



**ANDREW MANAR**  
CHAIRMAN

# MACOUPIN COUNTY BOARD

215 SOUTH EAST STREET • P.O. BOX 535 • CARLINVILLE, IL 62626  
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**JULIA WATSON**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON

**PETE DUNCAN**  
CLERK

**GABE SPRINGER**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

## BOARD MEMBERS

District 1  
MORRIE FRASER  
LARRY LUX  
ROBERT VOJAS

District 2  
ANDREW MANAR  
OLIVER SCHWALLENSTECKER  
FRANCIS WIESEMAN

District 3  
FRANK S. LONG  
PAUL QUIRK  
JULIA H. WATSON

District 4  
MARK DRAGOVICH  
JOHN GAY  
DAVID THOMAS

District 5  
JOE NOVAK  
RUTH ANN POMATTO  
JIM ZIRKELBACH

District 6  
JUDY BACON  
WILLIAM A. HARDING  
ROBERT K. QUARTON

District 7  
BERNIE KIEL  
BILL NICHELSON  
GLENN NICHELSON

District 8  
FRANCES GOODMAN  
LEE LOBUE  
TONY WIGGINS

District 9  
RAYMOND COATNEY  
LYNDAL HERSCHELMAN  
VERYL REIHER

Macoupin County Enquirer Democrat  
Letter to the Editor:

Last week Macoupin County Board Member Veryl Reiher brought to the forefront through a Letter to the Editor two important issues facing the future of the Macoupin County Board. First, Mr. Reiher advocated for reducing the cost of operating the County Board by cutting the pay of County Board members rather than by reducing the size of the County Board by one-third. Second, Mr. Reiher advocated for monthly County Board meetings to be held at night, rather than during the day.

Reducing the cost of County government by making it more efficient has been a cornerstone of the County Board since the multiple mine closures in 2008 when the county government was faced with incredible financial hurdles. I would like to point out the following relevant fact: today, the County's general operating fund spends about the same amount of money to operate County Government than it did a decade ago in 2001. This accomplishment has been achieved through balancing the budget by working together with county officials and employee unions by making County government more efficient. Prior to the County Board's reorganization in December 2004, County government was running record deficits at a time when revenues were coming in at a record pace. Back then, the economy was headed in the right direction but our County Budget was headed in the wrong direction. County government was undisciplined and that lack of discipline threatened core County services.

To Mr. Reiher's point, the County Board was placed under the same microscope as every other department. The County Board has never been immune to budget reductions—nor should it ever be in my opinion. To the contrary, prior to Mr. Reiher's arrival on the County Board, immediately following the mine closures and facing an estimated \$800,000 operating deficit, the first action the County Board took was to place a referendum on the ballot to ask voters to weigh in on the prospect of a smaller County Board. Prior to any other action, the County Board turned the focus on itself. Macoupin County voters responded and approved the referendum to reduce the size of the Board with over 61% of the vote in November 2008. Listening to the voters, I support the outcome of the referendum.

Mr. Reiher presents cutting Board member's pay as an alternative to reducing the size of the County Board as an either/or proposition. I would advocate, though, that these two options are not mutually exclusive. Staring at our immediate financial challenges including ongoing delayed revenue distributions from the State, a 22% hike in employee health insurance premiums and union contract negotiations, perhaps the County Board should look at both options simultaneously in the near future.

To Mr. Reiher's second point, members of the County Board have attempted to change our monthly meeting time to the evening. Those efforts which I support, though, have fallen



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short in terms of the number of votes needed to make that change. I agree with Mr. Reiher that evening meetings could increase public participation; something that I believe would be good for County Government. An active and informed electorate supported by healthy public participation is essential to the success of any elective body.

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ROBERT VOJAS

Mr. Reiher also stated in his letter that meetings held in the evening would help toward filling the need of having younger people serve on the County Board. Another relevant fact: until the election of County Board Member Lee Lobue of Carlinville on the County Board this past election, I've spent many years as both the youngest member of the County Board while simultaneously serving as Chairman. The willingness to accept younger representation and leadership exists in Macoupin County and we should cultivate that willingness to serve.

District 2  
ANDREW MANAR  
OLIVER SCHWALLENSTECKER  
FRANCIS WIESEMAN

While seldom talked about, partisanship plays little if any role in fashioning the actions of the Macoupin County Board. In the coming months, the County Board will be making these decisions not behind closed doors but in public. I am confident that the decisions that are made by the individuals serving on the County Board regarding these two issues will be made not as democrats and republicans, but as elected representatives who have chosen to serve their County.

District 3  
FRANK S. LONG  
PAUL QUIRK  
JULIA H. WATSON

I appreciate and respect Mr. Reiher's willingness to go on the record. It is through public discussions and collaboration such as these that our County government produces a better product for our fellow taxpayers.

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