



## DuPage Co. votes to keep lobbyists

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Published: 12/4/2007 3:47 PM

DuPage County will keep its lobbyists in Springfield until the General Assembly's roller-coaster session ends.

Despite questions about their usefulness, board members agreed to keep Hadfield Consulting L.L.C. and V.A. Persico Consulting Inc. employed until Jan. 9.

The two consulting firms' contracts ended last week, and because Illinois lawmakers are in the midst of an extended session it was necessary to retain them, staff members contended. The decision will cost the county about \$12,500 more.

Board member J.R. McBride objected to the original recommendation to extend the lobbyists' contracts until Feb. 28 during a legislative committee meeting Tuesday.

"We're in a budget crisis," McBride said. "Our lobbyists are our state senators and state representatives.

The county had set its hopes on the General Assembly passing a cigarette tax that would have generated extra revenues for DuPage, but hopes of that are dimming.

Committee members agreed to seek proposals from a variety of firms before hiring state lobbyists again in 2008.