WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2025

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairperson Brian Droscha, Brandon Haskell, Jeanne Pearl-Wright, Mark Mudry, Frank Holmes, and Keith Barber.
ALSO PRESENT:	Commissioners Jim Mott, Scott Hansen, and Nicole Christensen; Connie Sobie, Ben Dawson, Melissa Ballard, Tim Vandermark, Eric Daley, Jon Merrick, Ivan Christopher, Logan Bailey, Chad Powers, Tom Reich, KayDee Perry, Brad Baker, Diana Bosworth, and Amy Etzel.

The February 14, 2025 meeting of the Ways and Means Committee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Droscha.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all.

Controller/Administrator Connie Sobie requested to add two (2) items under miscellaneous: 14a. University of Olivet School Resource Officer and 14b. Courthouse Hours of Operation. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the agenda, as amended. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

No limited public comment.

A resolution to approve an Application for a Farmland and Open Space Development Rights Agreement (Public Act 116 of 1974, as amended) was presented. Equalization Director Tim Vandermark indicated that there was an amendment to the resolution as one of the parcels originally included was recently sold. Commissioner Barber moved to recommend approval of the Application for a Farmland and Open Space Development Agreement to the Board of Commissioners, as amended. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A resolution to approve an Appraisal Services Contract with Accurate Assessing LLC was presented. Mr. Vandermark was present to answer any questions regarding the contract. Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to recommend approval of the Appraisal Services Contract as presented to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Technology Services Director Eric Daley provided a department update for technology services. Mr. Daley introduced GIS Administrators Jon Merrick and Ivan Christopher who gave a presentation and demonstration to the committee regarding the importance of Remonumentation and how this information is used County-wide.

Communications Director Logan Bailey provided a department update for communications. Mr. Bailey shared analytics via Microsoft Clarity and Meta Business Suite to showcase user acquisition and engagement on the County's digital platforms. Mr. Bailey also spoke to social media etiquette for elected officials and the possibility of forming a communications workgroup to discuss outreach strategies.

Deputy Administrator/Human Resources Director Ben Dawson presented the positions update. As previously discussed, positions in elected offices should remain included in the report 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. Commissioner Haskell moved to fill the position vacancies as presented. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson discussed the reclassification process for the fiscal year 2025/2026 budget. Mr. Dawson requested that all reclassification requests be put on hold for the 2025/2026 budget unless such reclassification request is in alignment with consolidation efforts for cost savings purposes. Employees who are currently working outside of their approved classification are requested to cease such work and inform their supervisor(s) along with Human Resources. Commissioner Barber motioned to approve a freeze of the reclassification process for the fiscal year 2025/2026 budget unless it is part of a cost-saving measure for departmental budgets. Commissioner Droscha seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented a request to change the Non-Union Personnel Policy. The requested change is in alignment with the legislative changes to employee sick leave going into effect Friday, February 21, 2025. The proposed changes have been reviewed by legal counsel. Based on discussions with legal counsel, the County is not obligated to make immediate changes to any ratified union contracts, but changes will be required when contracts expire. Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to recommend the approval of the Amendment of the Non-Union Personnel Policy to the Board of Commissioners, as discussed. Commissioner Holmes seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Droscha called for a brief recess at 10:11 a.m.

Chairperson Droscha reconvened the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

Quarterly financial reports were presented for fiscal year-end 2023/24. Finance Director Melissa Ballard provided an overview of the reports, highlighting areas of importance. It was reported that the reports for 2023/24 are not final due to outstanding audit items. However, the audit is nearing completion. Discussion held.

The first quarter financial reports for fiscal year 2024/25 were presented. The reports compare trends from the same time period in the prior fiscal year. The Controller's Office staff continues to work with the accounting firm of Maner Costerisan to improve processes and procedures. Discussion held.

The Health Insurance Report for calendar year 2024 was presented. The 2024 calendar year-end report indicates an unfavorable variance of ($116,397) compared to the fund revenues. Ms. Ballard indicated that there is an outstanding settlement for the final quarter of the calendar year that has not been included in these reports. Such settlements are typically between $150,000 and $200,000. Administration continues to monitor this fund closely.

The Public Improvement Report was presented. Facilities Director Chad Powers provided an update regarding the outstanding and upcoming public improvement projects. Mr. Powers discussed the difficulties of managing aging facilities with significant funding pressures.

A resolution Pledging the Full Faith and Credit to Potter Drain Drainage District Bonds was presented. Commissioner Haskell moved to recommend the approval of the Resolution to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Mudry. Discussion held regarding the County's obligation created by the pledging of full faith and credit as well as the County's current debt obligations. Nays – Commissioner Barber. Motion Carried.

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

Miscellaneous – University of Olivet School Resource Officer Grant Application and Memorandum of Agreement. Kaydee Perry, Ed. D., Associate Provost for Student Development and Brad Baker, Assistant

Director of Campus Safety from University of Olivet were present to discuss the grant application and memorandum of agreement between the University of Olivet and Eaton County. Sheriff Tom Reich spoke in support of the proposed partnership which would provide an Eaton County Deputy as a School Resource Officer on the University of Olivet campus. The proposed agreement would be contingent upon the approval of a grant from the State of Michigan and would be effective from August 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. Commissioner Holmes moved to recommend the Memorandum of Agreement and approval of the Grant Application to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Barber seconded. Discussion held. Nays – Commissioners Haskell, Pearl-Wright, Mudry, Barber, and Droscha. Motion Failed.

Miscellaneous – Courthouse Hours of Operation. Board of Commissioners (BOC) Chairperson Jim Mott presented a request to change the hours of operation for the administrative side of the County Courthouse. In order to allocate time and resources without increasing staffing, the Courthouse will change its operating hours to the hours listed below:

Week Day	Current Courthouse Hours Public & Employees	Proposed Courthouse Hours Public	Proposed Courthouse Hours Employees
Monday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Friday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Employees in the impacted administrative offices will continue to work their regular schedule as indicated above. The proposed change in hours will allow offices that are currently short-staffed to catch up on work that could not be completed while simultaneously assisting the public. Offices will be available for appointments during these times provided they are scheduled in advance.

Additionally, BOC Chairperson Mott directed Ms. Sobie to close the Controller's Office on February 20th, 2025 and February 25th, 2025 in order to prepare possible scenarios for the 2025/2026 budget. During this time, the Controller's Office will be unavailable to the public and elected officials.

BOC Chairperson Mott invited Clerk Diana Bosworth and Trial Court Administrator Amy Etzel to speak on what these changes will mean for their operations. Discussion held.

Chairperson Droscha moved to approve the change in Courthouse hours of operation to the Board of Commissioners as discussed. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Haskell moved to recommend approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of $682,073.23, immediate claims in the amount of $918,133.50, electronic claims in the amount of $6,769,978.15, and employee payroll in the amount of $1,925,278.35 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Pearl-Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

The 2025/2026 Budget Schedule was presented for review. Commissioner Barber moved to recommend approval of the 2025/2026 Budget Schedule as presented, to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Commissioner Pearl-Wright reminded fellow commissioners that they are welcome to attend all Ways and Means Budget meetings. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. None

Commissioner Barber moved to enter into closed session at 11:46 a.m. pursuant to Section 15.268 Sec 8.(e) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss settlement strategy in connection with pending litigation in the matter of 56th Eaton County Judicial Circuit Court Case No. 25-44-CZ, Timothy Mauro-Vetter v Eaton County and to review material subject to the attorney-client privilege under MCL 15.243(1)(g). Commissioner Haskell seconded. Roll Call Vote: Haskell – yes, Pearl-Wright – yes, Mudry – yes, Holmes – yes, Barber – yes, Droscha – yes. Motion carried.

The Committee resumed the open meeting at 12:13 p.m.

Commissioner Haskell moved to accept the agreement as suggested by legal counsel in the matter of 56th Eaton County Judicial Circuit Court Case No. 25-45-CZ, Timothy Mauro-Vetter v Eaton County. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Droscha adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held on Friday, March 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Commissioner Room of the Courthouse located at 1045 Independence Blvd., Charlotte, MI 48813.

Brian Droscha, Chairperson