Council have done around violence prevention. The safety of our residents is our priority, and we are allocating resources to support community partners who are working on the front lines.

To date, we've awarded \$110 million to community-based organizations working with individuals at the



highest risk, to deescalate and disrupt violence when it occurs.

Organizations like IMAN, Green Re-Entry, and Firehouse Community Arts provide leadership and job training opportunities.

Young men like Preston Baldwin, who is with us here today, have come full circle, from being mentored himself to now helping other young people in therapeutic support and access to the arts. Please stand Preston.

Preston came to Firehouse Community Arts when a street outreach team encouraged him to be part of their program.

He lost several friends and two brothers to gun violence. Two brothers.

As he tells it, waking up every day not knowing if it would be his last just didn't sit right with him. He has two kids and he wanted to take care of them in a positive way. He said to us, "If it weren't for Firehouse's outreach team, there's no way of knowing where I'd be right now."

They contacted Preston a few times, but he didn't enroll until he was finally ready.

He was undecided about what he really wanted to do but that didn't stop them from being great mentors. They taught him the true meaning of purpose, authority, and character.

They were in his corner, and he flourished.

And now, he's a Firehouse mentor himself, coming full circle, and helping other young people move through the same program that was so transformational for him not long ago.

Thank you, Preston, not only for giving back, but for being a role model for many others.

These are life-changing programs that connect people to the critical services they need to change the trajectory of their lives.

This type of investment can go a long way toward addressing the root causes of violence.

That's why we're closely coordinating with the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago to maximize our collective resources to have the greatest impact.

Established by Lanetta Haynes Turner, my chief of staff, this historic and unprecedented coordination and collaboration across all three units of government will help improve community safety and save lives.

I would be remiss not to mention the Pre-Trial Fairness Act in the context of public safety and justice. Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated the milestone of ending the archaic money bond system in Illinois.

It was a system that wrongly tied access to financial resources to pretrial freedom. The result was that countless individuals, too often from Black and Latino communities, spent weeks, months, and even years

in jail — just for being poor.

Throughout history, like so many other jurisdictions across the country, Cook County experienced decades of racial segregation and disinvestment. In response to crime, Black and Latino communities have been subjected to hyper-policing and mass incarceration. And, for many years, Cook County jail was notoriously overcrowded.

I am proud that Cook County is now implementing all reforms under the Pretrial Fairness Act. And we continue to be committed to the strategy of long-term investment that supports vulnerable residents.

The stability that these investments provide can effectively increase community safety and decrease reliance on the criminal justice system. This is our vision for the future. This, too, is justice.

And when it comes to justice, we must also talk about healthcare.

I want to be very clear on this — access to quality healthcare must be considered a fundamental human right — no matter your race, gender, sexual orientation, ability to pay or immigration status.

Whether you've lived in Cook County your entire life or are a new arrival, tomorrow's history books will judge us on how we treat and care for our fellow humans today.

Cook County health provides more than 50 percent of the charity care throughout all of Cook County.

More. Than. Half.

And under the leadership of Cook County Health CEO Israel Rocha, no matter how tough the challenge we face, yesterday, today, or tomorrow, Cook County Health stands committed to helping ensure that every resident in Cook County can access the healthcare they need.

Patricia Salgado, who is here today, can attest to this. Please stand, Patricia.

She is a nurse who has been providing care services for patients at Cook County Health's new arrivals clinic for the past year. She says cultural competency has been essential in the success of our new arrival program.

Patricia says, "we speak our patients' language. We empathize with them. Being raised in a household where other family members have made similar journeys has helped me understand what they are going through.

Our team builds a bond of trust with our patients so we can give them the best care possible. A person's health is vital to their ability to thrive. We are making a difference every day not only for our patients but our community as a whole."

Since 2022, Cook County Health has cared for 13,200 new arrivals and provided more than 60,500 visits. These have included complete physical exams, health screenings, testing, lab services, standard vaccinations, complete school physicals and pediatric vaccines, as well as behavioral health screenings and counseling, care coordination, and prescription medications.

To Patricia, and all our Cook County Health nurses, doctors and staff, thank you for all you are doing to help keep Cook County healthy, vaccinated and strong.

In addition to caring for our new arrivals, Cook County Health

will spend \$44 million in ARPA funding to support the expansion of services at the health system, including mental health, substance use treatment, and crisis services.

We're also investing \$74 million into the creation of a new Behavioral Health Authority, which is needed now more than ever.

A recent report shows that African Americans are the only racial or ethnic group in Cook County whose suicide rates are now higher than they were at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More alarmingly, even before the pandemic, 69% of Black adults with mental illness received no treatment.

For this and many other reasons, the Behavioral Health Authority is a critical, transformative endeavor that is long overdue in the region.

Another healthcare initiative addresses the healthcare debt of our residents. With the use of ARPA funds, we are the first local government to create a program to abolish medical debt.

Called the Medical Debt Relief Initiative, we are partnering with RIP Medical Debt, a national nonprofit. With just \$12 million dollars of our federal funds, they have the potential to negotiate the purchase of up to \$1 billion in medical debt for Cook County residents and cancel it.

This initiative has tremendous impact on the future health and economic vitality of our region. The Medical Debt Relief Initiative puts equity at the center and helps those who need it most.

Our Cook County small business community has benefitted from one of our signature ARPA programs housed in the Bureau of Economic Development — it's called The Small Business Source.

This \$86 million dollar program provides access to capital, mentorship, and resources. And in fiscal year 2024, \$40 million of that funding will be available for businesses to apply for \$10,000 and \$20,000 dollar grants.

This is in addition to one-on-one advising and resources for marketing and promotion already available to them.

This initiative is reinvigorating local economies, preserving jobs and sustaining the vibrancy of communities across Cook County. To date, more than 15,000 businesses have been served through this program.

Additionally, through the Bureau of Asset Management, or BAM, we're making innovative investments in our municipalities and helping to provide critical capital upgrades in areas that need it most.

This \$20 million initiative, called Build Up Cook, provides County resources for local infrastructure projects. Over the past year, BAM has worked with partners in the Villages of Phoenix and Broadview to pilot and design the Build Up Cook program.

Beginning this fall, Build Up Cook will transition into Phase 1 of the program, starting with a listening tour of 27 priority municipalities.

We are also committed to safeguarding the environment for future generations. This budget includes initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint, conserve natural resources, and promote clean energy solutions. This includes the County's first off-site power purchase agreement for renewable energy.

Starting in March 2025, through the Bureau of Asset Management and the Department of Environment and Sustainability, Cook County's asset portfolio will source a quarter of its electricity from a new, off-site solar project in Illinois.

In the first year, this energy will cover all of the electricity use at 18 Cook County owned-and-operated buildings including health clinics, office buildings, highway maintenance facilities, public safety buildings and warehouses.

As climate change impacts our County, State, nation, and world — we all must do our part. And as we always do — Cook County will continue to lead.

And the way we lead is with the people who work at Cook County. These dedicated civil servants are your family, your friends and neighbors, and they live all across this great county.

Over the past year, our Bureau of Human Resources has increased the hiring pipeline by raising the visibility of the County as an employer of choice. They have also developed hiring incentive and retention programs to ensure Cook County is able to stay competitive in the field.

Their work in this space has been celebrated and recognized by the National Association of Counties.

These are important steps to ensure that the County continues providing services and driving our community investment work.

I often talk about the map of Cook County, where if you look at any outcome, whether it's educational attainment, economic status, or life expectancy, you invariably see the same picture.

That map shows that across the south and west sides of Cook County, the areas that have the highest crime and violence rates are the same communities that suffer the most from poverty, have the most under-resourced schools, and have the least access to healthy food and quality healthcare.

And, yes, we've found that digital equity and access to technology are no different.

This map is why I work every day to advance issues of equity at the County. Because your zip code should not determine how well you fare. And your race should not dictate your access to services or the digital

world.

High speed internet should be a right — not a privilege. And yet –

27% of Cook County households do not have home internet service.

21% of Cook County residents do not have a computer in their household.

This data is just a snapshot of what we learned along the way before launching our first-ever Cook County Digital Equity Plan this week — led by our inaugural Director of Digital Equity Kyla Williams Tate.

Speaking of technology, I'm pleased to share that recently, too, the Bureau of Technology completed Phase One of its current broadband expansion efforts, which connects several municipal anchor institutions in the south suburbs to high-speed broadband.

This includes the Palos Heights Police Department, Tinley Park Public Works, Moraine Valley Community College, Thornton School District 154, and others.

Our digital equity plan, working hand in hand with the Bureau of Technology, is a strategic blueprint to ensure that all Cook County residents have equitable access to the digital infrastructure, devices and tools to thrive in today's economy and society.

It's our promise ...

Cook County, the second most populous county in the United States, is a microcosm of the nation's diversity and challenges. It has a rich history, a vibrant culture, and a dynamic population. But, like many regions across the country, we also grapple with issues related to equity, justice, and inclusivity.

In addition to our expansive pandemic recovery efforts, we are spearheading a collection of equity programs through a dedicated Equity Fund.

We are committing even more resources to the fund this year which will continue enabling important work in the justice system, public safety, health, housing, economic opportunity, community development and social services to benefit historically marginalized communities. Again, this is all being done without raising taxes.

To date, we're investing \$120 million into the Equity Fund, of which \$70 million is allocated for fiscal year 2024. It's important to note, however, just how significant and systems-oriented our equity work is.

The Equity Fund has guided our work under the American Rescue Plan.

It has transformed how we implement our strategic plan — in which we look at everything we do with an equity lens, including equity in grantmaking.

And it has recommended policy and structural changes that Cook County government will continue to pursue to address persistent disparities in our communities.

The formation of the Fund and Taskforce demonstrates that equity is not just an aspirational goal — we are funding it, we are putting it into action, and we are committed to working with our community partners to make these efforts inclusive, sustainable, responsive, and impactful.

This is an ongoing journey towards building a just and inclusive community. The challenges are significant, but the progress made so far demonstrates that positive change is possible.

The Cook County budget for the upcoming fiscal year is a reflection of our values and our accomplishments. It embodies the principles of responsible governance, investment in our communities, and a commitment to inclusivity and social equity.

Its comprehensive approach serves as a blueprint for how a community can rise to meet unprecedented challenges.

And it takes a community with people like Bella, Preston, and Patricia working with us so that we can all reach our promise together.

The success of the ARPA programs in Cook County is not just a local achievement; it's a demonstration of what's possible when people and government work together with vision and determination.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the residents of Cook County for your engagement and for the many partners who deliver the critical services to our residents on our behalf.

I also want to share my heartfelt thanks for the work of our bureaus.

For the leadership and collaboration of all our Commissioners.

A special thanks to my chief of staff, Lanetta Haynes Turner, and her incredible leadership. And thanks to our bureau chiefs — Zahra Ali, Tanya Anthony, Xochitl Flores, Liz Granato, Velisha Haddox, and Tom Lynch. To our department heads and all the staff at Cook County.

In the coming months, we will work diligently to implement this budget. Together, we will build a Cook County that we can all be proud of, and a place where opportunity knows no bounds.

Thank you.

**REFERRAL OF EXECUTIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**Pursuant to the statutes of the State of Illinois, Chapter 55, Article 6, a motion was made by Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Lowry, that the Executive Budget Recommendation for Fiscal Year 2024 be referred to the Finance Committee. The vote of the yeas and nays being as follows:**

*Journal of Proceedings*

*Board of Commissioners*

*October 5, 2023*

**Yeas:** Commissioners Aguilar, Anaya, Britton, Daley, Deer, Degnen, Gainer, Gordon, Lowry, Miller, Moore, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Stamps, and Trevor (16)

**Nays:** None (0)

**Absent:** Commissioner S. Morrison (1)

**The motion carried.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Lowry, that the meeting do now adjourn to meet again at the same time and same place on October 19, 2023, in accordance with County Board Resolution 22-5826.

**The motion prevailed and the meeting stood adjourned.**

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**KAREN A. YARBROUGH**  
County Clerk