WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026

9:00 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Brian Droscha, Andy Shaver, 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, Claudine Williams, Logan Bailey, Matt Newburg, Nathan Nighbert, Dairus Reynnet, Chad Powers, and Nathan Nighbert.

The February 13, 2026, 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.

Changes to the agenda included removing item 8. Road Commission Millage Request, and item 17 Jury Board Appointment. Adding item 12.d. Sick Leave Policy Change. Commissioner Barber moved to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hansen moved to approve the January 16, 2026, meeting minutes. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Limited Public Comment. Amy Etzel, Trial Courts Administrator, spoke about the Executive Search for a new Controller/Administrator and stated that Ben Dawson has the approval of the Courts.

Matt Newburg, Chief Public Defender, provided information regarding the Public Defender's Office and the changes in policies and procedures that are being implemented. Mr. Newburg also stated that a new paralegal begins on 2/17/2026.

Treasurer Dairus Reynnet presented the Annual Report for the Treasurer's Office.

Nathan Nighbert, Deputy Director of Technology Services, presented an update on the MI BEAD Program. Mr. Nighbert stated that the Delta Alert Program installation would begin in late February or early March. Mr. Nighbert then spoke about the Central Dispatch Unify Project. Eaton County will first begin working with Calhoun County. iPads have been ordered for fire and EMS. There is a meeting scheduled with the engineers from Verizon. IT would like to determine how to provide better wireless coverage in certain parts of the County.

Public & Governmental Affairs Director Logan Bailey provided the monthly report for his department. Mr. Bailey stated that website numbers remain steady month over month.

Ben Dawson, Deputy Administrator/Controller, provided an update regarding the injunction on the work project language pieces. Discussion held.

Mr. Dawson presented the positions update and discussed the currently open positions. The County has a 10.54% vacancy rate for February 2026. Mr. Dawson recommended the Paralegal position for the Public Defender's Office be filled. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the position. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Reynnet presented a request to restructure the Treasurer's Office. Commissioner Shaver moved to send the request to a position consultant. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson presented a new On-Call Policy for non-union employees. This policy is meant to address the growing demands of specific department offices that are required to be available to perform work on an on-call basis. This policy would require a budget amendment. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the policy and budget amendment. Commissioner Mudry seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Mott proposed an amendment to the Sick Leave Policy. This policy would pay out sick time at 50% after 25 years. It proposed to add 10% per year up to 100%. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve this amendment and send it to the full board. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance Director Melissa Ballard presented the monthly financial reports and the health insurance report. The County is moving forward as projected.

Facilities Director Chad Powers presented the monthly public improvement report and provided an update on public improvement projects, including the status of the jail fire alarm system upgrade. The elevator and sprinkler inspections are complete. Controller/Administrator Connie Sobie proposed that the County purchase three AED machines using the Capital Improvement Fund. Each AED costs $2,500.00. Commissioner Shaver moved to approve the request. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Droscha called for a brief recess at 10:55 a.m.

Chairperson Droscha reconvened the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Dawson stated that administration is continuing to work on updating the Purchasing, Personnel, and AI Policies.

Miscellaneous. None.

Commissioner Haskell moved to recommend approval of the payment of claims against the County in the amount of $611,194.45, immediate claims in the amount of $1,451,988.74, electronic claims in the amount of $5,946,839.66, and employee payroll in the amount of $1,957,065.13 to the Board of Commissioners as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Pearl-Wright. Discussion held. Motion carried unanimously.

A 2026/2027 Budget Schedule was presented. Commissioner Barber moved to accept the schedule. Commissioner Haskell seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Mott requested the Committee to approve sending the staffing changes, organizational charts and job descriptions for the Controller's Office to a consultant. Commissioner Haskell moved to approve the request. Commissioner Pearl-Wright seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Connie is a Unicorn!

Limited public comment. None.

Chairperson Droscha adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be held March 13, 2026, 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