

**Jackson County Board of Commissioners Meetings Minutes**  
**November 1, 2006 - Committee of the Whole Meeting**  
**Jackson County Commissioners Chambers: 5:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice Chairman Herl called the November 1 st Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners to order at 5:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

(11) Present. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Duckham, Videto, Mahoney, Berkemeier, Smith, Wilson (arrived at 5:34 p.m. after roll call taken), Gumbert and Shotwell (arrived at 5:33 p.m. after roll call taken). (1) Absent. Cmr. Reynolds.

Also present: Randy Treacher – Acting Administrator/Controller, Janet Rochefort – County Treasurer , Karen Coffman – Chief Deputy Treasurer and Amanda Rutan – Chief Deputy County Clerk.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**SPECIAL ORDER:**

a) **County Cash Flow – Janet Rochefort, CountyTreasurer** . Janet Rochefort narrated a Power Point presentation on the County's cash flow from the year 2000 to present. Karen Coffman, Janet's Chief Deputy Treasurer assisted. (Copy of presentation attached). Comments made by Janet that are not included on the printed presentation are as follows: The due date for township taxes is September 14th. By law, the townships have 10 business days to send the money to the County. Some townships are very good and even get the money in the week after the due date. Others wait until the last minute to send out the money. That is the reason for the problem occurring in September 2006.

b) **Board of Commissioners Compensation.** Randy handed out a packet (copy of information attached) that includes examples of other counties meeting structures and also how they are compensated. He stated that as the year ends and a new commission comes forward, any change in compensation for the next two years has to be approved by this board before December 31 st. Since there has been some discussion on going to a committee of the whole system or changing committees, etc, any change that would potentially change the compensation needs to go along with that. There aren't as many counties that work under a committee of the whole as there are that work in a more traditional committee system. Those that do use the committee of the whole use them differently. Some of them use it as an advisory and some of them handle most of their business. There is even one county that hold a committee of the whole meeting, discusses all of their business and then they go immediately that same day into a regular board meeting and to have formal votes.

Cmr. Lutchka stated that Lenawee County has five committees, the same as we do, except that their Personnel & Finance are two separate committees. Those two committees are committees of the whole; the other three committees they have are separated and held in smaller groups. Randy stated that the compensation listed in the packet is pretty much all over the board with all kinds of different set ups. He feels that the packet provides a pretty good overview of what is occurring in other counties but will be happy to answer any questions.

Cmr. Wilson asked when the last time was that the commissioners received a pay raise. Randy believes it was in 1998 and was 2%.

Cmr. Brittain stated that another point to take into consideration is that when he first came on as a commissioner there were a total of 15 and now there are only 12. That is \$30,000 less than what was appropriated before so he feels they've helped out quite a bit, plus by not taking the increases in salary. His personal opinion when it comes to elected officials other than the commissioners is that they should look at not approving their increases as well. He thinks that they might not agree with it because they do work hard but they've taken a cut themselves. He feels the next time it comes to increases for elected officials, they should be put on a freeze as well.

Cmr. Wilson asked if it takes a motion from the floor at the next meeting to put it out for discussion. Randy stated that anything can be discussed tonight but there just can't be any motions.

Cmr. Lutchka said he has heard a lot of discussion about going to a committee of the whole system and one of the reasons is so that everyone knows more about what is going on with all of the other committees. He is not for

going to a committee of the whole system and thinks that being informed with copies of the agendas (not the entire packet) for each committee would help. If they were placed in each commissioner's mailbox that would allow them to review them and if they find an item they are interested, they could decide whether or not to attend that meeting. Part of his problem with committee of the whole is that he can see them lasting for three or four hours and he does not like to sit for meetings that long. He said if they want an opinion off the top of his head, he feels the current structure should be kept but still believes that the agendas should be provided.

Cmr. Duckham would like to see the minutes from the meetings provided to them more quickly. Randy stated the providing the minutes and the agendas is something that they can do without any trouble at all. The minutes are prepared by Wednesday mornings following the meetings.

Chairman Shotwell asked the board if they felt that County Management and Small Group are doing what they are suppose to because they are suppose to communicate. Cmr. Gumbert stated that she does not like County Management or Small Group. She thinks that the committee systems works good for them and she feels that they get a lot more done with small groups. She does not want to have committee of the whole meetings because she doesn't feel that they accomplish as much and it takes a lot longer to do. She thinks that when there are small groups working together, the bottom line is that it will end up coming through the board. Even if the recommendation is not liked that is coming out of a small committee, there will be an opportunity to bring it back up. She does think that there is a missing link as far as some of information out there and she spoke with Cmr. Videto about it today. She doesn't feel that some of the information coming from Small Groups and County Management is being funneled properly. She thinks that a place needs to be found in the standing committees for that. She also doesn't feel that the Small Group meeting is needed and that it needs to be moved into different committees because it was never needed before. She thinks that it was created to catch everything that doesn't fit. Chairman Shotwell stated that Small Group was here when he came on. Cmr. Herl said it was started by Gene McGraw in 1994. Cmr. Gumbert said she doesn't come to it now because she feels that it should fit within the committee system. If a decision is going to be made with this board, it needs to come through the committee.

Cmr. Videto likes the committee structure and thinks that one of the things as a board that is lacking is that as commissioners they don't talk enough. He doesn't mean to set up votes or anything else but just true communication. What he likes about Small Groups and County Management is that there is a lot of information about what is happening in Jackson County . He does disagree though that if there is a business item brought up, he believes that it should be funneled through a committee. Overall, he thinks it is a good opportunity for commissioners to get a heads up on what is going on and also of some issues that may be coming up in the future. He has talked with other counties that have committee of the whole meetings and they feel they are a lot of wasted time.

Cmr. Duckham thinks that Small Group is very informative and useful.

Cmr. Herl likes the committee system that they are currently using. He also likes the suggestion that Cmr. Duckham made to get the minutes ahead of time but was wondering if they could get them by e-mail instead of paper.

Cmr. Berkemeier finds the leadership meetings to be helpful. He thinks they help to give a broad, overall view of things that are going on or coming up like Cmr. Videto said and he thinks they work. He thinks that Cmr. Mahoney's concern and suggestion to go to a committee of the whole system stems from poor communications. Sometimes he can see that there are cliques developing among commissioners where certain information gets shared with some people and not with everybody. He thinks that needs to be addressed or improved somehow. He would be very concerned for a committee of the whole because most of the committee meetings are relatively well managed so they don't go on forever. He stated that if there are twelve commissioners sitting around the table that all want to weigh in on issues that come up in a committee of the whole, the meetings would be very long. He doesn't think that most people have the time or want to sit through a meeting that long. Most of the time at the committee meetings, they last approximately an hour to two hours and business gets taken care of. People feel like they have had the opportunity to participate and he feels it works. He thinks that Gail's concern of the communication problem and people getting left out of the loop can be addressed in other ways.

Cmr. Wilson supports the committee of the whole meeting because he feels one of the biggest mistakes that this commission made was revising the committee meetings to not allow commissioners to participate in the discussion. He feels that was designed to purposely keep commissioners out of the loop as far as when the item was on the table and there might be some input. To make a commissioner go through public comment to get their point across is a slap in the face to an elected official. He believes that is why there are the problems there are with divisiveness. He feels that if Jackson County is going to be considered a progressive community, elected officials need to be kept in the loop and he believes that a committee of the whole will serve that purpose. He said he does not watch a clock when he is at a meeting; when it is over it is over. He said that if everyone is worried about

having to spend more time as an elected official, then they shouldn't run for office. Elected officials have to accommodate their responsibilities to the public that elected them. He thinks another advantage to committee of the whole meetings is that they reduce a lot of the administrative work on the Administrator's part in having to assemble separate committee packets, producing all of that information and then, of course, having to sit through four meetings versus having to sit through one. A lot of things happen in the Personnel & Finance meetings that he doesn't particularly agree with so he had to bring it out on the floor through a support at a regular full board meeting. He said he knew it was never good because it wasn't going to go anywhere but he at least had to get it out for discussion. He thinks that committee of the whole would go a long way in bringing a lot of cohesiveness to the next commission because otherwise it will continue with the same problems. These problems are not new and they have been around for a long time. He stated that it is broke and he thinks that it needs to be fixed. He thinks a committee of the whole that Cmr. Mahoney suggested is a good start.

Cmr. Videto offered a quote from Max Videto from quite a few years ago, "If you can't get it done in a half an hour, it probably won't get done". He said that was a little bit to the extreme but stated to everyone who has served on different boards, if they have been involved like he has in the past and the meeting goes over an hour and a half to two hours, focus and attention are lost. He said that as he goes through the handout provided by Randy, it looks to him like a lot of the counties that have gone to committee of the whole have doubled their meetings. Where Jackson County typically has a committee meeting or whole board meeting, a lot of counties are having two committee of the whole meetings plus two other meetings so they are actually increasing their meetings. What that tells him is that when they went away from their committee structure because they weren't using it, they are losing productivity. He doesn't care if it takes three hours to get the work done but he knows from his past that if the meetings go too long, you lose people because it become redundant and drags on and on. He likes the system the way it is.

Cmr. Brittain would like to echo what Cmr. Wilson said about time. He said he doesn't care if the meeting lasts for two hours because they are getting paid. He agrees with the committee of the whole. He knows that when Betty Jo was the chairman of the board, there weren't the problems of getting the information to everyone. It seemed to happen after Betty Jo was gone because he felt very informed when she was chairman and now he would say that it's the total opposite. He said that if they are not going to the committee of the whole, he would like to eliminate the Personnel & Finance committee and spread it out amongst the three other committees that they have right now. That way everyone would meet on the same day and would all have the same information. He said they have put it in their policies that commissioners are no longer allowed to speak at committees unless it's approved by the chairman of that committee. If they don't want you to speak you won't be able to unless it's at the beginning or the end and not when the issue comes up. He doesn't think that is fair. He thinks the only fairness would be to eliminate the Personnel & Finance committee if we are not going to go to a committee of the whole or go just to the committee of the whole system. He agrees with Cmr. Mahoney that there isn't the communication that they deserve as commissioners. He feels the same as Cmr. Berkemeier that there are cliques that some people get their information from but the rest of the commissioners are left out. He doesn't feel that is fair to the commissioners and the people they are representing.

Cmr. Mahoney feels that we need a change. The counties that she has talked to that have committee of the whole do not get lost. They still have a separate chairman for the committee items. Two are taken on one day and the other two are taken on another. In the middle of the meeting when certain items get finished that person stops chairing and the other person begins so it doesn't eliminate chairmanships. She said what it does eliminate is the bifurcation of information. There is a way to do it so that everybody will still be able to have their leadership role if that is the issue. Her concern is that everybody needs the opportunity to hear the information at the same time, which is not happening right now. Stories end up changing when it is said from one person to the other and then it becomes a he said, she said and then they have to prove to each other what they said. She said that if we are taking about developing a board in the next commission that is cohesive and will function together to show a united front and also to try to bring a county administrator here to hire, it would be as this commission gets the opportunity to gel together, come to respect each other and function in a committee system. She said maybe it would only be a front but at least it would be united. She said if we talk about what is being conveyed to the public and what kinds of things we are willing to do to bring change and to show the positive attitude within a commission is to show that we are trying to work together. Most of the boards that do it are not meeting at 10:00 in the morning; they meet from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. so if the staff that has to come to do reports are not on overtime and then the commission could stay for the hour afterwards. There is flex time being given all of the time. She thinks that it would simplify the system to a point where everyone could function together. It doesn't eliminate chairmanships it just simply puts the commission at an advantage to hear everything together at the same time so things can be talked about. Perhaps it would eliminate some of the long debates that happen on the floor because someone didn't know that something happened or they had a question about something they heard. She believes in the committee system but thinks that everybody should have a fair chance at the information and she knows that is not happening right now. She knows it was different in the past but she thinks that the board needs to develop a system so that they can move forward as they prepare to go through an administrator search. That will be a big job and she feels that everyone should know what each others goals and objectives are in order to bring somebody here to work. She thinks that this is their opportunity. She is not so worried about the compensation.

She thinks it all will fit in but there is a way to do it so the meetings can be controlled because there will still be Chairs. It is not like there will be one long agenda, there will still be items underneath committees and agendas should still be set according to that and change Chairs. She feels it can be done and that it would give the board a different type of opportunity.

Cmr. Wilson said that the nice thing about committee of the whole meetings is that you don't have to take votes. He said you aren't under any pressure to establish a position that evening. There will be time between the committee of the whole and the next voting meeting to either solidify your own position or understand other people's position and possibly even change your own. He stated he does have a question on the mechanics of the committee of the whole. He asked, since no votes are taken and say for instance that Region II comes with their recommendations on land usage, would those just be put into a consent agenda for the full board meeting or are there time issues. Chairman Shotwell stated that you can vote in committee of the whole meetings but the board chooses not to. Committee of the whole is used as a consensus building tool for communication and information. You can still have your members be the members of County Affairs being the ones that are polled to vote. Cmr. Wilson stated that it is the best of both worlds. Cmr. Mahoney agreed.

Cmr. Duckham likes the committee set up that we have now. He can foresee people not showing up because they reviewed the agenda and nothing pertains to them. Cmr. Mahoney said that it is a full commission meeting which is required. Cmr. Duckham said that if there are separate committees that vote on issues, if a person doesn't vote, they won't worry about being on time. Cmr. Mahoney said that it could be that everybody still votes. Cmr. Duckham said that he believes what is already in place works but there is a breakdown of communication. He said that if the board had the minutes quicker there'd be more time to make a consensus.

Cmr. Herl said that everyone is concerned about missing meetings but asked why they can't have all of the standing committee meetings on the same day. It used to be that the County Affairs meetings were held at 8:00 a.m. and wouldn't get out until 11:00 a.m. Agencies would be ready and waiting to come in as they were walking out. Meetings now only last about an hour or so. He wonders if someone is afraid to miss something why all four meetings can't be held back to back. P&F could be held on Monday afternoons and he said that Human Services meetings don't really last that long either so the two could almost be put together. Cmr. Gumbert said that she thinks the reason it was changed was because the people working for a living can't sit and wait all day. Cmr. Herl stated he understands that reasoning but asked how then do they plan to hold committee of the whole meetings that last all day then.

Cmr. Brittain would still like to have the Personnel & Finance Committee divided between the three other committees. He is still having a problem with not being able to speak during standing committees since he is a commissioner. Cmr. Berkemeier said that it is kind of a hypothetical problem because it has hardly ever come up. Cmr. Brittain & Cmr. Wilson said that it has happened to both of them. Cmr. Brittain said that is why he stopped coming to a lot of the meetings because they won't let him speak. Cmr. Gumbert said that is why they changed the rule. Cmr. Berkemeier said yes the rule did change but he can't remember more than one or two occasions. He does recognize that there is a possible problem there for someone who may want to speak. Cmr. Wilson said that there have been a lot of times when commissioners would attend the different committee meetings and just sit around the room (back when there was one big table) and they would raise their hand to get involved in the discussion. Cmr. Berkemeier asked if that was before the rule was changed. Cmr. Mahoney said yes. Cmr. Berkemeier stated that when he first came on the commission, that was how all of the committees operated and it seemed to work okay too. Cmr. Wilson said that he used to enjoy coming to the other meetings but when he has to stand up to make a public comment and his issue is way at the other end of the agenda, he doesn't feel that there is the same amount of impact in his position. He asked if the new board can change it. Chairman Shotwell said that they can't change compensation. Cmr. Wilson said that they can go to the committee of the whole if they decide. He asked why the current board should make the decision. Chairman Shotwell asked why not because it's part of their job as commissioners. He stated that you don't stop working as of the election in November; you work all the way through to the end of the year. Cmr. Wilson said that once you have the new make up of the board, it might be a board that can work with the current structure or maybe it will be a board with progressive ideas and change things a little bit and make it more of one rather than twelve. He'd hate to make that decision for them.

Cmr. Videto feels really bad that Personnel & Finance is taking a lot of jabs tonight. The only thing that makes any sense to him is that under his leadership they rarely do a bad job. He said that there are some real concerns about poor information. Over the last couple of years the board was addressing issues that were getting debated over the airwaves and in print and he didn't see a lot of that with previous commissions. He thinks that a lot of times the board reacted to those situations because they weren't acting as commissioners and they weren't taking care of the issues there, they were taking care of them out in the community trying to push their own personal agenda. His concern is that some of the reactions toward changes were actually reactions to things that were going on with individual members of the commission. That bothers him. What bothers him even more is the criticism coming out of Personnel & Finance that supposedly they were shutting commissioners out or that there were things going on there. He said he hasn't heard anything previously and asked everyone to talk to him or put their concerns in

writing with support of why they feel the system isn't working. Just to say it is failing doesn't help to solve the problem. Cmr. Mahoney asked Cmr. Videto if he feels there is great communication between the commissioners. Cmr. Videto thinks that as a board they are falling short on that and doesn't disagree but isn't sure that he can buy into the committee of the whole solving that problem. He thinks that as commissioners they need to get their act together and start doing business the way they should be doing business. He isn't sure that the committee of the whole is the answer for that ideal they are trying to get to. He thinks that there are other things that are going on and there are reasons for that but as a board they need to get back to trusting and respecting each other.

Cmr. Brittain would like to see the board try the committee of the whole for at least one year. If it works out then it can be adopted for another year and if it doesn't, then they can return to the old system. He would like the board be open to trying it out. He thinks the board definitely needs a change.

Cmr. Berkemeier would like to hear what Randy thinks. He received a vote of confidence from just about everybody recently and stated that he has watched them and heard them. Cmr. Mahoney pointed out that the Chairman hasn't spoken yet. Cmr. Berkemeier stated he would like to hear from both of them.

Chairman Shotwell stated first he will answer the issue on committee speak. If it is truly an issue it can be taken back before the policy committee and let them review it and then bring it back to the commission. That can be solved very simply the next time the policy ad hoc committee meets. That means that he needs commissioners who will agree to serve on that committee and who will attend and participate in the debate and bring their ideas to the table. The commissioners who are there will be putting forth a new policy so everybody needs to be there from both sides. Second, the way he sees the committee of the whole system working is that there would be County Affairs and County Agencies first and then Human Services and Personnel & Finance. It would be conducted the way that Cmr. Mahoney has talked about. He doesn't see why an hour and a half meeting for both of them won't work. If the meeting ends early then a break can be taken until the start of the next committee meeting. He personally likes the system the way it is in place right now with County Management and Small Groups on top of it because he thinks it allows the greatest dissemination of information if the meetings are attended. He said it's not necessary to attend both County Management and Small Groups but suggests that if someone can't attend the Small Groups they should at least attend the County Management meeting. There is no action taken there and it is a public meeting. It also allows the administration to give the commissioners more information than what is received when sitting through a committee meeting. They put forward a lot of things that they say they are working on in the buildings and some of the different things the outside committees are working on. Again, he likes the current system the way it is and he would like to see that stay in place with County Management and Small Groups on the board's idea of a letter of information. He and Randy have talked about it already but he needs help doing it because he works a full time job and is not a retiree that can sit home and accumulate all of that information. He said that it has already been done once but would like to try to do it a little bit more than what they were doing with the administrator stuff and get it out to the commissioners. They intend to do it electronically instead of with paper because it is faster and cleaner and then that also allows everybody to return an input to him, Randy or to other commissioners so the debate may be carried on in an informal matter. Using the letter of information he thinks it will be a good idea and they will make attempts to get it out a little bit better than in the past.

Randy said that from an administrative standpoint, they can make either system work and certainly both of them have their advantages. He said to be bluntly honest, what has to happen under either situation is that the group has to have confidence in the rest of their members. It doesn't matter what system is in place, if there isn't confidence in each other, it will not work. He stated that the committee system can be improved, which sounds like is what the majority of the board is currently leaning towards. He said that they can provide the agendas and the minutes. He stated that as the Chair said, if there is enough of a concern by the entire board that the rule should be changed that non-member commissioners should be allowed to speak, that is something that every board member can easily take care of. It takes a very little bit of work on the part of the ad hoc committee to remove that, make a recommendation to the board and then vote on it. He said since the majority of the board wants to look at the current committee system, if we do these three things: committee agendas to everyone, minutes almost immediately following the meetings and allow the commissioner non-members of the committee to speak, then you've probably gone a long way with meeting everyone's needs. That might be worth a try rather than going to a committee of the whole which doesn't really seem to have the support of the majority of the group either. Randy feels that the board can do what they need to do.

Chairman Shotwell said that if the board removes County Management and Small Groups, gets rid of the four committees and then goes to the committee of the whole system, it will effectively be reducing everyone's compensation.

Cmr. Duckham said that when he is finished with the County Affairs meeting, he certainly has time to stay and attend the other meeting but doesn't.

Cmr. Gumbert said regarding letting commissioners speak at different meetings, she thinks the policy committee spent a lot of time on that issue and said the reason it was created was because there was a lot of structure missing from those meetings. She wants people to remember that it was done for a reason. She also wanted to make a point about how long meetings last and effectiveness. She stated that just because there is a three hour meeting, it doesn't mean that more will be accomplished than in a one hour meeting. She thinks that there was a little too much leniency as far as letting commissioner and members of the public speak and that is why they tried to build the structure. It wasn't to try to eliminate people from talking because they want that involvement but she said that it was to provide structure in order to get business done.

Cmr. Lutchka said on that same light regarding that committee, he thinks it was set up that way because sometimes one of the non-members of the committee was dominating the discussion at the committee meeting. He said sometimes that is alright but they would just keep repeating themselves. He said that maybe it is part of the Chairman's fault because if it starts happening to him, he doesn't allow it. He said that he can change it but he remembers the discussion that was had at the time it was set up.

Cmr. Brittain offered his suggestion for an easy remedy to the committee of the whole if the board does go to that structure: only pay a commissioner if they attend a meeting from start to finish regardless of what committee they are on. He feels that is someone gets up and leaves before the meeting finishes they shouldn't get any pay. He thinks that is the easiest way because it won't matter what committee a commissioner is on as long as they attend the committee of the whole meeting in its entirety, they will be paid. Cmr. Berkemeier asked what happens if someone gets stuck in traffic and are five minutes late. Cmr. Brittain feels that they should leave earlier then if they are concerned about the per diem pay.

Cmr. Lutchka said that it seems to him that the board is interested in keeping the system the way it is. His proposal regarding compensation would be that commissioners would not be paid for attending County Leadership/Management and Small Group meetings. He feels that it should be part of the base salary to attend those meetings. He stated that the Leadership team is made up of the chairs of the various committees which already get paid more money. His preference would be to keep it like it is and not get paid for the Small Group and Leadership meetings.

Chairman Shotwell provided a summary before the meeting moved on. He stated, for the rest of the year, the committee speak issue will be taken back to the policy committee. In an attempt to get the letter of information, the board will get agendas and minutes right after meetings via e-mail. Chairman Shotwell asked if everyone was comfortable with that. There was no response. He asked if there was someone not comfortable with what was stated. Cmr. Mahoney said no, as long as it is electronically because she feels that it doesn't make sense for the staff to make a copy for them and then also print one to put in their board packet. She feels it shouldn't have to be both. She said that because so many people do not read their e-mails, they are still being sent but then hardcopies are also made to put in each commissioner's box. Chairman Shotwell stated that he believes the county is supplying computers and phone lines to everyone so if someone is accepting those, they should be checking their e-mails. Cmr. Mahoney said she just wanted to clarify. Cmr. Gumbert said no more hardcopies. Cmr. Wilson stated that the Lifeways board went to electronic communications and it really hasn't been working out that well. He said that a lot of times people do not want to sit there and print out 50 or 60 pages of packet information, him included. He has finally figured out how to print single pages but overall he said it is not working out as well as they thought it would be when they made the decision to go electronic. It does involve a lot of printing and he suggested that if anything is sent electronically, not to include color because they have been using up a lot of color cartridges because of that. Cmr. Brittain thinks that if a commissioner requests to have a hardcopy they should be available that way. He doesn't believe that everyone's copy should be automatically eliminated. He stated he doesn't read his e-mail because of all of the junk he gets and he doesn't have time to read them. Cmr. Gumbert asked if he has a county computer. Cmr. Brittain stated yes. Chairman Shotwell asked if he has a county phone line. Cmr. Brittain stated yes, he does. Chairman Shotwell asked Cmr. Brittain if he should give them back then. Cmr. Brittain stated that he may have time once a month to get on the computer. His personal opinion is that computers are evil because they take away a lot of good time when someone could be doing constructive things or having family time. He doesn't have the time because when he gets on he doesn't realize how long he is on there. Cmr. Gumbert feels that county computers should not be available then and have one instead on the sixth floor with a printer and all kinds of back up ink cartridges. That way if commissioners don't have time to do it at home, they can print the agendas while they are at the Tower Building. Cmr. Mahoney said that she was simply saying that if the administration is going to get the committee minutes the week of the meeting, that it be available electronically at that time but still put them in the board packets. She just doesn't feel that they should have to print them twice. Cmr. Lutchka agrees that just the minutes and the agenda should be available electronically.

Randy spoke on the issue of compensation. He said that obviously it is a board decision but wanted to point out a couple of things. He stated that the packet is not a total survey of every county. There are fifteen counties that are paid less than what the current compensation is for Jackson County and seven are paid more. There are seven who also do not have per diem and almost all but about three or four pay for or have some type of health insurance for

commissioners. Almost everyone pays the IRS rate for mileage. Calhoun County does not pay mileage. He stated that that is a quick and dirty overview of what is contained in the packet. Cmr. Wilson already brought up how long it has been since there has been a change in compensation. This decision, contrary to the other one, does have to be made by the end of the year or they can make no decision, which is still a decision in itself.

Cmr. Duckham would like to volunteer that everyone takes a 2% decrease and hopefully make it a countywide practice. He would also like to set up rainy day fund.

Cmr. Wilson would like to suggest that the county commission pay be increased to \$15,000 per commissioner. He feels if you they do their job well as a commissioner, they have to put a lot of time into it. When they have township meetings that they have to go to, it takes away a lot of time. He said, sure, they could charge mileage if they wanted to but he thinks the commissioners are tremendously underpaid for the amount of work that goes into being responsible for the operation of the county. He thinks that the commission needs to have a lot more self respect for what they do. He has never bought into the sacrificial part of this commission. He has always felt that everyone has deserved raises right along with everybody else. Now it is going to look like a bigger raise because the commission hasn't taken one in such a long time. It's like increasing license fees and everything else. When it hasn't been done for a long time, it eventually has to be done. He really feels that for the position, \$15,000 is a very fair sum for a commissioner to make and then of course the leadership would be paid a little bit more for their time involved.

Cmr. Gumbert feels that it needs to be kept the way it is.

Cmr. Herl also feels that is should be left the same. He is satisfied. He knows that a lot of time is spent going out to township offices, he even has two township meetings a month but to him it's just part of the job. He said that they make enough just by going to one board meeting a month. He is also on quite a few outside committees that he gets per diem for and he is on them because he has the time to do it and enjoys it.

Cmr. Wilson knows that increasing your own pay is not a politically easy thing to do but it is something that he is more than willing to support as an outgoing commissioner because he knows how hard the job is. He has worked very hard at it but he has enjoyed every minute of it too. It has some great perks but the bottom line is that he puts in about four or five hours a week just at home doing research and things like that, plus there are other things outside of the job.

Cmr. Lutchka feels that the base pay should stay the same.

Cmr. Berkemeier said that it won't affect him because he won't be there but he feels that by not adjusting the pay at all, they are in fact taking a pay cut because the cost of living is going up. There haven't been any increases for apparently eight years. The commission before he was around took some very serious reduction in the way they were compensated. There are no longer pension benefits and health care benefits and the compensation has pretty much been frozen for eight years other than the per diems for different meetings. He thinks that sometimes, even though it isn't politically correct being right before an election, there should be adjustments in compensation on some regular basis. It is done with all of the employees, elected officials and department heads. It seems to him that it is only reasonable to adjust the commissioner's pay as well.

Cmr. Smith feels it should be kept the way it is.

Cmr. Duckham knew what he was getting into when he was ran for the position but he is different than some commissioners. He spends five and half hours a month sitting in meetings and that doesn't include driving time and he doesn't charge mileage. His district includes Norvell Township , Columbia Township , Napoleon Township and the Village of Brooklyn . He attends all of their meetings to advise them of what is going on at the county meetings and also to inform them of what may be coming up on the next month's agenda. He knew what he was getting into when he did it and stated that it is a lot of work if someone is going to do the job and do it right.

Cmr. Mahoney thinks the commission is entitled to and deserves the same amount of compensation that is given to the non-union employees. She thinks that they deserve at least a 2% increase.

Chairman Shotwell said that some commissioners feel that there shouldn't be any increase and some feel there should be a 2% increase. He thinks that what he is going to ask Administration to bring back to Personnel & Finance in November is figures for -2%, 0%, 1% & 2% for them to send forward to the board and then it can be voted up or down. He asked everyone if they thought it should be done then or in December. Cmr. Mahoney thinks

they should wait until December. Cmr. Wilson asked not to forget his suggestion to increase compensation to \$15,000 per year for each commissioner.

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Chairman Shotwell asked if this commission wants to recommend to the next commission or do they want it to come forward on the first agenda in January for them to make a decision as to whether or not there should be a celebration. Cmr. Gumbert said that she feels that it definitely should be done but maybe an ad hoc committee should be set up with some of the members that will still be on next year so the process can be started early. Cmr. Mahoney would like to see it wait until January. Cmr. Berkemeier feels that there should be some kind of an observance and thinks that it might be worth while to talk to somebody at the Ella Sharp Museum or maybe the Historical Society so it is a notable observance. Chairman Shotwell said he thinks that everyone agrees with that but the question really is administratively, do they want the Administration to start working on it now or do we want the next commission to start it. Cmr. Lutchka suggested that maybe there could be some kind of a ceremony or celebration the first day the fair opens since it's in August. He said it still needs to be cleared with Sally but he thinks she will go for that. He asked if that means that it needs to start now or in January. Cmr. Duckham feels it should be handled by the next commission. Cmr. Wilson asked if there will be some kind of budget established for it. He said he imagines that if it is done right, there will probably be some kind of a fireworks show and someone will have to pay for it. Cmr. Mahoney said that they will work in collaboration with the other governmental agencies and let them help pay for it.

Cmr. Wilson said on a related issue, the board needs to start issuing proclamations on these special events. The Mayor of Jackson, Marty Griffin, gets to have all of the recognition but nobody comes from the county to recognize Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, etc. He thinks that the board needs to think ahead and start passing proclamations that the Chair can present at the different functions and maybe a per diem can be set. There is a lot that goes on so that is something to think about for the future.

Chairman Shotwell said that the next meeting is November 8 th at 5:30 p.m. Cmr. Mahoney stated she will be in Washington D.C. at her National Committee Meeting so she will not be able to attend.

The meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, Committee of the Whole Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Steve Shotwell-Chairman, Jackson County Board of Commissioners  
Sandy Crowley-Jackson County Clerk  
Respectfully submitted by Amanda L. Rutan-Chief Deputy County Clerk