

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Blake Mulder, Terrance Augustine, Joseph Brehler, Brian Droscha, Brian Lautzenheiser, Jim Mott and Jeanne Pearl-Wright.

ALSO PRESENT: Tim Vandermark, Robert Robinson, Tom Reich, Jeff Cook, Chad Powers, Claudine Williams, Doug Lloyd, John Fuentes and Connie Sobie.

The December 16, 2022 regular meeting of the Ways and Means Committee was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Chairman Mulder.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2022 and November 28, 2022 Ways and Means Committee meetings. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

No Public Comment.

The 2023 Remonumentation Grant application was presented (attached) and discussed. A resolution appointing the remonumentation representative, Ron Lester, and related agreement for 2023 and a resolution authorizing agreements with surveyors was presented (attached). Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend approval of the resolution to appoint the 2023 County remonumentation representative and related contract and the resolution to authorize agreements with surveyors to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Tim Vandermark reviewed the preliminary 2022 Equalization Studies (attached) with the Committee. The studies indicate the following changes from the previous year: Agricultural 5.15% increase, Commercial 6.07% increase, Industrial 2.62% increase, Residential 10.07% increase and Developmental 3.48% increase. The total increase to Real Property was 8.44%. Mr. Vandermark discussed the changes in each classification and by local unit. Discussion held regarding rental cost increases and housing affordability.

Equalization Director Tim Vandermark presented and reviewed a resolution to amend the 2022 Apportionment Report to include the .50 of a mill County Parks Millage. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend approval of the Resolution Amending the 2022 Apportionment Report to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The positions update was presented and reviewed (attached). Commissioner Augustine moved to refill the vacancies as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Information regarding the Sheriff's recruitment efforts was presented (attached).

A program overview of the Sheriff's Office Cadet Program, as recommended by the Public Safety Committee, was presented (attached) including a proposed job description (attached). Controller Fuentes provided a an overview of the program concept. The cadets would begin employment as part-time, less than 29 hours per week at \$15.00 per hour. As determined by the Sheriff's Office, approved cadets may be sponsored to attend an approved police academy once meeting the MCOLES minimum eligibility requirements. Sponsorship will be contingent on hiring conditions mutually agreed upon by the Sheriff and the cadet candidate. The cadet will receive full-time wage and benefits as determined by the Board of Commissioners. Failure to successfully complete the program, enter the agreed upon police academy or failure to attain a passing score on their MCOLES licensing exam, will result in employment separation from the Sheriff's Office and require repayment of the County investment in the academy tuition. The conditions of the agreement are being reviewed by legal counsel. There was discussion regarding the terms of an agreement related to the repayment of tuition. Multiple options were discussed related to establishing an agreement with the employee. It was reported approval is being sought to create the cadet program for cadets to begin employment while attending their college courses. An agreement for future sponsorships is currently under development by legal counsel and must be approved by the Committee prior to a sponsorship being able to occur. Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to approve the creation of the position of cadet based on the presented job description and direct staff to finalize an employment agreement for sponsorships for consideration. Commissioner Mott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

It was reported that the Committee had previously provided the Controller with temporary authorities to attempt to address retention and recruiting issues, which expires December 31, 2022. These included the authorization of overtime pay within exempt classifications due to staffing levels and workload, additional flexibility to adjust the salary of an incumbent employee if a new hire was placed at a higher step on the scale in order to recruit the new employee and also allowed a limited authority of advanced accrual of vacation time for a new hire instead of the current policy in which it takes a full year to accrue the leave time. It is recommended to continue this temporary authority regarding these personnel policy provision discussed to be used as needed through end of June 2023. Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to extend the authority through June 30, 2023. Commissioner Mott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A job description for the Controller/Administrator position was presented with a proposed change to the educational requirements. Commissioner Augustine moved to approve the job description as revised. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

It was reported that Eaton County is required to report its I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification utilizing the federal E-Verify system. Human resources utilizes a software provider, NEOGOV, for its hiring and onboarding process and this resolution will authorize the County to submit its E-Verify through the NEOGOV system at no additional cost. Commissioner Droscha moved to recommend approval of the resolution to authorize NEOGOV to act as an E-Verify Agent, as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The October Health Insurance Expenditure report was presented (attached). The report indicates an unfavorable variance of (\$700,717) compared to the budget projection for both the County and Health Department. The County's portion is an unfavorable variance of (\$610,503). The County's active employees' unfavorable variance is (\$459,141) and the retirees' unfavorable variance is (\$151,352).

Excess Workers Compensation insurance one year renewal by Midwest Employers Casualty was presented (attached). Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to approve the renewal proposal with Midwest Employers Casualty for one year, as presented. Commissioner Mott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

An update of the Child Care Fund was presented and discussed (attached). Based on the updated projection of revenues and expenditures the estimated fund balance at September 30, 2022 is \$169,715. Previous action by the Committee was taken to reduce transfers to the Child Care Fund from the General Fund and the Juvenile Millage Fund to retain a balance of approximately \$150,000. Based on discussion regarding the Youth Facility expansion utilizing the Raise the Age Grant funds, the consensus was to retain the full transfers within the Child Care Fund for potential construction related expenses.

It was reported responses to requests for proposal for the Raise the Age grant proposal for Youth Facility expansion were received from Granger Construction and Clark Construction on December 8, 2022. A breakdown of the initial proposal information was provided (attached). Facilities Manager Chad Powers was present to provide information regarding the proposals. Discussion held. Mr. Powers will work to verify information and provide additional clarification and comparison on the proposals. Mr. Fuentes indicated Judge Byerley, Juvenile Administrator Amanda Pollard and Youth Facility Director Jeremy Mulvany are working to evaluate the proposals. Ms. Pollard has been working on a proposal with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to extend the current grant term set to expire September 30, 2023, as a work project that would extend through the completion of the construction.

Controller Fuentes provided an update to the status of the 2022/2023 Public Improvement project expenditures (attached). Mr. Powers was present to discuss the renovations to the Health Department Clinic. Commissioner Brehler moved to approve the contract with Nielsen Construction for the Health Department Clinic renovations, as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

It was reported the USDA lease in the 551 Building expires on December 31, 2022. The Controller's Office contacted the USDA regarding a lease extension. Given the current location has been leased by the Agency for twenty years additional approvals are necessary to consider an extension of a new long term lease. The current lease terms will remain in place until the USDA recommends a new long term lease.

Chairperson Mulder recessed the meeting for a brief break at 10:39 a.m.

Chairperson Mulder reconvened the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

An update of the American Rescue Plan identified uses and allocations was presented (attached).

Treasurer Bob Robinson was present to discuss the request for funding for a foreclosure prevention program through both Capital Area Community Services (CACS) and Housing Services Mid-Michigan (HSMM) he proposing the total of \$125,000 divided equally between both agencies for staffing the programs to provide effective services. The State of Michigan is no longer providing funding to non-profit agencies for these services. Treasurer Robinson indicated both agencies have proven successful in their foreclosure prevention programs by providing counseling services. Treasurer Robinson indicated the ARP fund investments have earned over \$150,000, so the request does not affect the County's ARP allocation.

Mr. Fuentes presented a memo regarding the extension and revision to the temporary employment recruiting and retention initiative expiring on January 31, 2023 and reviewed the recommendation (attached). The revision to the program is changing the frequency from a monthly payment to a semi-annual basis and eligibility would be considered after the completion of each semi-annual period. The amount would remain at \$3,000 for the annual period, but consideration for \$5,000 for the positions of Deputy, Corrections Deputy, Sheriff Command Officers and Youth Specialists. The recommendation would require an additional

\$1,565,000 to be allocated from the ARPA funds. The extension of the temporary employment recruiting and retention initiative would require letters of understanding with the County's represented employee groups.

Commissioner Augustine moved to extend the temporary employment recruiting and retention initiative as proposed in the Controller's memo. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. There was discussion regarding future funding in the form of modifications to the County's longevity payment program outside of the ARPA funding. Motion carried. Commissioner Brehler opposed.

It was reported the Eaton County Broadband Communication Action Team received six proposals from internet service providers (ISPs) to increase accessibility of reliable internet connectivity throughout the County (attached). Proposals were evaluated and individually scored by the members of the team using the identified RFP criteria. The team recommended ACD.net as the ISP to develop a partnership agreement to pursue grant funding through Realizing Opportunities with Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN) program in three of the seven identified zones within their proposal. The Information Technology and Communication Committee moved to approve working with ACD.net to negotiate a broadband wired infrastructure partnership agreement to pursue a ROBIN grant application and recommended the County's unallocated American Rescue Plan funds be allocated as matching funds in the grant application in the recommended bid zones, which would utilize \$2,674,266 of the ARP funds. It was reported there is not a required match, but would assist in scoring the grant application. There was discussion regarding continuing to pursue funding for future expansion to cover all zones within the County. Claudine Williams was present to discuss the upcoming ROBIN grant application process, expected to open the second week of January 2023. Additional funding could be sought for expansion through subsequent funding opportunities expected to be made available near the end of 2023. Commissioner Augustine moved to allocate \$2,674,266 of the ARP funds to the broadband project as described and \$125,000 to the foreclosure prevention program as described. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget amendments were presented (attached). Mr. Fuentes provided an explanation of the amendments. Commissioner Brehler moved to recommend approval of the 2021/22 budget amendments including the addition of the Foreclosure Prevention Program allocation of \$125,000, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fuentes presented a list of one expiring citizen appointment on December 31, 2024 for the Eaton County Building Authority (attached).

A resolution to establish the Commissioner Compensation effective January 1, 2023 with a proposed change to increase the per-meeting payment from \$35 to \$70 for commissioners and non-commissioners appointed by the Board of Commissioners was presented (attached). There was discussion regarding the proposed change. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend approval of the proposed resolution to establish the Commissioner Compensation effective January 1, 2023 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. Motion carried. Commissioners Droscha, Brehler and Mott opposed.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend approval of the payment of the claims against the County in the amount of \$726,880.38 and immediate claims in the amount of \$11,609,445.12 to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Mulder indicated he had completed the Controller's evaluation for 2022.

An employment agreement between the Eaton County Board of Commissioners and Connie Sobie was presented (attached). Chairman Mulder discussed the interview conducted by himself and Commissioners

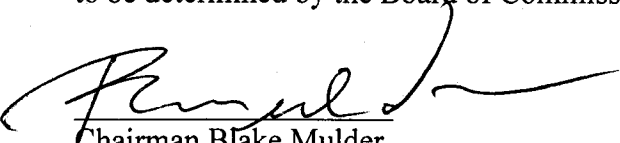
Mott and Augustine and the interview committee. Based on that interview, the interview committee is recommending Connie Sobie for the Controller/Administrator position. Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend approval of the employment agreement as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Mulder indicated Connie Sobie is requesting to allow John Fuentes to provide assistance through the annual audit on a temporary hourly basis. The consensus of the Committee was to approve the request at the Controller's discretion, as needed.

Prosecutor Doug Lloyd was present to express his disagreement with the retention and recruitment premium program extension including an increase for certain employee groups. He indicated it will be difficult to try to explain to his employees why some employees are receiving a higher amount especially considering his office is also dealing with retention and recruitment difficulties of its own and the same is true for other offices not being considered for the increased amount. He asked the Committee to consider extending the program to all with the same \$5,000 for all County employees.

Chairperson Mulder adjourned the meeting at 12:27 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Way and Means Committee will be held in January 2023, at a date and time to be determined by the Board of Commissioners at its Organizational Meeting scheduled for January 3, 2023.



Chairman Blake Mulder