WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2024

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Commissioners Blake Mulder, Terrance Augustine, Joe Brehler, Jeanne Pearl-Wright, and Barbara Rogers.
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Commissioners Brian Droscha and Brian Lautzenheiser.
ALSO PRESENT:	Commissioners Jim Mott, Scott Hansen, Frank Holmes; Connie Sobie, Doug Lloyd, Ben Dawson, Dan Skiver, James McCloy, Andrea Cherwinski, Melissa Ballard, Chad Powers, Zack Elkins, and Eric Daley.

The February 16, 2024 meeting of the Ways and Means Committee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Mulder.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all.

Controller/Administrator Connie Sobie requested to add item 16a. Labor Relations Command Officers Association of Michigan (COAM) letter of agreement. Commissioner Augustine moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Rogers moved to approve the January 12, 2024 minutes. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited public comment: Judy Ash, a County employee, spoke requesting the Commissioners to consider a monthly limit on the cost-sharing of retiree's health insurance to $200.00 per retiree. Prosecutor Doug Lloyd spoke in support of the Financial Stability Work Group and the continued work they are doing to stabilize the County for the future and requested the Board pass the proposed resolution. He also spoke in support of agenda item 16, Labor Relations Negotiations, demonstrating the Board's continued support for Public Safety and the pressures that have been felt with on-going staffing shortages in this area. He recommended the Board approve the settlements and continue to show support for public safety.

Deputy Administrator/Human Resources Director Ben Dawson explained proposed changes to the retiree medical insurance plan from the current pay-as-you-go plan to a Medicare Advantage Plan. Dan Skiver (from Brown and Brown) and James McCloy (from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan) were present to answer questions regarding the changes. Commissioner Augustine requested to know how many retirees this change would impact. Andrea Cherwinski (Benefits Specialist) indicated that this would have an immediate impact on approximately 110 retirees and spouses of the County. Discussion held. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the resolution to approve transitioning to Medicare Advantage for Retirees Health to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented the positions update. He spoke about the open positions in the Sheriff's Office. He also spoke about the Drain office and some possible changes to positions due to the needs of the office as well as the Treasurer's Office and coordination with the Controller's Office. There is no formal action at this time. Commissioner Augustine moved to authorize filling the vacant positions. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented a request for special consideration to waive the vesting schedule for the County's Health Care Savings Plan for an employee due to serious health issues. Commissioner Brehler moved to approve the waiver. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The health insurance report for calendar year 2023 was presented. The report indicates an unfavorable variance of ($532,806) compared to revenues received. Finance Director Melissa Ballard indicates there is a final reconciling item pending that will improve the unfavorable variance, but the exact dollar amount is unknown at this time. The final 2023 health insurance report will be provided at the next committee meeting.

Facilities Director Chad Powers presented the public improvement update. Mr. Powers indicated there was a gas leak identified at the Courthouse Complex between the Health Department and the MDHHS buildings. Consumers Energy was notified and the leak was fixed. There was no threat to employees inside and Consumers Energy remained on site to ensure the area was safe. The JCI project addressing safety concerns by installing gutters and downspouts is almost completed. He will have more information next month about the space management project in the courthouse. Zack Elkins, the on-site Project Manager from Granger Construction, provided an update on the expansion of the Youth Facility. The project is progressing on-time.

Technology Services Director Eric Daley and Mr. Powers presented a Capital Improvement Plan that includes a five-year projection of the needs of the County's building and technology infrastructures, using a threshold of $25,000.00 and up for all identified areas. Work continues on this plan which will be included with the County's annual budget process.

Budget amendments were presented. Ms. Sobie provided a detailed explanation of the amendments. Commissioner Brehler explained the request for the County to contribute to the State of Michigan's Housing Plan. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the budget amendments to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to approve the application for Title IV-E Child and Parent Legal Representation grant was presented. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the resolution to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to authorize the Financial Stability Work Group to evaluate the long-term health of the County finances and make recommendations was presented. Commissioner Brehler moved to recommend the resolution to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of $645,104.16 and immediate and electronic claims in the amount of $9,782,340.18 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Pearl-Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

The 2024/2025 Budget Schedule was presented for review. Discussion held. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend approval of the 2024/2025 Budget Schedule as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Augustine moved to add an additional limited public comment before entering into closed session. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

No limited public comment.

Chairperson Mulder recessed the meeting for a break at 10:17 a.m.

Chairperson Mulder reconvened the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Commissioner Brehler moved to enter closed session under Section 15.268 Sec 8.(e) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss trial and settlement strategy in connection with pending litigation in the matter of Case No. 1:23-cv-00023-PLM-SJB Nicholas Sanderson v Eaton Co., et al. Seconded by Commissioner Augustine. Roll call vote: Augustine – yes, Brehler – yes, Droscha – yes, Lautzenheiser – yes, Pearl-Wright – yes, Rogers – yes, Mulder – yes. Motion carried.

The Committee resumed the open meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Commissioner Augustine moved to approve the recommendation of legal counsel regarding the pending litigation to the Board of Commissioners. Seconded by Commissioner Brehler. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Brehler moved to enter closed session under Section 15.268 Sec 8.(e) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Roll Call Vote: Augustine – yes, Brehler – yes, Droscha – yes, Lautzenheiser – yes, Pearl-Wright – yes, Rogers – yes, Mulder – yes. Motion carried.

The Committee resumed the open meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the agreements with the Sheriff Non-Supervisory and Sheriff Command bargaining units and a Letter of Understanding concerning an employee, to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the letter of agreement with COAM to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

No limited public comment.

Chairperson Mulder adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held on Friday, March 15, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Commissioner Room of the Courthouse located at 1045 Independence Blvd., Charlotte, MI 48813.

Blake Mulder, Chairperson