

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2024

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Blake Mulder, Joe Brehler, Brian Lautzenheiser, Brian Droscha, Terrance Augustine, Jeanne Pearl-Wright, and Barbara Rogers.

ALSO PRESENT: Commissioners Jim Mott, Scott Hansen, and Frank Holmes; Connie Sobie, Ben Dawson, Melissa Ballard, Tim Vandermark, Kelley Cunningham, Mark Nettleton, Chad Powers, Tom Reich, Doug Lloyd, and Don Sovey.

The December 13, 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.

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

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2024 meeting and the December 5, 2024 special meeting. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. Donald Sovey, CPA presented a letter (on file) to the Committee regarding the proposed Millage Recommendation, item 14 on the agenda.

The Applicant Report for the citizen's appointment for the Eaton County Land Bank Authority was presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend appointment of Yvonne Ridge to the vacant appointment to expire 12/31/2026 to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Equalization Director Tim Vandermark presented and reviewed the 2024 Equalization Studies Report. The studies indicate the following changes from the previous year: Agricultural 8.30% increase, Residential: 6.76% increase, Commercial: 3.39% increase, Industrial: 5.48% increase, Developmental: 0.78% decrease. Mr. Vandermark discussed the changes in each classification by local unit. Discussion held.

Deputy Administrator/Human Resources Director Ben Dawson presented the positions update. The positions update has been modified to include an indication of elected office positions. Based on discussions with the County's Labor Attorney, these positions should remain included to be filled until the establishment of the next fiscal year's budget given that the funds are already allocated through the budgetary process through September 30, 2025. Central Dispatch Director Kelley Cunningham discussed the position openings in her office. Commissioner Augustine moved to fill the position vacancies as presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

The Excess Workers Compensation insurance one year renewal by Midwest Employers Casualty was presented. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the renewal proposal to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Annually the County reviews the weekly short-term disability rate, which is approved by the Ways and Means Committee. Mr. Dawson is requesting the rate be increased by 5% from prior year to coincide with the cost of living increase that was adopted during the budgetary process in September, 2024. Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to approve the updated maximum weekly disability rate of \$610 per week for 2025 disability claims. Commissioner Brehler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance Director Melissa Ballard gave an update on the Audit Corrective Action Plan. It was reported that an accounting firm is working closely with Controller's Office staff and audit closing is progressing as anticipated.

The Health Insurance Reports for fiscal year 2023/24 and October 2024 were presented. The 2023/24 fiscal year end report indicates a favorable variance of \$143,464 compared to the fund revenues. All journal entries for the finalization of the fiscal year have been recorded. This includes the July through September settlement adjustment of \$333,404, adjustments for the County's incurred but not reported (IBNR) amounts, and the transfer of \$185,000 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) interest revenue. The October Health Insurance Report indicates a favorable variance of \$54,753 compared to fund revenues.

Ms. Ballard presented the APRA report for revenues and expenditures through September 30, 2024. She indicated that there are several programs allocated funding that will not be fully spent through the end of December 31, 2026 as is required by the Department of the Treasury. Ms. Ballard requested these funds be reallocated to the Bank Intercounty Drain Project, which is eligible under the Department of Treasury guidance. In addition, Ms. Ballard presented a resolution to finalize the obligation of all of the ARPA funds. Mark Nettleton, an attorney from Mika Meyers was present to answer any questions regarding the use of ARPA funds for the Bank Intercounty Drain.

Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the resolution to obligate the American Rescue Plan Act funds to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Bank Intercounty Drain between the County and Bank Intercounty Drain was presented. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the resolution to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

The Public Improvement Report was presented. Chad Powers, Facilities Director, gave an update on Public Improvement projects.

Commissioner Brehler moved to recommend the approval of the Resolution to Approve the Interim Agreement for the Operation of the Youth Facility to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to establish the Commissioner Compensation effective January 1, 2025 with no proposed changes in compensation was presented. Commissioner Augustine move to recommend approval of the proposed resolution to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Lautzenheiser seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The 2024/2025 budget amendments were presented and discussed. Commissioner Augustine moved to recommend the approval of the budget amendments to the Board of Commissioners, as presented. Commissioner Rogers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Mulder called for a recess at 10:01 a.m.

Commissioner Mulder reconvened the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Chairman Mott was invited to present Public Safety's recommendation for a Public Safety Ballot Question. Discussion was held regarding the need for increased revenue to maintain services in the area of public safety.

A resolution was presented with language that includes Sheriff Road Patrol, staffing and services, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, staffing and services, and Animal Control, staffing, services and facilities. The County's legal firm has reviewed and revised the language for the proposal. Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend approval of the Resolution for Countywide Public Safety Millage Proposition to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Rogers seconded. Motion carried. Nays – Commissioners Augustine and Pearl-Wright.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of \$609,790.29, immediate claims in the amount of \$956,676.26, electronic claims in the amount of \$25,713,406.18, and employee payroll in the amount of \$9,534,724.91 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Droscha. Motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous. None.

Chairperson Mulder discussed the Controller's evaluation, invited input from both the public and from Commissioners and indicated that he will provide a final written copy of the evaluation to the Controller next week.

Limited Public Comment. Mary Clark Delta Township Resident, thanked the committee for action on recommending a Public Safety Millage to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Droscha moved to enter closed session under Section 15.286 Sec 8.(c) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss collective bargaining with legal counsel and a personnel settlement agreement. Seconded by commissioner Lautzenheiser. Roll call vote: Augustine – yes, Brehler – yes, Lautzenheiser – yes, Pearl-Wright – yes, Rogers – yes, Mulder – yes. Motion carried.

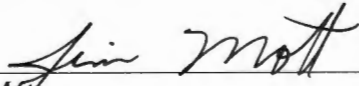
The Committee resumed the open meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend the collective bargaining settlement agreement as recommended by legal counsel, as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Augustine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lautzenheiser moved to recommend the personnel settlement agreement as recommended by legal counsel, as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Mulder adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held in January 2025, at a date and time to be determined by the Board of Commissioners at its Organizational Meeting scheduled for January 2, 2025.



Jim Mott
Chairman of the Board of Commissioners