

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY  
SPECIAL MEETING

Taken Wednesday, October 10, 2018  
at 1:00 p.m.

Cook County Board Room  
County Building  
118 North Clark Street  
Room 569  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

PRESENT:

PRESIDENT: MS. TONI PRECKWINKLE

COMMISSIONERS: MR. LUIS ARROYO JR.  
MR. RICHARD R. BOYKIN  
MR. JOHN P. DALEY  
MR. DENNIS DEER  
MR. JOHN A. FRITCHEY  
MR. JESUS G. GARCIA  
MR. GREGG GOSLIN  
MR. EDWARD M. MOODY  
MR. STANLEY MOORE  
MR. SEAN M. MORRISON  
MR. TIMOTHY O. SCHNEIDER  
MR. PETER N. SILVESTRI  
MS. DEBORAH SIMS  
MR. LARRY SUFFREDIN  
MR. JEFFREY R. TOBOLSKI

ALSO PRESENT:

MR. MATTHEW B. DeLEON, Secretary  
MS. BRANDEE SMITH, Deputy County Clerk  
MR. ANTHONY W. LISANTI, Court Reporter

1                   PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.  
2 The special meeting of the Cook County Board of  
3 Commissioners will come to order.

4                   Will the Clerk please call the roll?

5                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Arroyo.

6                   COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Here.

7                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Boykin.

8                   COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Here.

9                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Butler -- is  
10 absent.

11                   Commissioner Daley.

12                   COMMISSIONER DALEY: Here.

13                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Deer.

14                   COMMISSIONER DEER: Here.

15                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Fritchey.

16                   COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Here.

17                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Gainer -- is  
18 absent.

19                   Commissioner Garcia -- is absent.

20                   Commissioner Goslin.

21                   COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: Here.

22                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Moody.

23                   COMMISSIONER MOODY: Here.

24                   MS. SMITH: Commissioner Moore.

1 COMMISSIONER MOORE: Here.

2 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Morrison.

3 COMMISSIONER MORRISON: Here.

4 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Schneider.

5 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Here.

6 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Silvestri.

7 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: I am here.

8 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Sims.

9 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Here.

10 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Suffredin.

11 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Here.

12 MS. SMITH: Commissioner Tobolski.

13 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Here.

14 Madam Secretary, you have a quorum.

15 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Thank you.

16 The Clerk informs me that there is a  
17 quorum present.

18 Commissioner Sims, will you lead us in  
19 the Pledge of Allegiance?

20

21 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

22

23 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Will the Clerk  
24 please read the call of the meeting into the record?

1 MS. SMITH: "Toni Preckwinkle, President of  
2 the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, has  
3 directed me to call a special meeting of the Board  
4 of Commissioners of Cook County on Wednesday,  
5 October 10, 2018, at the hour of 1:00 p.m., in the  
6 County Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118  
7 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois. At said  
8 meeting, the executive budget for fiscal year 2019  
9 will be presented to the Cook County Board of  
10 Commissioners. Very truly yours, David Orr, County  
11 Clerk."

12 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Mr. Secretary, are  
13 there any public speakers?

14 SECRETARY DeLEON: There are, Madam  
15 President. Your first registered public speaker is  
16 Mark Armstrong from the Chicago Urban Fine Arts  
17 Commonwealth.

18 MR. ARMSTRONG: Good afternoon.

19 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.

20 MR. ARMSTRONG: In as much time as I may  
21 consume, I would like to reflect the sincere wish  
22 and will of the Chicago Southland, that this  
23 proposed budget be tied to the proposed Fiscal  
24 Forecasting Commission, or whatever you want to call

1 it.

2 We understand it has been resurrected  
3 because whatever was going on as far as we were told  
4 at the highest end, as far as overseen, what did or  
5 didn't happen with our tax dollars, it didn't seem  
6 to take especially with the balanced budget and  
7 surplus that people came to when they were elected  
8 to high office.

9 So, as Commissioner Tobolski pointed  
10 out, it is not our money, it is not special interest  
11 money, it is everybody's money. We want to make  
12 sure that everything, since we are told that Cook  
13 County is broke, is spent in a most deliberate way  
14 that is thought out and not half backwards or what-  
15 have you.

16 That is my message for this part of  
17 the budget proceedings.

18 SECRETARY DeLEON: Your next registered  
19 public speaker, Madam President, is George  
20 Blakemore.

21 MR. BLAKEMORE: To the citizens and staff  
22 and Commissioners. This budget says \$5.92 billion.  
23 That is not an "M". That is \$5 billion dollars.

24 This County Board is corrupt. Fraud

1 and abuse. Those are silent on the negative effect  
2 that illegal immigrants, illegals against the law  
3 have on all the county resources. The black  
4 community, the negative effect. Governor Rauner is  
5 now beginning to open his eyes. You cannot balance  
6 your budget on the backs of poor people, poor black  
7 people, citizens. Poor white citizens. Middle  
8 class citizens. Poor Asian, poor Hispanic citizens.  
9 You cannot balance your budget on us.

10 It is time out for this cesspool, this  
11 swamp, right here in Cook County. Not beyond the  
12 Beltway. All government is local. It is time out.

13 And you, Madam President, nineteen or  
14 eighteen years as an Alderman -- what did you do for  
15 our community in the time you have been here? Over  
16 there at this hospital, corruption with these  
17 vendors. Quentin Young said, "I want an independent  
18 health and hospital system." But is it independent  
19 for you political hacks down here?

20 It is time to clean up this swamp,  
21 this cesspool right here, and have the audacity to  
22 say, "I would like to be the Mayor of the City of  
23 Chicago."

24 The most people who are leaving

1 Chicago is the black community, black citizens. The  
2 ones that are coming into Chicago is the white  
3 citizens.

4 So, institutional racism, it is here  
5 with so-called black leaders -- you are silent.  
6 Silent. Clean up this swamp here. All of you are  
7 part of this swamp.

8 And over there, Daley and whatever,  
9 going over there with that contract with that vendor  
10 and you are looking at me. You are stone deaf when  
11 you told those people to handcuff me and take me  
12 out. And not a mumbling word by any of you, any of  
13 you, and the blacks were silent.

14 SECRETARY DeLEON: Your next registered  
15 public speaker, Madam President, is Rae Kyritsi from  
16 the Center for Conflict Resolution.

17 MR. BLAKEMORE: They handcuffed me and  
18 threwed me out like a slave.

19 SECRETARY DeLEON: Rae Kyritsi from the  
20 Center for Conflict Resolution.

21 MS. KYRITSI: Good afternoon.

22 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.

23 MS. KYRITSI: Thank you for the opportunity  
24 to speak today. My name is Rae Kyritsi and I am the

1 Program Director for the Center for Conflict  
2 Resolution.

3 Our organization provides free  
4 mediation services throughout all of Cook County to  
5 anyone who wants it in any kind of conflict. We  
6 have done so since 1979.

7 I am here today to speak to you  
8 briefly about the funding that we have received  
9 through the Justice Advisory Council. The JAC  
10 funding funds our juvenile victim offender and  
11 family mediation program. With funding through the  
12 JAC, we have been able to maintain and expand our  
13 twenty-five-year-old restorative justice program.

14 In that program, juvenile offenders  
15 have an opportunity to sit down with their family  
16 members and the victims of their crimes to have a  
17 conversation about the incident that occurred, talk  
18 about ways to repair harm, to discuss  
19 accountability, and to look at different ways to  
20 move forward.

21 In the past year, we have served  
22 almost 550 parties through the program, serving over  
23 two hundred juveniles and their families. We do  
24 this through referrals throughout all of Cook



1 County, throughout all of the juvenile courthouses,  
2 as well as in partnership with CPS. These conflicts  
3 have a ninety percent resolution rate, which means  
4 that in ninety percent of the cases where the  
5 parties sit down and have a conversation, they are  
6 able to create a plan for the next step moving  
7 forward.

8 I would like to highlight one of my  
9 favorite cases from last year, where a juvenile  
10 offender was arrested for property damage to a small  
11 local bakery in his neighborhood. The owner of the  
12 bakery as well as the juvenile and his mother came  
13 in and had a mediation. At the end of the  
14 mediation, after a two-hour-long hard conversation,  
15 the parties came up with a plan where the owner of  
16 the bakery allowed the juvenile to work off the  
17 damage. So he came in and did repairs to the  
18 building where it had been damaged. But in our  
19 follow-up, six months after the case, we learned  
20 that in the end the owner of the bakery hired that  
21 juvenile who now works there, which is a fantastic  
22 outcome for us.

23 In cases where victims were unable or  
24 unwilling to participate in the mediation, we still

1 provide a mediation for juveniles and their  
2 families. We find often where a juvenile has been  
3 arrested there has either been a consequence at home  
4 or a conflict at home which may have led to the  
5 arresting incident, in those cases the families are  
6 often able to create plans to divert truancy, to get  
7 homework completed, and improve communication at  
8 home.

9 Thank you.

10 SECRETARY DeLEON: Your next registered  
11 public speaker, Madam President, is Mary Hartsfield  
12 from Warriors on the Watch.

13 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Will the Clerk  
14 please add Commissioner Garcia to the roll?

15 MS. HARTSFIELD: Good afternoon.

16 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.

17 MS. HARTSFIELD: Good afternoon, President  
18 Preckwinkle. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Good  
19 afternoon, families, friends, and some enemies in  
20 this room.

21 My name is Mary Hartsfield. I am a  
22 citizen. I am a voter. I am a mother of three  
23 grown children. I am a taxpayer. I am an activist.  
24 I am an advocate. I am a minister. All of this

1 information that I am giving you all does not mean  
2 anything when I am not given the right to do  
3 everything that you all do in this room.

4           You all sit in the seats the taxpayers  
5 put you in. The seat was not earned by you all, but  
6 we voted you all in that seat.

7           Our community, the way it looks on the  
8 west side of Chicago is terrible -- terrible. We  
9 got gang violence. We got no jobs. We got empty  
10 houses. We got vacant lots. We got a food desert  
11 -- on and on and on. Something is wrong with a  
12 society that balanced their backs -- balanced on the  
13 backs on all which you have all make here on the  
14 backs of somebody like me.

15           I experienced a lot out there with my  
16 children going to jail. Writing letters that never  
17 got answered from State lawmakers, from City  
18 lawmakers, from County lawmakers. Who do you write  
19 to when you are in some trouble and you are trying  
20 to get some help? The people, you all are sitting  
21 in this seat and you are ignoring people, and at  
22 election time, you all want somebody's vote.

23           You are all good to come out to the  
24 churches during election time, but come out now that

1 our kids' blood is crying from the ground. Laquan  
2 McDonald deserved to live. He is dead now. We  
3 cannot bring that boy back. Second degree murder is  
4 not a victory. It should have been first degree  
5 murder. The cops should have been responsible. He  
6 is supposed to be held responsible for having that  
7 gun and utilizing that gun in the manner that he  
8 used that gun on that African-American boy. Sixteen  
9 shots in the back of a poor African-American man.  
10 You all should be ashamed of yourselves.

11 SECRETARY DeLEON: Your next registered  
12 public speaker, Madam President, is Carina Delgado,  
13 from the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council. Carina  
14 Delgado, from the Brighton Park Neighborhood  
15 Council.

16 MS. DELGADO: Good afternoon.

17 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.

18 MS. DELGADO: Good afternoon. My name is  
19 Carina Delgado and I work for the Brighton Park  
20 Neighborhood Council.

21 The JAC grant, we were very fortunate  
22 to get, to be awarded with the JAC fund grant. It  
23 helped us implement the leaders of tomorrow program,  
24 which is a violence prevention program to help

1 youths between the ages of twelve to nineteen.

2                   We are three case managers,  
3 restorative case managers that work inside the  
4 schools. This is a program that helps the students  
5 when they are inside the school, to be one on one  
6 with a case manager. This program has allowed the  
7 youth to receive support that they need to make  
8 positive changes in their lives.

9                   The program also teaches the youth to  
10 be positive leaders in their community, and empowers  
11 them to use their own abilities and resiliency to  
12 overcome their daily challenges that they encounter  
13 in their communities.

14                   We focus on the students that struggle  
15 with truancy, that struggle with behavior, and  
16 struggle because they are being recruited to be in a  
17 gang.

18                   The goal of this program is to  
19 increase attendance, to decrease the number of  
20 negative incidents that happen at the schools, and  
21 also to teach them how to resolve conflict by  
22 engaging them in various anger reduction groups.

23                   We are three case managers that work  
24 at the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council with this

1 program. The need is great.

2 I work in two middle schools. I am  
3 divided and I have to go from one school to the  
4 next. I have just a certain amount of numbers that  
5 I can see. I see that there are other students who  
6 benefit from the program.

7 We also serve the community high  
8 school. We see that our three case managers is not  
9 enough. Our students need that positive role model  
10 in their communities because they don't have it in  
11 their lives. This program has allowed us to be that  
12 positive role model for them.

13 I want to highlight briefly one story  
14 of one student that was referred to me in the  
15 seventh grade who was struggling with truancy. The  
16 student was not coming to school in seventh grade.  
17 When I started working with her, I then discovered  
18 that the student had a mom who was deported, and she  
19 was living with her sister who was a single mom.

20 The family was struggling  
21 economically. I was able to connect the family to  
22 other of our services to be able to help the family.  
23 The student in the eighth grade started improving in  
24 her attendance. She was accepted at Phoenix High

1 School, and currently she is a 4.2 GPA.

2 Thank you.

3 SECRETARY DeLEON: Madam President, your  
4 next registered public speaker is Phillip Jordan  
5 from Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation. He  
6 will be joined by Christine Weil, who will follow  
7 him.

8 MR. JORDAN: Good afternoon.

9 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good afternoon.

10 MR. JORDAN: I am Phillip Jordan from  
11 Precious Blood. The grant that has been provided to  
12 us, it is helpful. We all do, like some guys do,  
13 slip through the cracks. They fall as victims to  
14 the system. End up, unfortunately, dead. The  
15 monies that is allocated to us does help our youth  
16 stay out of trouble and stay off the streets.

17 I am a youth advocate and a job  
18 readiness coach. I advocate for guys. I try to get  
19 them in school, try to find work for them, try to  
20 keep them out of trouble. Also, too, I know it  
21 works because I came up in the program.

22

23 (Applause - applause - applause)

24

1 MS. WEIL: I am Christine Weil, Associate  
2 Director of the Precious Blood Ministry of  
3 Reconciliation. They are located in the Back of the  
4 Yards neighborhood, and also serve the Englewood  
5 community.

6 The program that Phillip was  
7 referencing is called our job readiness program.  
8 The young men that we work with are between the ages  
9 of sixteen and twenty-eight, and they mostly come to  
10 us saying they want a job. What the grant has  
11 provided for us is that it created positions like  
12 Phillip's, where we have a case manager that can  
13 assist them as they are returning home from prison.

14 They are receiving their Social  
15 Security card, their IDs, and helping them to fill  
16 out applications, taking them to job sites,  
17 accompanying them throughout the process, and even  
18 when they get the job, working with employers in how  
19 to work with those who have been traumatized in the  
20 neighborhood.

21 We are creating this environment with  
22 organizations such as "Preferred Freezer", having  
23 them sit in a circle and talk through -- maybe not  
24 firing our guys when they commit their first offense



1 against the company, but sitting in and  
2 understanding where their trauma came from that day  
3 so that they can come to an understanding, okay,  
4 let's come together and work with our guys, keeping  
5 them employed in these positions. That is what this  
6 particular fund has done for us.

7 We work with those who are affected by  
8 violence, incarceration. We work with their  
9 families. We work with their mothers. They come to  
10 us as well. So through job readiness, mothers and  
11 grandmothers have also been supported in finding  
12 positions as it has been difficult for them to  
13 navigate by themselves.

14 We have just accompanied throughout  
15 this process. That is what we do at Precious Blood.

16 SECRETARY DeLEON: Madam President, that  
17 concludes your registered public speakers.

18 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Thank you.

19 I want to thank everyone who came out  
20 this afternoon. We are grateful for your presence.

21 I am pleased to present to you my  
22 FY2019 executive budget recommendation. This \$5.92  
23 billion budget represents principled progress toward  
24 our commitment to making Cook County healthier,

1 safer, and more fiscally responsible.

2                   This budget builds on the considerable  
3 progress we have made during my eight years in  
4 office to reform and reshape Cook County into a  
5 government that truly serves all of its residents.  
6 Whether you're from Evanston or Englewood, Pullman  
7 or Palatine, you can expect a government working for  
8 you. I will add that we are doing so without any --  
9 without any new taxes, fines or fees in the coming  
10 fiscal year.

11                   I ran for this job because I had a  
12 vision for a new Cook County that was responsible  
13 and responsive. A Cook County that was efficient  
14 and effective. A Cook County that was successful  
15 and sustainable. A Cook County that was transparent  
16 and truthful. And I believe that each balanced  
17 budget we have presented has been a step toward  
18 realizing this vision.

19                   We have achieved much because we have  
20 avoided quick fixes and one-time solutions. We have  
21 done the hard work and heavy lifting to instill  
22 sound fiscal discipline, and ensure that more than  
23 ninety percent of our annual budgetary solutions are  
24 structural in nature. And this budget is no

1 exception.

2                   In June, I released a preliminary  
3 financial forecast acknowledging an expect \$81.8  
4 million budget gap. \$29.5 million of the gap was  
5 related to the Health and Hospitals System, and the  
6 other \$52.3 million shortfall in the general fund.

7                   Increases in CountyCare membership  
8 have helped close the health fund gap. A growth in  
9 projected sales tax and enhanced enforcement  
10 activities have increased gas tax, use tax, and  
11 amusement tax revenue. Reducing overtime at the  
12 jail through prudent management by the Sheriff's  
13 Office and eliminating vacancies has helped close  
14 the general fund gap by decreasing expenditures.

15                   The County's budget is more than \$5.9  
16 billion. That is a lot of money by any measure.  
17 Yet, I want to point out that nearly ninety percent  
18 of that money is spent in two arenas -- public  
19 health and public safety.

20                   In truth, the departments that operate  
21 under my purview comprise approximately five percent  
22 of the budget. Ensuring that the budget is balanced  
23 each year involves a great deal of collaboration  
24 with Commissioners and independently-elected

1 officials who run other county offices.

2           Since I took office in December, 2010,  
3 we have closed \$2.1 billion in budget gaps and cut  
4 expenditures by more than \$850 million.

5           We are also working to put the County  
6 on a stronger financial footing by being more  
7 judicious and careful about how we incur and pay  
8 down debt. Despite having to account for borrowing  
9 that predated my Administration, we have decreased  
10 outstanding debt by more than \$400 million, or  
11 eleven percent, since 2011. We are living within  
12 our means and being disciplined in spending.

13           We have done all of this by ending the  
14 bad practices of the past. We are not selling bonds  
15 to pay settlement costs or other non-capital  
16 purposes. And we are buying assets with short  
17 useful lives, like computers, with our operating  
18 funds instead of using credit. These efforts have  
19 been recognized by all of the major rating agencies.

20           We are being recognized for our strong  
21 financial management, commitment to fiscal balance,  
22 and strides in improving pension funding. Rating  
23 agencies have consistently commended Cook County's  
24 work to create financial stability and confront

1 legacy liabilities. Cook County has investment-  
2 grade ratings for our bonds, making us a bit of an  
3 anomaly when compared to other large local units of  
4 government in Illinois. This, in turn, allows us to  
5 borrow at a much lower cost.

6           Through a combination of fiscal  
7 prudence and with the advent of the Affordable Care  
8 Act, Cook County has reduced the direct taxpayer  
9 allocation to our Health and Hospitals System by  
10 seventy-four percent, from \$389 million in 2010 to  
11 \$102 million in 2018. That amount covers the cost  
12 of healthcare for the detainee population in the  
13 County corrections system, and funds our public  
14 health system, both services required by law. This  
15 significant reduction has been accomplished while  
16 still providing more than \$500 million in annually  
17 uncompensated care to those who use our Health and  
18 Hospitals System.

19           For more than a century, our Health  
20 and Hospitals System has provided quality care to  
21 anyone, to anyone who needs it, regardless of their  
22 ability to pay. And though there are seventy-two  
23 hospitals in Cook County -- I will say that again,  
24 there are seventy-two hospitals. Our two hospitals

1 provide nearly fifty percent of all of the charity  
2 care administered in Cook County.

3 I am grateful to Chairman Hill  
4 Hammock, who is with us today, and Doctor Jay  
5 Shannon, his team, and the hospital board for the  
6 exemplary work they have done. I am proud to say  
7 that our healthcare system is increasingly one of  
8 choice, not simply one of last resort.

9 We are projecting CountyCare  
10 membership of 345,000 people next year, up from  
11 140,000 members in 2017. In addition to caring for  
12 CountyCare patients, the Hospital continues to  
13 increase its contracts with managed care plans,  
14 further driving new funding to the system. This  
15 means that we are expanding and improving services,  
16 while at the same time reducing costs to taxpayers.

17 These improved services are being  
18 acknowledged. US News and World Report recognized  
19 Stroger Hospital with its highest rating for cardiac  
20 care in the 2018 Best Hospital rankings. Stroger  
21 Hospital was redesignated as a Level III perinatal  
22 center and recertified as an advanced primary stroke  
23 center by the Joint Commission, while the burn unit  
24 has been reaccredited by the American Burn

1 Association.

2 In FY2019, the hospital system will  
3 establish dialysis services at Provident Hospital to  
4 meet a growing need in the community. Currently, we  
5 refer patients to private dialysis centers,  
6 interrupting their continuity of care and sending  
7 revenues elsewhere.

8 The opening of the new professional  
9 building later this month, on our west side campus,  
10 will provide tens of thousands of patients long  
11 served by Fantus Clinic with state-of-the-art  
12 healthcare in a bright, modern space. Our patients  
13 deserve no less.

14 The opening of the professional  
15 building marks the beginning of the healthcare  
16 system's commitment to renovate or relocate the  
17 community health centers to allow them to compete in  
18 this new environment that is heavily focused on  
19 outpatient care. We look forward to the opening of  
20 the new Vista and North Riverside clinics in FY2019  
21 as well.

22 To succeed in new environment, the  
23 goal is to keep patients healthy, and to avoid  
24 unnecessary hospitalizations. Care managers work

1 with patients and CountyCare members to ensure they  
2 are getting the services they need when they need  
3 them. They visit people in their homes to make sure  
4 they are managing their conditions and link them to  
5 community-based services they may need to improve  
6 their long-term health. To accomplish this, the  
7 healthcare system has been expanding care  
8 management, and will continue to do so in 2019.

9 I am pleased to introduce you to a  
10 patient at Cook County Health. Efrain Torres is a  
11 young man who has had several health matters  
12 successfully treated at Stroger Hospital. Mr.  
13 Torres is starting his first year at Malcolm X  
14 College, and dreams of becoming a physical  
15 therapist. He is immensely grateful for the care he  
16 has received at Stroger, and is a shining example of  
17 how access to adequate healthcare can impact other  
18 areas of our lives.

19 While we have made dramatic  
20 improvements in the public health arena, we continue  
21 to also make significant progress in public safety  
22 as well.

23 By continuing to advocate for criminal  
24 justice and bond reform, we have seen a sustained



1 reduction in the pretrial detainee population in the  
2 jail. This has allowed us to demolish a number of  
3 buildings on the jail campus, reducing costs that  
4 reflect the lower detainee population.

5 Through collaborative efforts between  
6 the public safety stakeholders, which include the  
7 Justice Advisory Council, the State's Attorney, the  
8 Sheriff, the Public Defender, the Clerk of Circuit  
9 Court, and the Chief Judge, the jail population is  
10 now at its lowest since 1991. For years, the daily  
11 jail population hovered at roughly 10,000  
12 individuals. Today, it has been reduced by more  
13 than thirty percent.

14 We have also invested millions in  
15 community-based programming to reduce violence and  
16 recidivism. When I walked in the door, our grant  
17 efforts were nonexistent. Since then, we have  
18 distributed almost \$18 million to community partners  
19 in anti-violence, anti-recidivism and restorative  
20 justice grants.

21 In 2019, the County will award more  
22 than \$4 million in grants to twenty community-based  
23 organizations. With us today are several grantees  
24 and representatives of these laudable organizations,

1 some of whom you have heard from. I want to  
2 recognize Rae Kyritsi, from the Center for Conflict  
3 Resolution, for their efforts to offer pro bono  
4 mediation services and conflict management training  
5 in the County. I'd also like to recognize Carina  
6 Delgado, from Brighton Park Neighborhood Council,  
7 for their expansive work to improve education  
8 opportunities, provide alternatives to gangs, and  
9 bring together their community. And with us today  
10 are Christine Weil and Phillip Jordan, who you heard  
11 from, from Precious Blood Ministry of  
12 Reconciliation. Their focus on restorative justice  
13 work, work and study programs, and resources for  
14 neighborhood youth and families should be commended.  
15 I want to thank all of you for what you do.

16 We have kept people out of the  
17 criminal justice system and in their communities,  
18 working, going to school, and contributing to the  
19 community. We have also worked with the Legislature  
20 to end automatic probation, ease the process of  
21 expungement, dramatically decrease the automatic  
22 transfer of youth to adult court, and overseen the  
23 end of a Federal oversight at the Juvenile Temporary  
24 Detention Center, the JTDC. These efforts have

1     resulted in a decline in our detained youth  
2     population of forty-five percent since 2009.

3                     One of the true joys of this job is  
4     hearing and seeing young men and women thrive after  
5     experiencing hardship. I think at times we forget  
6     the good that government can do, and that our  
7     policies and programs that attack at the grassroots  
8     can be life-altering.

9                     It is uplifting and encouraging to see  
10    the County making a difference in people's lives,  
11    which is why I am also proud of the County's recent  
12    efforts to administer SAT testing for the first time  
13    ever for youth at the JTDC and our work to expand  
14    prevocational programming.

15                    The SAT has never been  
16    administered to JTDC students before. The JTDC  
17    coordinated with CPS, the courts, and other  
18    stakeholders to ensure that all residents who were  
19    in their junior year took the SAT exam. Completing  
20    this college placement test is critical to high  
21    school graduation and to beginning a postsecondary  
22    education.

23                    The JTDC is also offering residents a  
24    number of prevocational programs, including a

1 licensed barber school, pre-apprentice painting  
2 program, and now a pre-apprentice electrician  
3 program. This program introduces JTDC residents to  
4 the electrical trade, including basic electrical  
5 circuits, wiring techniques, and how to secure  
6 employment as an apprentice. Those in the JTDC can  
7 leave the facility with a new skill, ready to  
8 participate in the workforce or continue their  
9 education.

10 While we create opportunities and hope  
11 for individuals, we are also undertaking similar  
12 efforts for our local Cook County businesses. We  
13 have taken important actions to foster economic  
14 development and encourage job growth through  
15 increasing exports for small and medium-sized  
16 businesses, strengthening the fabricated metal and  
17 manufacturing sectors, and recognizing the critical  
18 role of the south suburbs through strategic and  
19 concentrated investments in them.

20 Our Bureau of Economic Development  
21 recently closed on a \$3 million loan with Alsip  
22 MiniMill designed to spur economic growth in the  
23 south suburbs. It will assist in the generation of  
24 approximately \$70 million in private capital

1 investment, and support more than one hundred jobs  
2 for the MiniMill.

3 I am also pleased to recognize John  
4 Schneider, the Economic Development Director for  
5 Franklin Park, who is in the audience. A couple of  
6 years ago, the Cullerton Street Industrial Area,  
7 located in Franklin Park, experienced crumbling  
8 infrastructure that jeopardized a number of area  
9 businesses.

10 As a direct result of County  
11 intervention, and a \$6.56 million grant for road  
12 improvements, five businesses located in the project  
13 area have committed to increasing full-time  
14 employment by an estimated 133 jobs. These  
15 companies have also committed to retaining more than  
16 one thousand existing jobs.

17 Transportation and infrastructure play  
18 a pivotal role in economic development and regional  
19 growth, and I am proud that our Department of  
20 Transportation and Highways is the newest member of  
21 CREATE, a partnership of railroads and private  
22 sector and public sector agencies that supports rail  
23 improvements across northeastern Illinois. Since  
24 joining the partnership, the County's participation

1 has proved transformative.

2                   The Department's Commitment of \$78  
3 million in matching funds -- \$78 million --was  
4 critical in winning a \$132 million Federal grant in  
5 June for much-needed area rail improvements. A  
6 number of our County Commissioners were with me as  
7 we cut the ribbon for this project. Cook County is  
8 North America's freight capital. By advancing this  
9 nationally significant project and creating  
10 additional capacity for rail, we are enabling  
11 businesses to move their products to market in the  
12 US, and, ultimately, overseas efficiently, and  
13 further downstream job creation is the benefit.

14                   While we reshape our roads and  
15 bridges, we are also updating our technology  
16 infrastructure. Not long ago, many County workers  
17 were signing in and out on paper timesheets. We now  
18 have fully implemented a biometric time and  
19 attendance system, which has simplified reporting  
20 for our workforce, reduced the potential for fraud,  
21 and increased accountability, while also providing a  
22 strong return on investment for County government.

23                   Now employees can scan a finger to  
24 record precisely when they arrive at work and when

1 they depart for the day. The new system is a  
2 countywide replacement for the multiple disparate  
3 systems used by offices across the County. By  
4 unifying our time and attendance system and records,  
5 we have more effective management and oversight of  
6 our operations.

7           The Bureau of Technology has also made  
8 significant strides toward modernizing Cook County  
9 in the past year, and plans to continue to bring  
10 invocations and efficiencies.

11           In FY2018, the Bureau of Technology  
12 completed an overhaul of the County's back office  
13 financial systems with a modern enterprise resource  
14 planning system.

15           The new system is retiring eight  
16 outmoded systems and centralizing supply chain data  
17 -- such as information about materials and vendors  
18 -- to reduce inventory expenses and increase  
19 automation.

20           We have introduced new artificial-  
21 intelligence-based security systems and prevented  
22 more than 1.75 billion possible security threats  
23 between July, 2017, and July, 2018. Governments,  
24 just like businesses and individuals, are under

1 constant threat of cyberattack.

2           Recognizing the importance and  
3 effectiveness of our modernization efforts, we are  
4 further expanding our work to provide smart  
5 governance. In the coming year, we will establish  
6 the Office of Research, Operations and Innovation to  
7 further make the business of government more  
8 effective and efficient. The new department will  
9 identify opportunities for improvement and implement  
10 creative, data-driven solutions to enrich services  
11 and the overall effectiveness of the County.

12           My vision for a better Cook County  
13 hasn't come without challenges and difficulties.  
14 Doing what is right and responsible isn't always  
15 easy, and we have not shied away from tough  
16 decisions.

17           The difficult but necessary choice to  
18 raise the sale tax by one percent has put the County  
19 on a sound financial footing to address pensions,  
20 legacy debt service costs, and transportation  
21 infrastructure needs.

22           By dedicating this revenue from the  
23 sales tax, Cook County has provided supplemental  
24 pension payments of almost \$1 billion above the



1     statutorily required contribution.

2                     Additionally, in the three fiscal  
3     years, legacy debt service payments were increased  
4     by \$107 million and transportation funding by \$139  
5     million to address deferred maintenance. An  
6     additional \$369 million in increased contributions  
7     to these categories in FY2019 will bring the total  
8     to over \$1.7 billion. That is billion with a "B".  
9     While this has allowed us to address our legacy  
10    liability costs, it does little for future  
11    government operations.

12                    Although the County has a diverse  
13    revenue base, expenditures rise over time due to  
14    inflationary pressures, with health benefits and  
15    several other categories of expenditures growing  
16    faster than general inflation. Unfortunately,  
17    natural growth of our revenues struggles to keep  
18    pace. This is not an encouraging trend, but it is  
19    an unavoidable reality.

20                    This makes structurally balancing the  
21    budget difficult and necessitates difficult  
22    decisions. To cope with our revenue needs, sustain  
23    our critical services, and establish a three-year  
24    financial plan, last year we moved forward with a

1 new revenue proposal. With its repeal, the County  
2 lost a source of funding and the opportunity to  
3 create a three-year financial plan.

4 We had to adjust some ambitious goals  
5 and delay some worthy projects that would better  
6 serve the residents of Cook County. Through the  
7 dedicated work of our budget team, separately-  
8 elected officials, and Commissioners, we closed the  
9 \$300 million gap last year.

10 However, without revenue -- and I  
11 recognize the Commissioners have no appetite for new  
12 revenue -- tough decisions will need to be made.  
13 Make no mistake about it. We continue to benefit  
14 from a robust consumer economy, as measured by our  
15 sales tax revenue, but we should not make the  
16 mistake of believing the economic trend line will  
17 point upward forever. In fact, most economists  
18 believe we are overdue for a recession, and while it  
19 would be convenient to avoid talking about this, I  
20 did not say that my vision for Cook County included  
21 being dishonest -- we have to be transparent and  
22 truthful.

23 Each and every budget, we faced these  
24 challenges head-on, and navigated these

1 difficulties, and will continue to do so. Our  
2 residents expect it of us, and they deserve it.

3 I am proud of what we have done, and  
4 excited about what we are going to do.

5 Thank you very much.

6

7 (Applause - applause - applause)

8

9 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Chairman Daley.

10 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you, Madam  
11 President.

12 Pursuant to the statutes of the State  
13 of Illinois, Chapter 55, Article 6, I move that item  
14 18-6084, the 2019 executive budget for Cook County,  
15 as submitted by the Office of the President, be  
16 referred to the Committee on Finance.

17 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I second it.

18 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: It has been moved  
19 by the Chairman and seconded by the Vice-Chairman.  
20 Is there any discussion?

21 All right. It has been moved by  
22 Chairman Daley and seconded by Commissioner Sims  
23 that item 18-6084, the 2019 executive budget for  
24 Cook County, as submitted by the Office of the

1 President, be referred to the committee on Finance.

2 All in favor signify by saying "aye"  
3 -- all opposed "nay". In the opinion of the Chair,  
4 the "ayes" have it.

5 Chairman Daley.

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: I move to adjourn.

7 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: I second it.

8 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: It has been moved  
9 by Chairman Daley and seconded by Commissioner  
10 Silvestri.

11 All in favor signify by saying "aye"  
12 -- all opposed "nay". In the opinion of the Chair,  
13 the "ayes" have it, and the motion carries.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: As a reminder, we have  
15 Finance.

16 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Yes, we have the  
17 Finance Committee next.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript of the original shorthand notes of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony W. Lisanti  
Court Reporter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date