

**MINUTES OF THE CLARE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING**

*Jmm 2/15/17*  
**Unapproved Minutes  
January 25, 2017**

**Harrison, Michigan 48625**

**Meeting was called to Order at 2:06 p.m.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Present:** Commissioners: District 1: Dale Majewski, District 2: Samantha Pitchford, District 3: Leonard Strouse, District 5: Sandra Bristol, District 6: Karen Lipovsky, District 7: Jim Gelios

**Absent:** District 4: Jack Kleinhardt, excused

**Others Present, Signing In:** Ken Hoyt

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Commissioner Strouse, seconded by Commissioner Majewski, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Maye Tessner-Rood spoke about the possibility of Hayes Township rebuilding their community center on Grant Road. It has moved through their process with the recommendation of their Planning Commission to come before the County Planning Commission, but it is her understanding that the County Planning Commission is no longer active. Therefore Hayes Township would be asking for a waiver from the Board of Commissioners by board resolution. It was moved by Commissioner Gelios, seconded by Commissioner Strouse to waive the County's zoning so Hayes Township can move forward.

Roll call vote revealed:

Yeas: (6) being Commissioners Strouse, Majewski, Bristol, Gelios, Lipovsky, and Pitchford.

Nays: (0)

Absent: (1) Commissioner Kleinhardt

Resolution adopted.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Lipovsky confirmed that the purpose of this meeting was to go over the budget and no decisions would be made.

Administrator Tracy Byard passed out the current 2017 budget, 2018 and 2019 Wage Summary for general fund, a list of mandated versus non-mandated services that we have along with a list of total figures of the non-mandated services. Administrator Byard asked that the board members take a look at all the documentation that was provided to them so they can analyze it all for the next and current budget. She also asked that at the next meeting they take a look at the fees the county charges to see if there is room for adjustment there and be thinking about what will be done with MERS.

Commissioner Gelios commented that at the meeting the night before Hayes Township cut their road patrol from now until July so there will be no money income for that deputy. Ms. Tessner-Rood did offer information that they are meeting again next week and may offer quarter or half time based on their needs, but were required to give a 30 day notice.

Commissioner Gelios started discussion about the unfunded liability of the pension by suggestion talking with MERS and Attorney Stoker to stop that liability from growing. Commissioner Majewski asked where they are at this year with the budget and what they are projecting for next year to get a good handle on which direction to head. Administrator Byard pointed out the Treasurer Beemer-Fritzinger handed out a worksheet at the last meeting that outlined \$113,000.00 shortfall. Treasurer Beemer-Fritzinger confirmed that amount and indicated it she has already added in \$250,000.00 from the delinquent tax fund and also confirmed that cannot continue.

Commissioner Majewski asked what the total revenue was last year. Administrator Byard stated \$11,577,269.00, as listed on the back page of the budget she handed out. Commissioner Majewski stated

that if we take the \$11,500,000.00 and back out the debt, that will give the true number to start with for next year's budget.

Court Administrator Darrell Schlese mentioned at their last Department Head Meeting the Sheriff's office indicated they are \$200,000.00 ahead of budget and the county is \$113,000.00 negative. Are we jumping the gun? Administrator Byard indicated the Treasurer has already contributed \$250,000.00 so, no they are not jumping the gun.

Commissioner Strouse would like to set a "floor" amount that they absolutely would not go below. Maybe figure revenue after expenses, and cut that by \$100,000.00 or \$200,000.00 so we would not be running into a deficit. Commissioner Lipovsky indicated they always set the budget higher than what is taken in and that needs to stop.

Commissioner Lipovsky asked Sheriff Wilson if he had anything he wanted to discuss. Sheriff Wilson said he had some things he would like to address, but would bring it before the Board at a regular meeting. He will be seeking funds to update his aging building. He has identified some safety issues and the County needs to take some of the money that the jail is bringing in and put it back into that facility. Commissioner Bristol asked Sheriff Wilson to bring a list of projects that need to be completed at the next meeting.

Commissioner Pitchford would like to see the Board go more to the conservative side with the revenues so that if something does happen and revenues do go down there is some extra room in the budget.

Commissioner Gelios talked about the funds for capital improvements that were taken out of the budget and some of that is going to have to go back in. Everyone sees where the fund balance is headed and if we don't stop it we will be facing cutting our biggest cost, which is people. He wanted this meeting to put on the next meeting to stop the bleeding and come up with something. He wants to go to the Union and negotiate starting new employees under one of the pension plans that does not add to the current one that is underfunded. Commissioners Strouse and Lipovsky will be meeting with the County Attorney next week and will talk with him about it and bring back to the board at the next meeting.

Commissioner Lipovsky asked the Judges if there was anything they were there to talk about. Judge Evans indicated they were there in an abundance of caution in case the budget was going to be changed in some way that would affect the courts in some fashion. Commissioner Lipovsky confirmed that the purpose of the meeting was not to change the budget, but rather to work on the budget for next year.

Commissioner Strouse thanked the Sheriff, Prosecutor, and Judges for all they are doing to handle the rising crimes and want them to know they are appreciated. He knows that as a Commissioner they have to pay for them keeping the county safe. That is a priority for him as a Commissioner. Judge Farrell then spoke about the reason he was there. All the pieces of the puzzle are intertwined and when you talk about the County Clerk/Register of Deeds and that those positions remain unfilled and do have a direct and indirect impact on the courts, and we witnessed that last week. My presence here today after speaking with Administrator Byard and Clerk/Register Martin today was to make sure that as the budgeting process moves forward there could be some type of committee that sits down with the courts or other departments to see what the direct and indirect impact would be before the Board unilaterally makes certain cuts without really looking at the impact that it will have. So when we have indirect staffing issues in the County Clerk's office that is going to directly impact Judge Mienk, Judge Evans, and myself with running the Recovery Court program, but it will ultimately end up impacting the Prosecutors office and the Sheriff's Department. On behalf of the Courts I would like the opportunity to sit down to discuss the impacts of cuts. Judge Farrell then indicated that he heard a flood of reports that certain Commissioners were commenting they are spending too much on programs such as Recovery Court without really examining the savings it brought or the benefits to the community. He would like an open discussions with the Commissioners. Commissioner Majewski indicated that he didn't believe any Commissioner said they were spending too much on Recovery Court.

Administrator Byard thanked Jim Shuster from IT for providing her with a vendor that will supply them with paper at a lower cost.

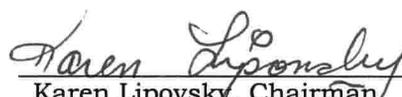
Commissioner Majewski would like put on the agenda for the next meeting to make a decision on the Planning Commission as to whether there was going to be one or not.

Commissioner Pitchford questioned Jim Shuster what the savings were by using Kelly Services for the last IT person hired. Mr. Shuster replied \$8,000.00.

The next Special Budget Meeting was scheduled for Friday, February 10, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.**

  
Lori Martin, Clerk  
Clare County Board of Commissioners

  
Karen Lipovsky, Chairman  
Clare County Board of Commissioners