WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 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 and Scott Hansen; Connie Sobie, Ben Dawson, Chris Garrison, Brandy Miller, Tim Vandermark, Eric Daley, Logan Bailey, Doug Lloyd, Melissa Ballard, Chad Powers, Dale Deis, Steven Mann, Diana Bosworth, Dairus Reynnet, and Tom Reich.

The May 16, 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 item 10.d. State Grant: Additional Support for Prosecutor's Office - Review of Use and Framework for Funding. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the agenda, as amended. Commissioner Holmes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the April 11, 2025, meeting minutes, and the April 28, 2025, Ways and Means budget meeting minutes. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. None.

Construction Code Director Chris Garrison presented a request to amend the fee schedule for Planning and Zoning to be effective June 1, 2025. Additionally, Mr. Garrison presented a recommendation from the Public Works and Human Services Committee to allow Planning and Zoning to operate based on fees charged to townships for Planning and Zoning Services. The maximum annual amount for each participating Township is $15,000 and would be incorporated as part of the budgetary process to begin October 1, 2025. Commissioner Barber moved to recommend the approval of the amended fee schedule to the Board of Commissioners as presented and to recommend the incorporation of the township contribution for Planning and Zoning services for the annual budgetary process. Seconded by Commissioner Haskell. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Equalization Director Tim Vandermark presented an application for PA 116 Farmland and Open Space Developmental Rights Agreement for Dan & Jacquline Burkett. Commissioner Haskell moved to recommend approval of the application to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Vandermark also presented the following reports: L4046 Base Report, L4058, L4029, and the DDA report. Mr. Vandermark reported that the County received a Headlee rollback this tax year which permanently reduced the allowable mills from 5.2096 to 5.2023. Commissioner Haskell moved to recommend approval the reports as a slate to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Technology Services Director Eric Daley provided a departmental update. Mr. Daley discussed the finalized technology audit for the Eaton County Friend of the Court. This is required to be completed every three years. Mr. Daley also provided an update regarding the changes in charges on the County's analogue telephones. He reported that all of the County's phone lines have been updated and there are no analogue phone lines open to large monthly fees.

Communications Director Logan Bailey provided a departmental update. He stated that the County's social media interaction is on par with other governmental entities. Mr. Bailey also has been submitting applications for grants for various projects in the County. Mr. Bailey expressed his appreciation to the Commissioners for their support regarding the millage. Discussion held.

Human Resources Director/Deputy Administrator Ben Dawson presented the positions update. Mr. Dawson indicated that the monthly vacancy rate is 12.68%, with the annual vacancy rate at 12.73%. Commissioner Barber moved to accept the report as presented. Commissioner Pearl-Wright Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented the actuarial assumptions and methodology for the 2024 annual valuation of the Eaton County Retiree Health Care Plan. Commissioner Barber moved to accept the actuarial assumptions. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented an addendum to the County's MERS plan to codify how the County handles Retirement Credits for Military Leave. Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to adopt the addendum to the County's MERS plan for all MERS groups. Commissioner Barber seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Eaton County Prosecutor Doug Lloyd presented a letter outlining the proposed framework for the use of State of Michigan Appropriation funding. These funds are a non-recurring direct appropriation and were accepted by the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday October 16, 2024, contingent on approval of a framework for disbursement. Commissioner Barber moved to recommend the acceptance of the proposed framework to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

The monthly financial report for fiscal year 2024/25 was presented. Finance Director Melissa Ballard indicated that revenues and expenses were comparable to last month as well as the same time last fiscal year. Additional revenues will be updated for next month's financial report.

The health insurance report for the 2024/2025 fiscal year was presented. Ms. Ballard indicated the report contains settlement data for the first quarter only for the current fiscal year but contains two quarters for the prior fiscal year. The report indicates an unfavorable variance of $138,884 compared to fund revenues.

The Child Care Fund Report for March, 2025 was presented and discussed. State ward chargebacks are higher than expected. However, the County has no control over these costs as they are determined based on placement by the State. Administration will continue to monitor these expenses. Based on the updated projection of revenue and expenditures, the estimated fund balance at September 30, 2025 is $1,717,057.

Dale Deis, Senior Managing Consultant from PFM Financial Advisors, LLC, and Steven Mann, Principal at Miller Canfield, provided information about capital improvement bonds. A Resolution Authorizing Issuance of 2025 Capital Improvement Bonds (Limited Tax General Obligation) was presented. Commissioner Barber moved to recommend approval of the Authorization to Issue Capital Improvement Bonds to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Facilities Director Chad Powers and Mr. Daley presented the Capital Improvement Program. Commissioner Haskell moved approve the Resolution to Adopt the Eaton County 6-Year Capital Improvements Program. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Powers presented the Public Improvement Report. He reported that Fox Park was closed until further notice due to storm damage. Mr. Powers discussed the generators at the jail, which are required to be tested annually. One of the three generators failed the load test. Said generator is a 1987 model and parts are no longer available for it. The generator will need to be rebuilt at a cost of approximately $35,000. Mr. Powers requested to add a budget amendment from the Jail Millage funds to accommodate this repair.

Mr. Powers also discussed a plan for the Treasurer's Office and the Clerk's Office to trade office spaces. The cost to move these offices is nominal and will be completed utilizing savings identified in the Facilities Department. Eaton County Clerk Diana Bosworth spoke regarding how this will allow the Clerk's Office to cross-train with the Register of Deeds Office. Eaton County Treasurer Dairus Reynnet spoke about his team and their willingness to make the move. A motion to move the Treasurer's Office and the Clerk's Office was brought by Commissioner Haskell. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mudry. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Droscha called for a brief recess at 10:32 a.m.

Chairperson Droscha reconvened the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

The budget amendments were presented and discussed. A budget item for the generator repair at the jail was added to the amendments and will be taken from the jail millage. Commissioner Barber moved to approve the budget amendments as amended. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous. None.

Commissioner Pearl-Wright moved to recommend approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of $552,959.11, immediate claims in the amount of $1,312,921.81, electronic claims in the amount of $6,193,466.77 and employee payroll in the amount of $1,823,004.07 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Mudry. Motion carried unanimously.

The updated 2025/2026 departmental revenue and expense projections were presented. Discussion held.

Limited Public Comment. Sheriff Tom Reich spoke about the various counties that are actively recruiting current County deputies. He stated, as of Monday, May 19, 2025, all out county patrol is done due to the failure of the Public Safety Millage. He also requested that the Animal Control Ordinance be repealed.

Chairperson Droscha adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held on Friday, June 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room of the Courthouse located at 1045 Independence Blvd., Charlotte, MI 48813.

Brian Droscha, Chairperson