

Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL



Journal of Proceedings

Thursday, October 15, 2020

10:00 AM

Special Meeting:

Presentation of the FY 2021 President's Executive Budget Recommendation

Virtual Meeting

FRANK J. AGUILAR
ALMA E. ANAYA
LUIS ARROYO, JR.
SCOTT R. BRITTON
JOHN P. DALEY
DENNIS DEER
BRIDGET DEGNEN
BRIDGET GAINER
BRANDON JOHNSON

BILL LOWRY
DONNA MILLER
STANLEY MOORE
KEVIN B. MORRISON
SEAN M. MORRISON
PETER N. SILVESTRI
DEBORAH SIMS
LARRY SUFFREDIN

**KAREN A. YARBROUGH
COUNTY CLERK**

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

October 8, 2020

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

Re: SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE for October 15, 2020 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

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 15, 2020, at the hour of 10:00 A.M. As a result of Covid-19 and in accordance with the Cook County Board Rules, the Special Meeting will be by remote means only and will be able to be viewed by the public at 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 2020 will be presented to the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

Instructions for how to attend this meeting and participate in written public comment will be provided the Cook County webpage at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MD7V86F>. The proceedings will be able to be viewed at cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings on October 15, 2020 starting at 10:00 a.m. Written public comment on any of the items listed on the Agenda will be accepted at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MD7V86F> For cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov. Written comments provided prior to the start of the Special Board meeting will be posted at <https://tinyurl.com/yxvybcsl> and may be read aloud or summarized at the meeting. Three minutes per comment will be allowed for any written comments read into the record.

Copies of the Agenda for the October 15, 2020 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 on or before October 9, 2020 at <https://tinyurl.com/yxvybcsl>

Please issue the Notice of this Special Meeting and Agenda as required by law.

NOTE: The Cook County Board of Commissioner Board Room located in the Cook County Building, 118 N. Clark Street, Room 567, Chicago, IL 60602 remains closed to the public, until a date to be determined, due to the current circumstances concerning COVID-19.

Very truly yours,

Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Board President

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO ALL COMMISSIONERS

October 9, 2020

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 15, 2020 at the hour of 10:00 A.M. As a result of COVID-19 and in accordance with the Cook County Board Rules, the Special Meeting will be by remote means only and will be able to be viewed by the public at 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 12, 2020 through Thursday, October 15, 2020.

LEGAL NOTICE

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Very truly yours,

KAREN A. YARBROUGH, Cook County Clerk and
Clerk of the Board of the Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois

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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.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Aguilar, Anaya, Arroyo, Britton, Daley, Deer, Degnen, Gainer, Johnson, Lowry, Miller, Moore, K. Morrison, S. Morrison, Silvestri, Sims and Suffredin (17)

Absent: None (0)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Pursuant to Cook County Code of Ordinances, public testimony will be permitted at regular and special meetings of the Board. Duly authorized public speakers shall be called upon at this time to deliver testimony germane to a specific item(s) on the meeting agenda, and the testimony must not exceed three (3) minutes. The names of duly authorized speakers shall be published in the Post Board Action Agenda and Journal of Proceedings as prepared by the Clerk of the Board.

1. Chief Apostle William McCoy, D.D., PhD. - Brothers Keepers Community Outreach
2. Marion Shuck – Gift of Hope of Itasca
3. Pastor J.D. Anderson – Centennial Missionary Baptist Church
4. Dr. Phalese Binion – Westside Ministers Coalition

20-4595

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

EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

Department: Office of the President

Summary: Executive Budget, Cook County Budget Resolution and Annual Appropriation Bill for Fiscal Year 2021

Good Morning.

For more than 20 years, Carlos Rosas, a lifelong resident from the Southwest Side, was known as Calumet Fisheries' most dedicated and hardworking employee.

When dining somewhere, he'd anonymously pay the tab for elderly patrons eating alone. He was just that kind of guy.

The kindest person you'd ever met, devoted to his family and friends. And when his sister suffered a devastating injury, of course he stepped in and became her primary caregiver.

Again, he was just that kind of guy.

But on July 20th COVID-19 stole Carlos from us, and his family's loss is felt among all of us who call this city, this county home..

We have lost so many people who made an indelible impact throughout our Cook County community, our country and our world. We cannot even begin to quantify the magnitude of this loss.

To Carlos's family — thank you. Thank you for sharing him with us for 41 years. Our hearts are with you.

Like so many of you, I started this year with a vision. A 2020 vision.

And just like that –

How quickly our 2020 vision went awry.

I know our collective visions never considered a world where handshakes are forbidden. Hugs are off limits. A world where, should you even go outside, you check to make sure you have the necessities– your wallet, purse, keys, coat and now, the new, vital accessory — your mask.

Our 2020 vision never imagined a world where maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet from our mothers, daughters, fathers, brothers and even our elderly, allow the best chance for their — and our own — survival.

A world where wearing a mask to protect your neighbor should be patriotic — not partisan. A world where the simple and factual statement — Black. Lives. Matter. — remains somehow, for some, impossible to say.

For everyone listening this morning let me remind you and know that –

This is not normal.

This is not over.

It's OK to not be OK.

And also know — this will not last forever.

This pandemic has been relentless and unforgiving. Just listen to these numbers: 214,000 and counting have died nationally from COVID-19.

Here in Cook County, our outlook has been just as bleak. 157,000 COVID positive cases. Out of those, more than 5,300 have succumbed to this deadly novel coronavirus. And as has been true throughout American history, our Black and Brown communities have been hit the hardest.

I've said this before, and I'll say it again — the most vulnerable among us are too often left to bear the brunt of what should be a collective burden. Your zip code should not determine your life expectancy, and your race should not determine your access to opportunity. And it is only through equity-based public policy that we will reach our goal of a more just and equal world.

But as it stands today, where you live and how you identify too often determines your quality of life. And COVID-19 has only exacerbated this fact.

Of the 50 largest U.S. cities, Chicago has the biggest life expectancy gap:

- In Pilsen on the southwest side of Chicago, the average life expectancy is 68.
- In Wilmette in the northern suburbs, it is 82.
- In West Garfield Park on the west side, it is 65.
- In Schaumburg in the northwest suburbs, it's 85.
- In Englewood on the south side of Chicago, it's 60, and in Streeterville — downtown — it's 90.

That's a range of 30 years.

This is unacceptable.

The world is now learning what happens when inequity in our society is allowed to fester. And in parallel with a pandemic, we are collectively learning the answer to the Langston Hughes' poignant question — what happens to a dream deferred?

The dreams of someone like George Floyd.

And Ahmaud Arbery.

Along with the dreams of those also not to be forgotten such as:

Tamir Rice,
Sandra Bland,
Eric Gardner,
Philando Castile,
Laquan McDonald,
and Breonna Taylor.

I'll repeat that name again: Breonna Taylor.

Breonna Taylor.

Now, now we all know what happens to our world when far too many dreams are so wrongly deferred. It explodes.

With an aching and angered heart, I peacefully marched side-by-side with so many of you this summer demanding justice. Justice for these Black lives snuffed out with impunity. And, like so many of you — I, too, am still awaiting justice. Justice in so many of these cases that has yet to be served.

The unrest — the UPRISINGS — this summer, forced all of us to pause and reflect.

I reflected on race — race in America, as well as the racism I personally experienced in my life. The searing moments that have shaped me to this day. I spoke candidly about my own upbringing, and one of the many times I was called “nigger.”

That vile, racist, hate-filled word that was hurled my way during my childhood far too often.

And of course, I am not alone. Too many people of color have similar stories of hate — and also of resilience.

And again, the too many dreams deferred this summer, would be more than enough to bear for one year.

But there was more.

The economy.

It tanked.

Travel stopped. Hotels became ghost towns. Sports teams played to empty seats. The sounds of the symphony were silenced.

Unemployment in Cook County rose to 17.4% by June 30th. That’s a far cry from the 4.2% estimated unemployment rate in Cook County just one year ago. Hard to believe that was just one year ago. It feels like we’ve lived a decade since then.

Unsurprisingly, Cook County’s budget outlook has been equally dreary. Due to the economic consequences brought on by the pandemic and unrest, we experienced hundreds of millions in revenue losses and were faced with an economic calamity we could never have foreseen in that original 2020 vision.

When I took office in 2010 — an actual decade ago — a near half billion dollar deficit stared us in the eyes. Since then we have made tough decisions, cut costs, spent wisely and worked within our means.

We hoped a rainy day would never come, but if it did — we hoped the work we put in, the sacrifices we made, the cuts we took, and the billions of dollars of budget gaps closed, would place us in a better position to weather the crises we hoped would never come.

Last year, we announced a historically low projected preliminary gap of \$18.7 million. This was the lowest preliminary gap of my administration and an almost 96 percent decrease from the \$487 million I encountered in my first year in office.

Fast-forward to June of this year in the middle of the pandemic. We were more than \$200 million in the red. That number was growing by nearly \$50 million each month. Before long we faced a projected \$320 million deficit.

This was worse than any rainy day we feared.

But despite the precipitous drop in revenue, through a decade of tough decisions and strategic management, I can stand here today and say –this budget I present before all of Cook County weathers the 2020 storm. So, today, I am proud to announce this \$6.9 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2021 is balanced with no tax increases. This proposed budget is balanced with no cuts to critical services or widespread layoffs. And this 2021 budget is balanced while increasing our investments in equity.

Let me repeat — in the midst of a historic pandemic this proposed budget will have no tax increase, no cuts to critical services and will be balanced while increasing our investments in equity. And, as you will see, never in Cook County’s history has a budget placed this much of its own corporate dollars into equity-focused investments.

We refused to balance this budget on the backs of the residents and businesses who need resources the most — especially during a pandemic.

We also made sure to balance this budget while continuing to increase contributions to our Pension Fund. Five years ago, we recognized a problem with the funding mechanism, and we took definitive steps to address it in a responsible manner.

To date, Cook County has provided supplemental pension payments of almost \$1.7 billion dollars above the required contribution, significantly reducing the unfunded pension liability — of which we are very proud.

We will not kick the can down the road, not even during a pandemic.

Still, I will not mince words here — this pandemic has dealt Cook County and its residents a catastrophic blow. And let me be abundantly clear, while we’re in this spot because of good, wise and tough decisions made over the last decade — Cook County cannot absorb another financial calamity in 2021.

No matter how we balance our books and continue to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, we cannot take another historic hit as we did in this year. Not without impacting the critical services our residents rely on. No one can. If we do — the outlook and outcome — will not be the same.

While we know next year’s budget will pose a tremendous challenge — today, we will focus on our 2021 budget.

Before I announce some of the highlights of this budget, I must say thank you.

Thank you to our residents for wearing masks, physically distancing and understanding that these sacrifices save lives.

Thank you to each of our separately elected officials who all collaborated with us to ensure that they tightened their belts without making deep cuts to their operations and the services they provide. This was not easy for them either. Without their help and shared sacrifice, today would not be possible.

Thank you to our staff for continuing to provide services during these immensely difficult times. And let me personally say thank you to our Sheriff's deputies for their hard work and sacrifice — especially during this pandemic.

Thank you to the front line workers and heroes at Cook County Health for rising to this extraordinary challenge by providing care to those in need.

Heroes like Victoria Furlow. Victoria has served as a paramedic at Cook County jail for more than 20 years. Her warm demeanor and her belief in humanity allows her to establish instant trust with her patients.

She is often the first Cermak employee a detainee will encounter following their arrival at the jail. She takes their vitals, documents their medical history and talks them through the intake process. Since April, performing COVID tests has been added to her responsibilities.

Victoria was asked by a reporter earlier this year why she does what she does. She responded: “because it’s my job and I love my job.”

For decades, Cook County Health has been filled with heroes like Victoria. They go about their jobs, quietly caring for the most vulnerable. COVID reminded us that their commitment is something that should be celebrated.

And let me remind everyone that despite operating only two of the 68 hospitals in Cook County, Provident and Stroger, Cook County Health provides over 50% of all charity care across the County. Cook County Health serves as a safety net for many residents.

This has been especially true for our undocumented neighbors throughout the county. We promise to always stand with you in your times of greatest need.

62-year-old Englewood resident Milton Walker is one of the many residents who are grateful for the staff and support at Cook County Health.

Like tens of millions of people across the nation, Milton recently lost his job as a bus operator. He became one of the millions of uninsured people in our country. That number will undoubtedly rise, I might add, should the Affordable Care Act be repealed.

Milton almost lost his toe due to his lack of medical care and coverage. That’s where Cook County Health stepped in. Milton became a patient at Provident Hospital. Milton received treatment at Provident and as he puts it:

“received nothing but great service.”

Milton wrote us to say “I feel that Provident Hospital is such an asset to the community and the services there should be sustained at all cost. Please don’t cut any of the services at Provident Hospital as it is a staple and asset to the African American community.”

Let me tell you this, Milton, you do not have to worry.

Cook County is fully committed to you, the surrounding community and ensuring everyone who needs it, receives high quality care at Provident.

There has been a lot of disinformation spread about this historic hospital — particularly on social media. Today, I will set the record straight.

We are strengthening Provident Hospital. It is here to stay. Period. I’ll say it again. We are strengthening Provident Hospital and it is Here. To. Stay.

How about we share that on Social Media: Hashtag ProvidentStrong.

In fact, over the next few months we will be reimagining Provident with a new lifestyle center that will provide programmatic and educational services to help patients manage chronic diseases. Many of these diseases disproportionately impact the Black community.

- We will open a brand new 12-chair Dialysis Center.
- We will expand existing diagnostic services which will include CT scans, MRIs and upgraded radiology rooms.
- And, we are creating a more robust out-patient surgery operation.

Yes, we will be consolidating two clinics — the near south clinic and Woodlawn Clinics — into Provident. We are not doing this to cut costs. We are doing this to IMPROVE SERVICES for the community.

Every single patient at those clinics will be able to keep their same doctor, access the same services they receive now — just at a new location that many already travel to: Provident Hospital.

Additionally, last year we announced plans for a more than \$200 million Provident Hospital redevelopment. Those plans are moving forward.

Again, hashtag — ProvidentStrong.

Why do we remain committed to these plans?

Why do we remain committed to our Black and brown communities?

Because this is what prioritizing equity looks like.

When it comes to healthcare, transportation, economic opportunity, public safety — County services that improve our residents’ quality of life — we are resolute in our commitment to equity, ESPECIALLY during a pandemic.

During these challenging times, transportation has been more relevant than ever before. Last year, during the County's first Racial Equity Week, I announced a fair transit pilot project. We wanted to ensure that residents on the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs had better access to transit.

We pledged to reduce fares on the Metra Electric and Rock Island lines, enhance service in Pace's Halsted Corridor and committed to the initial investment to make this three-year pilot happen.

I want to reassure you that we have not let the pandemic thwart our efforts. I'm proud to say this budget stays committed to the pilot and aims to launch in January 2021.

Why?

Because this is what prioritizing equity looks like — especially in a pandemic.

I am proud of this moving forward and the leadership of John Yonan in our Department of Transportation and Highways. He has been instrumental in fair transit while also shepherding a number of important road projects in our suburbs.

As we have taken a wholistic and equitable look at our roads, we are doing the same when it comes to criminal justice reform.

And what's more, we're doubling down.

In FY2021, the County plans to establish an Equity Fund and will invest an additional \$20 million in community-based services for residents involved, or at risk of becoming involved, with the criminal justice system.

This increase over the next two years will total nearly \$32.5M in funding directly to the community through the Justice Advisory Council, or JAC.

A recent evaluation by DePaul University found that JAC programs and practices are evidence-informed and have proven to be effective in delivering successful outcomes.

We saw in 2020 how violent crime has risen during the pandemic to levels that are even higher than our worst year experienced in 2016. We also know we cannot police our way out of this crisis.

We cannot police our way out of gun violence.

We've learned that we must use a public health approach to address the root causes of violence. That means investing in people and the communities in which they live.

That is why we are providing these additional funds for public safety programs in impacted communities.

This money will provide grants to community-based organizations who work directly with individuals who have been entangled in the criminal justice system.

We are using evidence-based programs to:

- Prevent and reduce violence BEFORE it starts
- Connect those in need to critical mental health and substance abuse services rather than detention and incarceration
- Reduce recidivism
- Bring restorative justice to more communities, and especially to young adults
- And so much more...

We are also investing more resources into our Public Defender's Immigration Unit in 2021, which will be one of the largest in the country when it launches. These times demand more from us than just being a Welcoming County. The PD Immigration Unit builds upon Cook County's commitment to being a fair and equal community for all residents regardless of their immigration status.

With an additional \$350,000 for staff, the Public Defender's Office can continue to fight the good fight protecting our immigrant communities. These dollars will ensure that clients are fully informed of potential immigration consequences of criminal cases.

This will allow more of our immigrant neighbors to make strategic decisions that will have an impact on their futures in this country.

I want to take a moment and thank Public Defender Amy Campanelli and her office for working diligently to make this Unit a reality. I would be remiss if I did not also thank the Defenders for All Coalition and all its members for their tireless advocacy, and Commissioners Anaya and Johnson for their leadership and collaboration during the initial planning process. Last but not least, I want to thank the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation for their financial commitment to support the Immigration Unit and this critical work.

Improving the lives of those who are involved in the criminal justice system is just one piece of the Equity Fund. We will also be investing in economic opportunity and essential services for our residents.

Over the next two years we will invest an additional \$20M in Economic Development. We will continue our expanded grant and assistance programs launched by the Bureau of Economic Development to help working families and small businesses survive the pandemic. We will also launch a Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program and an Early Resolution Program to help residents across Cook County at risk of losing their homes after the mortgage and eviction moratorium are lifted at the end of this year.

With some exemplary direction from Bureau Chief Xochitl Flores, the Bureau moved quickly to provide emergency support to working families, small businesses, gig workers, and nonprofits struggling to make ends meet. With our federal funding, we launched a comprehensive suite of programs through the Community Recovery Initiative.

I am grateful for all of the work Economic Development staff have done to put these new programs in place. In addition to providing assistance directly to residents and businesses in suburban Cook, we also prioritized helping municipalities throughout the County.

In late April, Cook County received \$429 million from the U.S. Treasury from the CARES Act and we've been compassionate stewards of these funds as we begin to recover. We created a nationally recognized model for allocating these funds, based on socioeconomic determinants and public health needs.

And we designed this approach to ensure these dollars are going to communities most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

From Cicero to Schaumburg, from Chicago Heights to Chicago Ridge we are distributing millions of dollars to municipalities right now. We worked on creating this formula with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. I am grateful to them for their support and I'm proud of the results.

But we're not out of the woods yet.

Let me be abundantly clear: the inequities I've been talking about today existed long before 2020. They have only been magnified, the gaps widened, and the health disparities worsened during this pandemic.

This is the cruel reality of rampant inequality.

It is exasperating.

It is infuriating.

But, it shouldn't come as a surprise.

Given our history, governments have an essential duty to use our resources and power to address these disparities and provide all residents equitable services, regardless of race, ethnicity or zip code.

If and when the next crisis hits, we can't repeat the same mistakes. Whether it be the Chicago heat wave of 1995, Hurricane Katrina, or a global pandemic, Cook County will not allow our vulnerable communities to be hit the hardest by every single catastrophe.

So, I want to thank you, the residents of Cook County, for your resilience. For your mutual aid and community organizing. It has been inspiring watching neighbors come together to help those in need.

I want to thank Bill Barnes and our team at Emergency Management and regional security who has distributed more than 1.5 million pieces of PPE — and counting — to Cook County communities.

I want to thank Cook County Health's Andrea Gibson, interim Chief Business Officer and interim Chief Executive Officer Aaron Galeener for their tireless efforts during this budget season.

I want to give a special thanks to my Chief of Staff, Lanetta Haynes Turner and our six Bureau Chiefs and their teams, who have helped guide us through this pandemic. CFO Ammar Rizki has done an incredible job and helped bring us to where we are today. And to Budget Director Annette Guzman who is going through her first budget season at the County, thank you for a remarkable job done under immense pressure. I also want to thank my Director of Communications, Nick Shields and our communications team: Alex Ensign, Hannah Fierle, Nick Mathiowdis, Ted Nelson and Jennifer Sanchez, who have all been working

non-stop since the pandemic began to ensure our residents have the information they need to survive during these challenging times.

Last but not least, I want to thank our Cook County Commissioners who have stood with us during these challenging times. Your leadership, thoughtful input and commitment to working with us on behalf of all of our residents is appreciated and will not be forgotten.

While we can't say with certainty what happens next with the coronavirus, I know this is a budget that works to address the fallout of the pandemic.

This is a moral document of which we can be proud.

This is a budget that reflects our values. It reflects our commitment to advancing equity in Cook County.

Together, we will stand up to any future challenges as ONE COOK COUNTY.

Thank you.

REFERRAL OF EXECUTIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021
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 Sims, that the Executive Budget Recommendation for Fiscal Year 2021 be referred to the Finance Committee. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Daley, second by Commissioner Sims, that the meeting do now adjourn to meet again on October 22, 2020, in accordance with County Board Resolution 19-6267. The motion prevailed and the meeting stood adjourned.



KAREN A. YARBROUGH
County Clerk