

THE Beacon-News

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Kane County OKs reallocations of COVID-19 relief

Spending deadline for funds approaching at end of 2026

By Molly Morrow
AURORA BEACON-NEWS

With the deadline to spend the funds approaching at the end of 2026, the Kane County Board is continuing to reallocate its remaining COVID-19 relief money to county projects.

Several transfers approved Tuesday at the board's regular meeting total over \$600,000 and direct funds toward projects in building management, IT and the State's Attorney's Office.

The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, commonly called ARPA, was signed into law by former President Joe Biden in 2021, with the goal of helping the United States deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and help out the economy. Part of that relief package was

a \$350 billion program to distribute aid to state and local governments, meant to support their response to and recovery from the pandemic.

Local entities nationwide had until the end of 2024 to allocate the ARPA funds they received, according to the Treasury Department. The funds can be spent through the end of 2026, but can only go toward projects or services authorized before Dec. 31, 2024.

Kane County received about \$103 million in total, and in the

years since has pursued a variety of programs and capital projects.

Reallocations of the funds the county has left are essentially transfers from one county project to another. When funds are available because a different project came in under the amount it had been allotted, the county is able to move those funds to another project.

The county has made several such transfers in recent months.

Approved Tuesday as part of the meeting's consent agenda were

transfers topping \$600,000.

One of the measures will transfer \$200,000 from a 16th Judicial Circuit Court technology modernization project to an access control project in the county's Building Management Department. According to the county, the former project, which was slated to use a little over \$3 million in pandemic funds, is coming in under budget.

The county will also be transfer-

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East Aurora High School varsity boys volleyball head coach Jennifer Wilson and libero Edgard Junez shake hands with their Yorkville opponents before the game at Yorkville High School, April 7. JOSH BOLAND/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

A WISH YEARS IN THE MAKING

Boys volleyball team finally a match for East Aurora High

By Molly Morrow | AURORA BEACON-NEWS

Volleyball has always been a part of Edgard Junez's life.

His parents played the sport when they were younger, he said, and his older sisters went through the long-standing girls volleyball program at East Aurora School District 131. His younger sister in middle school plays, too.

"Volleyball's always been around me," Junez, 17, said. "It really has a spot in my heart."

But he didn't have the opportunity to be part of a school team — until this spring, during his junior year.

After years of attempts to start a boys volleyball team at East Aurora D131, the inaugural East Aurora High



Abraham Hernandez, No. 31, cheers with East Aurora High School junior varsity volleyball teammates in a game against Yorkville High School, April 7.

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Oswego OKs grant for property renovation

Project will bring new pizza restaurant to village's downtown

By Linda Girardi
FOR THE AURORA BEACON-NEWS

The Oswego Village Board recently awarded a grant to fund substantial renovations to a downtown property at 5 S. Madison St. that will be home to a new pizza restaurant.

The applicant EJ Vision LLC, which owns the property, was awarded \$40,000 in grant funding from the village for a "fast casual wood-fired pizza" place called Billy Bricks, which already has several locations operating in the Chicago area.

The general purpose of the village's Economic Development Incentive Award program is to aid in property improvements which enhance Oswego's downtown business district, Oswego Economic Development Director Kevin Leighty said in a report to trustees.

The building, across from the Oswego Public Library, has been vacant since 2023, Leighty said.

"As a result of their recent deal with Billy Bricks, the applicant will be completing a substantial buildout and interior renovations to accommodate a new restaurant tenant. They're requesting the maximum \$40,000 grant award for their project which is valued at approximately \$130,000," Leighty said in a report before the board's vote.

The scope of work includes the installation of a grease trap, a new fire sprinkler and alarm monitoring system for the site and water and sewer service line upgrades to support the new building improvements, he said.

Another application for grant funds for the restaurant project will likely be coming, the economic development director said.

"Due to the extent of the work needed to convert this building to a functional restaurant space, the tenant Billy Bricks will be seeking additional grant funding inde-

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Festival in downtown Aurora to feature more than 30 food trucks



By David Sharos
FOR THE AURORA BEACON-NEWS

More than 30 food trucks are set to take part in the city of Aurora's Spring Food Truck Festival on Friday, organizers said.

The fest, to run from 5 to 9 p.m. on Benton Street between River Street and Broadway in downtown Aurora, will feature "a diverse collection of top-tier food trucks," said Aurora Special Events Coordinator Christina DiCristofano.

"With over 30 trucks set to come out, plus a DJ and no admission fee, we are proud to provide everyone with an opportunity to visit Aurora and enjoy all that the city has to offer," DiCristofano said in a press release.

Along with the food trucks, the event will also include music and free family-friendly activities such as face painting, balloon animals and bubble shows, the release said.

Jon Zaghoul, communications manager for the city of Aurora, said the event will be one of two food truck fests to be held in the city this year, with the other planned in the fall. Last year the city had three food truck festivals, including one in the summer.

"Attendance is really, really high at the spring and the fall ones and while a lot of people come in the summer, the attendance is so much higher and there seems to be a much bigger demand for the spring and the fall, so we're choosing to go back to just one in the spring and the fall,"

he said.

Regarding this season's opener, Zaghoul said organizers are "expecting tons of people to come."

"This is the first one we've had since last fall and we're expecting a great turnout and hopefully good weather," he said. "This is such a popular festival. Year after year, we get thousands of people, not just from the city itself but from surrounding areas to come and sample the delicious cuisine that's going to be on display, and we expect that to be the case again this year."

Zaghoul praised the staff from the city's Community Events Division, who he said "do a really great

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A previous food truck fest draws a crowd to downtown Aurora. The city's Spring Food Truck Festival will run from 5 to 9 p.m. May 15, on Benton Street between River Street and Broadway in downtown Aurora. CITY OF AURORA

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY H: 64 L: 54
THU. H: 62 L: 53
FRI. H: 60 L: 49

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