

Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL



Journal of Proceedings

Thursday, October 7, 2021

9:45 AM

**Special Meeting:
Presentation of the FY 2022 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**

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

October 1, 2021

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

Re: SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE for October 7, 2021 at 9:45 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 7, 2021, at the hour of 9:45 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 2022 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/KTVX82S>. The proceedings will be able to be viewed at cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings on October 7, 2021 starting at 9:45 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/KTVX82S>. Written testimony will also be accepted at 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 7, 2021 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>.

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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. Members of the public may view the proceedings online or in-person at 118 N. Clark Street, Room 560.

Very truly yours,

Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County Board President

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO ALL COMMISSIONERS

October 1, 2021

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 7, 2021 at the hour of 9:45 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 4, 2021 through Thursday, October 7, 2021.

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 7, 2021 at the hour of 9:45 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](https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/watch-live-board-proceedings).

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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

OFFICIAL RECORD

President Preckwinkle in the Chair.

CALL TO ORDER

At 9:45 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, Arroyo, Britton, Daley, Deer, Degnen, Gainer, Johnson, Lowry, Miller, Moore, K. Morrison, S. Morrison, Silvestri, Sims and Suffredin (17)

Absent: None (0)

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.

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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 C, 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.

There were no public speakers.

21-5619

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

EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

Department: Office of the President

Summary: Executive Budget, Cook County Budget Resolution and Annual Appropriation Bill for Fiscal Year 2022

Good Morning.

You have of course never heard me say this before but.... did you know I'm also a history teacher?

Once a teacher always a teacher. And, as a history teacher, I have one assignment for every Cook County resident today:

Get vaccinated, please.

That's the homework.

That's the assignment.

That's the continued call to action this morning.

Get vaccinated.

To those who are hesitant, you can save someone else's life — or your own — by doing one simple task — getting vaccinated.

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If you don't want to get vaccinated for me, please do it for Noemy Godina. Noemy is a nurse at Cook County Health's North Riverside Health Center. Since the clinic began administering the COVID-19 vaccine earlier this year, Ms. Godina has been dedicated to drawing up vaccines and helping folks get their shot.

At the end of the day, after filling hundreds of syringes, her fingers are swollen, battered and bruised.

Yet, without wavering, she continues her important work in memory of her father, who passed during this pandemic from COVID.

See, most vaccine vials contain about six doses, but every so often, in a small miracle that she attributes to her dad, she can draw out a full seventh dose.

Ms. Godina recently said: "That's an extra life you can help save today. That's someone else who will get a Father's Day."

So, if you don't want to get vaccinated for me, or Ms. Godina, then do it in memory of Rafael Rojas. Rafael was just 28 years old when this brilliant Little Village resident and artist was taken too soon by the pandemic.

He was the 11,000th person to succumb to this virus in Cook County. I'm urging you, don't allow yourself, or your loved one, to become another tally mark in that tragic number.

I believe we all wished that we would be talking about the return to normal this morning, but we are unfortunately not there yet.

This pandemic, which is somehow approaching nearly two years now, directly impacts the Cook County budget and the spending of your tax dollars.

Despite a significant drop in revenue caused by the pandemic, increased unemployment, sheltering at home and so much more, I can stand here today and say a decade of tough decisions and strategic management, along with the federal assistance, has helped create this 8-billion-dollar balanced budget. It's a budget that reflects our values, our commitment to advancing equity and creates a path to an even stronger County.

Because of our responsible efforts, roughly 2/3rds of the \$1 billion the County received from the federal American Rescue Plan Act will go directly to residents, important programs and transformative ideas.

What it will *not* go toward is paying down old debt or paying the minimum on a credit card. This funding can and will do *so* much good, so much more for the future of Cook County.

That's my administration's commitment to each and every Cook County resident. This is money for our residents, for our future, for a better Cook County. Just as we've done providing relief to folks at the height of the pandemic, we'll do the same as we look toward recovery. The good work we've done will guide the good work we'll do.

In the coming year, with an equity lens at the core of our decision-making process, we will use nearly a quarter of the billion American Rescue Plan Act dollars to fund programs in alignment with our Cook County Policy Roadmap. While our planning continues and these estimates could change based on new needs and challenges, here's a snapshot of how we will spend that money.

Today, I pledge \$80 million dollars — to start — with more money to follow, which will fund economic development initiatives. This will include the continued expansions of legal aid for housing and mortgage assistance, workforce development program and assistance to small businesses.

Thanks to the good work of my staff, the Bureau of Economic Development has already done transformative work in these areas since the pandemic began and this significant investment will build on our successes while doing even more good for our communities.

Because vulnerable and marginalized residents should be able to access services that improve their quality of life, we will invest \$60 million — to start — with more money to come, toward healthcare and access initiatives.

This will include developing social justice programs targeting the youth and young adults, further expansion of our vaccination programs as we continue to battle the coronavirus and programs that address basic needs such as cash and utility assistance, food assistance and childcare.

I will add that I am incredibly proud of our efforts last year to offer one-time \$600 cash assistance grant to nearly 20,000 of our residents.

People need stability and providing direct cash assistance is one critical way to contribute to the well-being of the people we serve.

This past March I said that historically in this country, the way in which we've dealt with poverty and overcoming hard times is to provide programs for those in need — but we haven't done the obvious — which is to provide those in need with what they need most — money.

Here in Cook County, that will soon change.

Tapping into our federal funds, we will build on our direct cash assistance program and enact a guaranteed income pilot next year.

Additionally, with these federal funds, millions will be allocated for alternatives to 9-1-1 for mental health crises, and expanded access to community-based mental health services.

We will also expand our efforts to address the digital divide in new ways — such as through broadband infrastructure investments and connecting families to services and devices.

In total we expect to spend \$40 million next year alone on smart community initiatives.

This is just the beginning of how we will spend our federal funds. Will it be a heavy lift? Of course. But we welcome the challenge. Our commitment to you, the people of Cook County, is that we have and will continue to approach this process with the same thoughtful, targeted and equitable approach we have taken since the start of the pandemic.

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We're asking you — please be patient. These programs — and the many more to come — have not been picked out of a hat or quickly thrown together. The ideas mentioned and the many more to come are the byproduct of months of internal and external engagement.

We're going above and beyond with our community engagement, which does take longer, but it's worth it to ensure that community voices are integrated into our decision-making with this funding. There is a saying that: "Nothing about us, without us, is for us." We want to hear from everyone throughout Cook County — and especially our most marginalized communities — about what YOU need to resiliently recover from this pandemic.

We've solicited ideas from Cook County employees, and we put out two surveys this summer that received over 30,000 responses combined. We are continuing to engage targeted communities with a series of town halls and listening sessions throughout October. You can find those on our new dedicated website: engagecookcounty.com.

We are still reviewing the survey responses from residents with innovative ideas and clear priorities for how we should spend our ARPA dollars. We're grateful for your feedback and know that your voices will continue to be heard.

Let me be clear — we are focused on recovery while remaining mindful of the big picture and our long-term fiscal stability. We are paying down pensions. We have put nearly \$2 billion extra dollars into the pension system in the last six years. \$2 billion.

It is something that other units of government just aren't doing or can't do. But because of our decade of tough fiscal decisions — Cook County can and will continue to do so. In fact, we have a plan in place that has a fully funded pension in less than 30 years. Now, I know that may not be exciting to people outside of our chief financial officer and our creditors, but it is important, and it speaks to a stronger, more stable Cook County.

It is an example of setting a goal and a plan and remaining committed to it. This is the same with how we've approached budgeting. This isn't smoke and mirrors. It is about making hard decisions and doing more with less.

In June, I announced a projected budget gap of roughly \$121 million. This was a sharp decline from the nearly \$410 million projected gap in FY2021. A combination of rebounding revenues, Federal relief and prudent financial management have contributed to the encouraging budget picture. The \$121 million projected gap marked one of the smallest gaps since I took office despite the financial challenges caused by the pandemic.

Today, I can stand here and say because of our decade of prudent fiscal management, we are once again in a position to not raise taxes this year. We will not hit residents in their pocketbooks during these uncertain and unimaginable times.

Let me say that again — we will once again not raise taxes.

The good work we've done will guide the good work we'll do.

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.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in July reported that black and brown people are two times more likely to die from covid and three times more likely to get sick and require hospitalization than a white person. What's more is that the uptick in violence and crime we've seen in our neighborhoods over the past year and a half has impacted these same Black and Brown communities disproportionately.

We also have to remember that these inequities we're talking about existed long before the pandemic. They have only been magnified, the gaps widened, and the disparities worsened during this pandemic. This is the cruel reality of inequality and systemic racism — and we as a government have an obligation to do something about it.

To address these disparities and disinvestments in Black, Brown, and other marginalized communities, last year Cook County established the Cook County Equity Fund and its Advisory Task Force. This year's budget will build on that commitment to fostering safe, thriving, and vital communities through additional investments in the Equity Fund. The fund, which is being led by my Chief of Staff Lanetta Haynes Turner, will maintain its \$40M commitment from last year with more to come in the years ahead.

We're proud to make this commitment because we know the need is great. We've seen how violent crime has risen during the pandemic to levels that are even higher than our worst year experienced in 2016.

Yet, we know that we cannot police our way out of this crisis.

We cannot police our way out of gun violence.

While some may look at our problems surrounding violent crime and deflect blame or point fingers, we stand committed to continuing the work toward real solutions to the issues we're seeing in our disinvested neighborhoods.

We've learned that we must use a public health approach to address the root causes of violence. That means using a preventative approach and investing in people and the communities in which they live. That means providing opportunities through community-based organizations for residents in disinvested communities.

Through the Equity Fund, Cook County will help tackle disinvestment in Black and Brown communities by supporting structural change and assisting with wealth building, wrap-around services and basic need supports. We're doing this to ensure that Cook County not only recovers equitably, but so that it will also have long lasting resiliency well into the future.

Critical to our efforts to combat the root causes of crime and violence is the Justice Advisory Council, or JAC. In the upcoming year, the JAC will provide grants to community-based organizations who work directly with individuals who have been entangled in the criminal justice system or are at-risk of becoming involved.

President Preckwinkle visited Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, a JAC Grantee, in 2019, and learned about their many job training programs, including screenprinting (shown above), urban agriculture and carpentry.

The grants we are pouring into the community through our JAC are changing lives. Just ask Cortez Austin.

Cortez is a JAC participant at Lawrence Hall this summer.

He recently reminisced to our staff about his life saying:

“Where I grew up, you were considered lucky if you made it to see 21. I am 24 years old and in my short time here on Earth, I have lost 24 people that I would consider close to me. That trauma and those negative experiences put me in survival mode early on.

I got wrapped up in the wrong crowd and started getting in trouble because of the choices I made and those I chose to have around me.”

Eventually, he was arrested and went to jail.

Once released, he learned about our programs funded by JAC at Lawrence Hall.

Today, he says, “When I got out of jail, I knew what I wanted to do with my life, but now I *really believe* that I can achieve it.”

That’s the restorative power of our Justice Advisory Council.

That is equity in action.

Yet our work toward a more equitable world doesn’t stop there. We aim to infuse equity in everything we do at Cook County. From transportation to technology, from housing to health, this guiding principle informs all of our actions.

In January, the County’s Department of Transportation and Highways launched Fair Transit South Cook, a pilot program designed to deliver transit equity by providing lower fares and increased service on Pace as well as Metra’s Electric and Rock Island lines.

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

We will look to increase mobility and accessibility for all residents by also advancing the first Countywide Bike Plan. The plan will refine our priorities for bicycle infrastructure, expand partnerships to build and maintain bicycle facilities and establish long-term goals for bicycling in Cook County.

Speaking of mobility, we’ve also made a concerted effort to reach our residents where they are, instead of making them travel to get vaccinated. We recognize that many people have difficulty getting to vaccine sites.

People might not have cars and live in areas where public transit is less reliable. People with disabilities, may have mobility issues. That’s why Cook County Health and the Cook County Department of Public

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Health launched a hyperlocal strategy to provide vaccines to anyone, anywhere, in their own home, or given people the option to take a rideshare service — free of charge.

We're targeting this strategy in eleven priority communities at high risk with lower vaccination rates. And we're knocking on doors in these eleven communities to get the word out for those who might not have access to internet.

Because this is what prioritizing equity looks like — especially in a pandemic. It means meeting people where they ARE, instead of expecting them to come to you.

Despite overseeing only two of the 68 hospitals in the County, over the last year we provided more than 50% of charity care in the county. This has totaled more than \$384 million over the last year. We do it and will continue to, because this is what prioritizing equity looks like — especially in a pandemic.

In the wake of the pandemic and with the continued threat and the now expiration of the eviction moratorium, we have worked to establish much needed programs to assist renters and landlords with over \$70 million in funding for rental and utility assistance.

We were one of the first jurisdictions nationally to have rental and utility assistance program up and running and we distributed close to 95% of the funding dedicated for this purpose. And, we opened the application process this week, to distribute another round of \$75 million to renters to ensure our residents can stay in their homes during this difficult time.

We do it because this is what prioritizing equity looks like — especially in a pandemic.

This budget will also expand units within our Department of Environment and Sustainability to assist business and local governments with pollution prevention and resiliency planning, which is becoming more and more critical as we see increased impacts from shifting weather patterns and climate change.

We will continue remediation efforts of brownfields in the west and south suburbs.

We do it because this is what prioritizing equity looks like — especially in a pandemic.

This is only possible because of the tireless work of my team. I've asked so much of them, and they have stepped up to the challenge time and time again.

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 and Dean Constantino, our Manager of Financial Planning and Analysis and our entire budget team.

I'd like to thank our entire Communications team for all of their efforts and Last but not least... I want to thank our Cook County Commissioners who continue to stand 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.

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In closing, as Board President and County Commissioners, we are stewards of these tax dollars, tasked with using these funds to benefit the people we serve. I know we all understand that responsibility and appreciate the opportunity to continue our good work on behalf of Cook County residents.

I submit this budget for your consideration to continue our efforts to move beyond relief and look toward recovery. Building on the work we've already done, the work we will do is certain to stabilize and strengthen the County we all call home.

Thank you.

REFERRAL OF EXECUTIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022
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 2022 be referred to the Finance Committee. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Sims, that the meeting do now adjourn to meet again at the same time and same place on October 7, 2021, in accordance with County Board Resolution 20-5487.

The motion prevailed and the meeting stood adjourned.



KAREN A. YARBROUGH
County Clerk