

Commissioner Minutes of February 28, 2017

The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Tuesday, February 28, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Walters. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call found all Commissioners present.

There were no changes or additions to the agenda. *Motion by Commissioner Smith, supported by Commissioner Hinman, to proceed with the consent agenda as prepared, with the approval of the minutes of the February 14th and February 17, 2017 meetings. Ayes carried, motion passed.*

The **cash balances** were then read by Commissioner Aultman. *General Fund - \$37,554.43.*

Shari Spoelman, MSU Extension, introduced Michelle Neff to give a **presentation on “4-H Program Evaluation: 40 Developmental Asset Study”**. Ms. Neff shared her experience in working for MSU and gave an overview of the study and the importance of MSU for students.

Finance Matters:

1. Prosecutor, Aaron Miller, has informed the committee that his **Child Support Specialist has left employment with his office**. Mr. Miller has requested permission to hire to fill the vacancy, noting that this position is grant funded through the State. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to allow the Prosecutor to hire as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
2. Karen Moore, Court Administrator/Magistrate, has presented the committee with the information on the **“New Magistrate” training that is required for Mr. Worpell to attend**. The registration for this course and meals are covered through the State of Michigan, along with 50% of the lodging arrangements. The County will be responsible for mileage to and from conference, 50% of lodging and any meal costs incurred on travel days to be paid from 101-136-860.000. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Hinman, to allow Magistrate Worpell to attend this conference and to be reimbursed for the expenses as outlined. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
3. Undersheriff Hartwell has submitted the **new food services contract with CBM** for consideration. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to allow the Chairman to sign the contract as presented. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
4. Lt. Troy Rabidue has requested permission to send **Deputy Greg Guild to Taser CEW Instructor Re-Certification training** on March 2nd in Cheboygan, Michigan. Once approved, this course will be paid for from 101-301-804.000. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to allow for the training as outlined. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
5. **Rick Ghent, Maintenance Supervisor**, has requested **payout of 124 hours of unused vacation time** from 101-265-702.000 in the amount of \$2,989.64. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Smith, to allow the Clerk to make the disbursement as outlined. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
6. Matt McGourty, Jail Administrator, has registered for the **Michigan Sheriff’s Association conference June 11-13th at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, Michigan**. Mr. McGourty is estimating the cost of the conference at \$525.00 using 264 funding. *Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Smith, to allow the Jail Administrator to attend the conference and to allow the Clerk to use the credit card for reservations if required. Ayes carried, motion passed.*
7. Karee Barlow, Ass’t 911 Administrator, has made request to have **several dispatchers attend the following trainings:**

- a. Diane Doherty and Cindy Teffner to Active Shooter training on April 6th in Traverse City. Total of \$378.00 in registration, approximately \$93.00 in lodging, plus meals and mileage.
- b. Diane Doherty and Cindy Teffner to 911 Customer Service training on April 7th in Traverse City. Total of \$378.00 in registration, approximately \$93.00 in lodging, plus mileage and meals.
- c. Jennifer Matteson to Survive and Thrive Comprehensive Stress Resilience Training in Detroit, Michigan March 7-8, 2017. Total of \$359.00 in registration, approximately \$233 in lodging, plus mileage and meals.

Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Smith, to pay each of these training requests from 282-000-804.001 and to allow the Clerk to make the reservations with the credit card if needed. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Aultman then spoke on the budget and how proud she is to be a resident of the community for 34 years, stating she is here to provide great service to the County and act as a representative of the townships she has been elected by. Commissioner Aultman stated that the committee worked on the reductions to the budget based on the following: MERS funding levels, denial of a USDA loan to make Courthouse improvements based on cash flow, reductions in State revenues, overturn of the headlee rollback millage restoration request, and the loss of MAC membership to help support general fund. Commissioner Aultman commented that she would like the community to look at these cuts as the committee's understanding of the budget so that they can build trust in knowing that they are trying to save money toward projects that are needed.

Commissioner Aultman then read the reductions of departments that are included in the budget being presented today for consideration:

1. Zoning Clerk to be budgeted 50% from zoning (410 department) and 50% from construction codes (371 department) and that wages and fringes would need to be corrected to reflect the shared duties of the employee.
2. Animal Shelter: Officer to 25 hours/week and part time Clerk reduced to 12 hours/week, noting the department will be able to handle the office hours as works best for them.
3. Clerk's Office: Reduction of one part-time clerk and one full-time clerk.
4. Treasurer's Office: Reduction of one part-time clerk.

Chairman Walters stated he knows there are problems, noting the County can't go to the bank and get a loan and that they are working through these times. Chairman Walters stated at one time there was over 7 million on hand and now the Board is forced to borrow from outside funds to allow the bills to be paid, noting concern that a controller from the State could be sent to the County.

Commissioner Smith stated that she had communications with Chairman Walters this morning and Commissioner Aultman last evening regarding the Council of Local Government meeting where the consensus was to not make any layoffs, but rather use the budget prepared by the employees. Commissioner Smith commented that people have worked hard on this process, but the layoffs leave "a bad taste in her mouth" because there was a budget presented without any layoffs. Commissioner Smith went on to say further that the Clerk and Treasurer work with these numbers every day and the considerations of the employees should have been considered.

Public Comments:

Many comments were made and summarized as listed below:

Ron Taylor, Sage Township and retired Animal Control Officer with over 35 years of experience, spoke on the history of the Animal Control Department in the past 40 years. In those 40 years, this department has been cut three times and then been added right back because of the duties that are needed. In 2013, the budget was \$135,000 and now just over \$92,000 per year. Mr. Taylor asked the Board to look at other areas, as this is cut to important services that can't be handled by volunteers or other staff. The Animal Control Officer holds certifications through the Department of Agriculture and holds the responsibility of providing rabies enforcement through the sale of dog licenses.

Keith Cousineau, Grim Township Supervisor, stated that his Township for years has operated on a \$50,000 budget and there are certain things that "you don't mess with". The County Clerk and Treasurer have always been efficient and helpful and the Townships can't operate without them. Mr. Cousineau commented that there should not be discontent and things need to run smoothly, noting the Board should trust in the Clerk and Treasurer to help them run smoothly.

Circuit Court Judge, Roy Mienk, noted the budget to be adopted shows revenue under 9 million; however the County has not collected under 9 million in revenue since 2014. Judge Mienk commented on his concern that the County Clerk's Office makes up over 1/3 of the total cuts to the budget then noted their duties to the County. Judge Mienk has worked for a Judge for over 10 years, noting the Gladwin County Clerk's Office is much more efficient than the other County he represents. The cuts to the Clerk's office severely impacts SCAO standards, noting they are certified to handle all three of the Courtrooms under their statutorial duties. Judge Mienk continued to comment on the impact of many services the Clerk's Office handles with these proposed cuts and asked the Board to consider restoring the Clerk's Office to their potentials.

Kathy Wilton, Secord Township Clerk, spoke on the recent resignation of their Township Treasurer and the importance of having the County Treasurer's Office to assist. Ms. Wilton stated that she relies immensely on the relationship of the Clerk's Office to assist with election responsibilities. As a past Commissioner, Ms. Wilton commented on the reduction to Animal Control services and the many phone calls the Board received on after hours services, livestock complaints, and response to complaints. The Sheriff's Department is already understaffed and is not able to take on additional responsibilities. At the Council of Local Government meeting last night, there was desire to have this Board adopt the budget that was drafted by the employees. Ms. Wilton pointed out that the reason given by the committee to cut these positions was to save money to handle projects, but there are no projects listed in the budget? Chairman Walters commented on the projected revenues.

Treasurer Christy Van Tiem spoke on her many years at the County and the budget experience that she has. The Treasurer stated that she is not able to continue to function, providing the services that she does, without additional staff, as she is putting in multiple personal hours a week to get the work done. Treasurer Van Tiem stated that she will not do the tax bills in her office without the additional staff and that she was never asked to assist in the preparation of the budget and that she has funding the covers her entire staff, and by cutting staff, the Board cuts revenue.

Chairman Walters commented that the budget does not cover additional staffing to the maintenance department that desperately needs help.

Lydia Goshke, Billings Township Clerk, spoke on her experience as a new Clerk and the reliance she has on the Clerk's Office, noting these cuts will put additional work on the Townships that are not able to perform the tasks.

Circuit Judge, Thomas Evans, addressed the Board and spoke on the importance of the offices of the Clerk and Treasurer and asked the Board to reconsider their actions.

Steve Worpell asked the Board what their plan is for the animals when the officers are not there and how are they will be cared for?

Jim Maveal, Animal Control Officer, asked the Board for their plan of action for after hour services. Mr. Maveal commented that his department has been reduced the last four years by over \$34,000, noting his is one of the smallest budgets in the County.
Discussion.

Stacey DeMoines, Beaverton City resident, stated she was there to speak on behalf of the animals that needed these services. Ms. Demoines spoke on the responsibilities of the shelter and the neglect and abuse cases they handle. Without the shelter, she fears for neglect and abuse of animals that are no longer wanted, or can be cared for. What will happen to those animals without these services? Discussion.

Eric House, Clement Township Clerk, stated that he retired as a county employee in Arizona and was a supervisor to the budget division. Mr. House stated that he worked closely with those individuals that knew the budget. Mr. House continued to point out that if the Board received a budget from the two chief financial people of the County, they should consider adopting that budget and putting the positions that are proposed to be reduced back in the budget.

Brian Anderson, spoke on his concerns with the reductions to the Animal Shelter.

Madalyn Hubble, Beaverton Township Clerk, stated she was here in support of the Clerk and Treasurer and representing those Township Treasurers who couldn't be here today.

Laura Flach, Sage Township Clerk and retired County Clerk of 38 years commented that she was here in November and spoke on the services provided by the Clerk's Office. Ms. Flach spoke on the responsibilities of election duties, noting it would be an election issue, and disaster, if these responsibilities went back to the Townships and Cities. Ms. Flach commented that since she has retired the Clerk's Office has been reduced one and a half employees and there has not been an appointment of a Chief Deputy since 2014. Ms. Flach stated her concern in making the Board's Secretary full time, noting in her experience the Board doesn't need a full time Secretary, but does need the work of the Clerk, Treasurer and Animal Shelter. The impact on services in those three departments is much more severe than the few that are served through the Board's Secretary. Ms. Flach urged the Board to make wise decisions.

Larry Grell also spoke on his concern of the five people on the Board that need a full time secretary, but 1000's of people in the community need the services of the Clerk and Treasurer. Mr. Grell stated that their Township Clerk resigned before the August election, causing an issue and because of the assistance of the Clerk's Office both elections were successful. Mr. Grell asked the Board to not cut services to the people of Gladwin County.

John Jurgenson, Sherman Township Trustee, asked how much was saved with the discontinuation of membership with MAC and why the Board needed a full time Secretary? Commissioner Aultman stated the membership savings were \$8,000 and that the Board cut \$28,000 from their own budget to offset the costs of making the Secretary full time. Commissioner Aultman commented that many of the duties that are being done are non-statutory in many offices and can be done by another employee. Discussion. Julie Jackson, Local 1974, Unit 6 Representative, stated that union positions cannot be eliminated and given to another employee without a union lawsuit.

Lonnie Norris, Hay Township resident, spoke on his concerns with the information provided to adopt the budget and that the Board has been elected to do a job and adopt a budget to save money if that means reducing staffing, even though it may be terrible to lose staffing. Discussion between Larry Grell and Mr. Norris.

Laura Brandon-Maveal, County Clerk, spoke on the reductions to her office and then clarified many issues. Ms. Maveal stated that she does not believe it is the staffing of the County that has put the County in financial issue, but projects that were not budgeted for. The Clerk spoke on the concern for inaccurate figures in the budget that has been presented and that “cost saving projects” have not been included in the budget, with no explanation as to why the positions need to be reduced. Ms. Maveal also spoke on MERS funding and shortages in staff and services to be provided to the community.

Ron Taylor spoke again and asked the Board how much they would be saving with the proposed cuts and if the Board has ever considered running a millage for the Animal Shelter. The Board did not have a figure on what the reductions would save them. Discussion on the millage issue.

Chairman Walters commented that at some point the building will need security and that the Board has already received recommendations from the insurance company on what needs to be done, noting his concern on being able to afford these upgrades.

Tim Mickler, Beaverton Township Supervisor, commented that he can see both sides of the issue, but urged the Board to review the second budget in detail and to work with the Clerk and the Treasurer. Mr. Mickler would like to see the Board get rid of the “party controlled vote” and adopt a budget for the people of Gladwin County.

Treasurer Van Tiem stated that upon review of the Board’s budget, their department did not take a reduction in 2017, but rather an increase. Discussion. Treasurer Van Tiem commented that neither budget provided for projects that need to be budgeted for and asked if there were projects identified to be paid with from the proposed cuts.

Stacey DeMoines spoke again and asked if the purpose of the cuts were to fund unrecognized projects? Chairman Walters stated that without the Board borrowing from special funds, they would not be able to pay bills or make payroll.

The Board then took a short recess at 10:40 a.m.

Chairman Walters called the meeting back to order at 10:46.

Laura Flach stated there were many comments during the break that individuals don’t feel comfortable stating. She would like to ask on their behalf, of each Commissioner, why they feel their Secretary needs to be full time. *Chairman Walters – handle*

correspondence, review the telephone bill, watching contracts to make sure they don't slip by the Board without being addressed, handling the garbage contract, then spoke on the history of the secretarial duties. *Commissioner Aultman* – on behalf of the five Townships she represents it is nice to have someone in the office to answer the phone, speak with the public, finds information on issues, answer questions and emails and work on contracts. *Commissioner Birgel* – commented that this County has had problems for the last 30 years because of the Clerk, Treasurer and the Board. *Commissioner Hinman* - stated that he voted no to make the Secretary full time, noting he feels if the Board as a leader is making cuts, they should not be increasing their staff. *Commissioner Smith* – was ill at the meeting that the vote to make the Secretary full time occurred, stating she agrees with Commissioner Hinman and would have voted no on the question. Discussion. Laura Flach commented that she realizes their Secretary is important to them, but the offices they are reducing are important to the whole community. Stacey Demoinis stated that if the Animal Shelter has to do their jobs in 25 hours, their Secretary should have to do the same.

Undersheriff Hartwell spoke on his 24 years experience with the County, noting 15 years with the budget. The Undersheriff stated that the budget presented is not accurate, is irresponsible and the committee has not provided a budget to the Board that they can understand and has failed to include the Clerk and Treasurer. Undersheriff Hartwell asked the Board to take a step back, review the budget, and have the budget lines explained if they don't understand.

Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to adopt the budget as presented today. Roll call vote as follows: Hinman – no, Walters – yes, Aultman – yes, Smith – no, Birgel – yes. 3 yes, 2 no. Ayes carried, **motion passed**. The Clerk noted that unless the Board published this action as a public hearing they cannot adopt this budget, but only prepare it as budget amendments.

Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to withdraw their action to adopt the budget. Roll call vote as follows: Walters – yes, Aultman – yes, Smith –yes, Birgel –yes, Hinman –yes. 5 yes, 0 no. Ayes carried, **motion passed**.

Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Birgel, to adopt the figures provided today as budget amendments to the budget that was adopted in December and that the employees would be given their five day notice. Roll call vote as follows: Aultman – yes, Smith – no, Birgel – yes, Hinman -no, Walters – yes. 3 yes, 2 no. Ayes carried, *motion passed*.

Kent Crawford, Sage Township Trustee, commented that the Clerk and Treasurer are doing an excellent job and feels that there may be a hidden agenda behind these actions.

Commissioner Reports by District –

Commissioner Hinman reported:

- That he attended the Sherman and Gladwin Township meetings.

Commissioner Smith reported:

- On attending the Buckeye Township meeting where a moment of silence was held in honor of Elaine Mather, Liz Looker's mom.
- On the Land Bank meeting, noting there have been five land bank lots sold since the last land bank meeting. The Board is looking for a building site in Beaverton

for the next year's construction class. Gladwin County has never adopted a property maintenance code. The possibility was discussed and no further action is needed at this time.

- That she attended the Special Board meeting on February 17, 2017.
- On the HSCB meeting on February 21st. There was an announcement of an expansion of Mid Michigan Health – Gladwin Hospital.
- On meeting with Commissioner Aultman on February 27, 2017 and reviewed the proposed budget.
- That she attended the Council of Local Government meeting last night in Billings Township.
- On the Souper Challenge that will be held this Saturday, March 4th from 4-8 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus.
- That the Moxie Strings performance last weekend at the Beaverton Activity Center was a success.

Commissioner Birgel reported:

- On the audit report for Central Michigan Health Department, noting there are no financial issues. Gladwin County is the only County that does not fund the budget request issued by the Health Department.
- That he attended the annual meeting at the Sports Complex, commenting on the election of officers for 2017.

Commissioner Aultman reported:

- On attending the Township meetings of Billings, Butman, Bourret and Grim.
- That she attended the MMCAA meeting on February 16th.
- On the Special meeting of February 17th.
- That she participated in the Central Michigan Community Health Department meeting on February 22nd. The County doesn't fully fund the appropriations because they don't have the funding; instead a portion of the shortage has been passed back to the taxpayers.
- On the Finance meeting on February 23rd.
- That she has been working with Chairman Walters on the budget.

Comments from the Chairman:

- That he attended the Gladwin City meeting.
- On working on the flooding issues around the County.
- On the \$36,622.00 grant from the Department of Regulatory Affairs for Remonumentation. Motion by Commissioner Birgel, supported by Commissioner Aultman, to accept the 2017 Remonumentation grant as presented. Ayes carried, motion passed.
- That he will continue to review and work on the budget and will try to put items back in the budget if they can.

Public Comments – Treasurer Christy Van Tiem presented the Annual Investment Report for the review of the Board. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner Birgel, supported by Commissioner Aultman, to accept the report as presented. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Hinman, supported by Commissioner Smith, to receive and file various correspondence and reports. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Aultman, supported by Commissioner Smith, to adjourn. Ayes carried, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m., until the next regular Board meeting on March 14, 2017 at 9:00 a.m., unless otherwise ordered.



Laura Brandon-Maveal
County Clerk



Terry Walters
Chairman