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The HERALD-NEWS

Future video gaming banned in unincorporated Will County

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JOLIET — Future video gaming will be banned in unincorporated areas of Will County under an ordinance change approved by the Will County Board Thursday.

The vote was 13-9, with some board members absent. Under the ordinance, licensed fraternal organizations, truck stops and other businesses that have video gambling would not be affected. Businesses that submitted a license application prior to enactment of the ordinance would also not be affected, according to documents. County Board Speaker Jim Moustis, R-Frankfort, [brought forth the idea last month](#).

Several spoke in favor of the possible video gambling prohibition during the public comment period on Thursday. Many argued it does more harm than good.

Melynda Litchfield, a former gambling addict who's now an advocate for the organization Stop Predatory Gambling, was among those who spoke.

“This is not who we are. A decent civilized government does not repair itself on the heels of creating personal debt, anguish and misery,” Litchfield said.

She said there are not enough safeguards in place to prevent the pitfalls of addiction, noting Gov. Bruce Rauner's recent suspension of grant funding for social services, meaning a reduction in addiction

help services available statewide.

“This should weigh heavily on your decision,” Litchfield said.

In other news:

- The County Board voted 13-9 to deny a special use permit to Joliet-based NR1 Transport for the company's plan to operate a truck terminal at U.S. Route 30 and Gougar Road in New Lenox Township. The site developer, Z Brothers Properties Inc., previously agreed to more than a dozen conditions, but it wasn't enough to sway the entire board.

The board's Land Use Committee voted against the plans earlier this month, as did the county's Planning and Zoning Commission. Several people spoke out against the truck terminal plans on Thursday, including an attorney from the nearby [Providence Catholic High School](#).

- The County Board voted 17-4 on a resolution urging Illinois officials to hold off on state condemnation cases regarding the planned South Suburban Airport near Peotone. The controversial regional airport is among the major projects Gov. Bruce Rauner has put on hold pending further financial review.

- The County Board unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the Will County State's Attorney's Office to proceed with a condemnation lawsuit with property owners along Briggs Street, from Mills Road to U.S. Route 52.

The plan is to resurface all of Briggs Street from Mills Road to U.S. 52., requiring the county to acquire land from property owners in the area. Eight parcels of land are listed in the county resolution.

If negotiations fall short and the matter ends up in condemnation, it would be [another in a string of condemnation suits](#) filed against property owners in recent months, including a suit involving planned improvements at 147th Street and Gougar Road in Lockport.