WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Commissioners Joe Brehler, Jeanne Pearl-Wright, Brian Droscha, Terrance Augustine, and Barbara Rogers.
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Commissioners Blake Mulder, and Brian Lautzenheiser.
ALSO PRESENT:	Commissioners Jim Mott, Scott Hansen, and Frank Holmes; Connie Sobie, Ben Dawson, Melissa Ballard, Bob Robinson, Theodore Seitz, Chad Powers, and Tim Vandermark.

The September 13, 2024 meeting of the Ways and Means Committee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Vice-Chairperson Rogers.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all.

Commissioner Droscha moved to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Droscha moved to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2024 regular session meeting. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. None.

Eaton County Treasurer Bob Robinson gave an update on the Foreclosing Governmental Unit Fund. Treasurer Robinson reported that the fund balance is approximately $2.1 million, however between $1.2 million and $1.4 million is at risk for claims in the Michigan county tax foreclosure class action suit. Theodore Seitz, an attorney from Dykema Gossett PLLC, provided an overview of the class action lawsuit. Discussion held.

Treasurer Robinson presented the quarterly investment report for the 1st quarter of calendar year 2024. Discussion held.

Deputy Administrator/Human Resources Director Ben Dawson presented the open positions report. Mr. Dawson discussed the open positions in the Sheriff's Office as well as the vacancies that have occurred from the prior meeting. Discussion held. Commissioner Augustine moved to fill the position vacancies as presented. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented a proposal from the Public Works and Planning Commission regarding a proposed restructuring of the Parks Department. It was requested that the proposed changes to the job descriptions be submitted for evaluation by Municipal Consulting LLC to assess the potential need for reclassifications based on the change in duties. The consultant's analysis will be presented to the committee for final approval before the proposed changes are enacted. Discussion held. Commissioner Augustine moved to submit the amended job descriptions to Municipal Consulting Services LLC for analysis. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Nays - Commissioner Brehler. Motion carried.

Mr. Dawson presented the summary of bargaining with the Command Officers Association of Michigan

(COAM) the Central Dispatch Supervisory Group Bargaining Unit along with the tentative agreement. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the tentative agreement to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Health Insurance Report for July was presented with projections of expenses and revenues through the end of the fiscal year. The report indicates an unfavorable variance of ($111,366) compared to fund revenues. Administration continues to monitor this fund to ensure an appropriate fund balance for the County's fiscal year end. Discussion held.

Mr. Dawson provided an update regarding the status of the County's bid process for the carriers of health, vision, and dental insurance. In accordance with County policy, these insurances are put out for bid every three years.

Mr. Dawson discussed a proposed change to the County's health insurance prescription drug coverage pertaining to "Elective Lifestyle Medications". All of the medications in this classification are used to treat non-life-threatening, non-painful conditions and have substantially increased the County's costs for prescription drug coverage. County prescription claims for these types of drugs have risen $241,000 over the past year. Effective January 1, 2025, Blue Cross is eliminating health insurance coverage for these medications. The proposed change would allow the County to adopt this change early, and would take effect October 1, 2024. Discussion held. Commissioner Augustine moved to approve adoption of the elimination of Elective Lifestyle Medications from the County's self-fund health insurance plan effective October 1, 2024. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson updated the Committee regarding the Active Violence Trainings conducted in coordination with the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services. Trainings are well attended and received. There are plans to schedule additional training opportunities next year, dates will be provided when available. Mr. Dawson also discussed the purchase of tourniquet kits which were approved as an amendment to the budget in November 2023. The kits are in all county vehicles and are expected to be installed in county offices soon. He thanked the Board for their support for these projects.

Finance Director Melissa Ballard provided an update to the Committee regarding the Audit Corrective Action Plan. The financial team is actively working with a contracted accounting firm to prepare for the end of the fiscal year.

The Child Care Fund Report for June was presented. There were no significant changes from the prior month. Based on the updated projection of revenues and expenditures, the estimated fund balance at September 30, 2024 is $1,707,153. Discussion held.

The fiscal year end projections for the County's General Fund were presented. Controller/Administrator Connie Sobie noted that some revenues are delayed until later in the fiscal year, but the projections presented were fiscally conservative and consistent with prior reports.

Vice-Chairperson Rogers called for a brief recess at 10:10 a.m.

Vice-Chairperson Rogers resumed the meeting at 10:21 a.m.

The Public Improvement Report was presented. Facilities Director Chad Powers updated the committee regarding the projects completed to date. Mr. Powers indicated that the Youth Facility Expansion Project is substantially completed. Renovations in the existing detention rooms have experienced delays due to permitting issues through the Bureau of Fire Services, but this portion of the project is still on track for completion. The County's & Grainger's financial teams have met to ensure compliance with grant requirements and financial closeout of the project. The Controller's Office has reached out to Representative Witwer for an extension should this be necessary, however, this is just a precautionary measure. Communication Director Logan Bailey is organizing a ribbon cutting for the facility expansion on October 16, 2024.

The 2023/2024 budget amendments were presented. Ms. Sobie discussed the likelihood of needing additional budget amendments which would be presented at the Board of Commissioners meeting on September 18, 2024. Commissioner Brehler moved to recommend approval of the presented budget amendments and additional budget amendments as identified by the Controller's Office to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous. Commissioner Droscha moved to approve the closed session minutes for the meeting held on August 16, 2024. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Droscha inquired about the County's cost for Mr. Trump's Presidential Campaign visit to the Alro Steel Plant in Potterville on August 29, 2024. Controller Sobie stated that the final figure has not been calculated, but it would be presented when available.

Commissioner Droscha moved to recommend approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of $348,641.04, immediate claims in the amount of $2,001,389.14, electronic claims in the amount of $13,560,514.76, and employee payroll in the amount of $2,739,535.99 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Brehler. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to approve the 2024/2025 Eaton County Budget and Winter Tax Rates was presented. Commissioner Brehler moved to recommend approval of the resolution as presented to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Equalization Director Tim Vandermark provided an update and explanation regarding the winter tax rates. Discussion held.

A resolution to approve technical and structural changes for Non-Union employees was presented. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend approval of the resolution to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. None.

Commissioner Rogers adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held on Friday, October 11, 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