

Jackson County Board of Commissioners Meetings Minutes
February 18, 2008 - Regular Meeting
Jackson County Commissioners Chambers: 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Shotwell called the February 18, 2008 meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners to order at 7:01 p.m.

INVOCATION: by Commissioner Todd Brittain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: by Chairman Steve Shotwell

ROLL CALL: County Clerk Amanda L. Riska

(12) Present: Commissioners Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way, Elwell, and Shotwell.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *Moved by Mahoney, supported by Duckham for the approval of the agenda.* Motion carried.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS:

A. Resolution (02-08.09) Honoring Cheryl Kiefer. Award Presented by Chairman Shotwell to the family of Ms. Kiefer. *Moved by Herl, Supported by Elwell.* Roll call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS/PETITIONS:

Moved by Videto, supported by Poleski to receive correspondence from John R. Case Sr. of Spring Arbor Township regarding a complaint against the Road Commission concerning a mailbox damaged by snow. Motion carried unanimously.

SPECIAL ORDERS/PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Resolution (02-08.10) to Appoint an Administrator/Controller and Establish a Succession Plan.

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Poleski to Appoint Randy Treacher as the Administrator/Controller and Establish a Succession Plan. Roll Call: (11) Yeas. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Shotwell, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way, and Elwell. (1) Nay. Cmr. Brittain. Motion carried.

Cmr. Brittain stated that he has a hard time voting in favor of this. He thinks that Randy does an excellent job and has taken on additional duties, but to only change the name and then give him an almost \$20,000 increase, he doesn't agree with. He stated that Randy may be willing to stay on and according to some discussions, maybe even five years. He doesn't know why they would hire a full-time deputy for five years if they could get by with a part-time, which he believes Randy at one point stated he could. He will be opposing the resolution.

Cmr. Elwell stated that he doesn't think it is just a name change, and the reality is that Randy has been doing the job of the Administrator for quite some time and has done a good job of it. He doesn't think it's just about the money, but he doesn't know why they would want him doing the job of the Administrator and being compensated as if he was the Deputy Administrator. He thinks the job duties go with the title, and the pay goes along with it and is commensurate for the work he's been doing.

Cmr. Mahoney stated that she thinks the board is making an acknowledgment that they could have made a year and a half ago. She said that Randy has worked without the pay for a year and a half to satisfy some of the commissioners who didn't think he was worthy of it two and a half years ago. She said that for this not to happen would be a slap in his face, and she is so happy that the board has moved into a position and made a decision to give people recognition where it's due. She thinks that it is more than a title and thinks that pay may not be all of it, but it is part of it. If they ever expect to attract another Administrator after Randy retires, as he deserves to, then this is something that this board needs to do and should have done long before now.

Cmr. Herl stated that he has worked with Randy for two years and he has never taken a pay increase, and has been a deputy all along. He gives him a lot of credit for the many hats he wears as different department heads, and feels that he is entitled to all of it. He mentioned how Randy stepped in on the Road Commission and didn't take anything for it. He thinks they have a good Administrator right now, and they ought to try to keep him. He said that Randy has been overworked and needs somebody to help him. He believes it is time to step up and get a deputy to follow Randy, as there will be some big shoes to fill if Randy walks out the door. He will be supporting this motion 100%.

Cmr. Brown stated that he looks at the County like a business not a government, and in any business you have a Vice President and would have several as a bank. He pointed out how many departments Randy has to oversee as one person, and said that his hat is off to him for a job well done. He feels that a full-time deputy is needed so that person can learn the ropes from people who have been with the County a long time and have done a good job at it. He said it is time to move on with an Administrator and a deputy, and to Randy a job well done.

Cmr. Poleski echoed what Cmr. Mahoney, Elwell, Herl, and Brown said. He pointed out that not only would this simply be adding a deputy and acknowledging Randy's excellent service, but it would also be establishing a succession plan for the Administration which he believes is very important for the County. He said that Randy has given them the stability they wanted, after some of the difficulty a couple years ago. He thinks that the succession plan that this resolution would put into place is appropriate, and will lend further stability to the County and its management. He fully supports the resolution and stated his intention to vote for it.

Cmr. Lutchka doesn't think they would attract the people they want to fill Randy's shoes, if they made the deputy position part-time. He said that he didn't want to put words in Randy's mouth, but he doesn't think that he wants to stay for another five years. He thinks that they need to attract the best possible people they can to replace him when he's gone and feels that the deputy is the place to do it.

Cmr. Brittain stated that it was mentioned that Randy hasn't taken an increase since he first came on, but said that he is actually making double of when he first came on. He stated that he was making \$56,000 when he first came on as the Deputy Administrator and believes he is now making close to \$92,000 as the Acting Administrator/Controller. He said that he can see going with a full-time deputy and wouldn't have a problem with that, but if Randy were to choose to stay on for five more years he thinks they should wait to get a full-time deputy until the year before he leaves and have a part-time person until that time. He doesn't think they should force Randy to leave, and they should allow him to stay as long as he chooses.

Cmr. Duckham stated that he will be supporting this resolution. He said Randy has saved the county money time and time again, so he is worth every penny and probably more.

Cmr. Smith stated that she thinks Randy has done an amazing job, and she feels that he is worth every penny that he is paid as well.

Cmr. Herl responded to the comment made that when Randy first started he only made \$56,000. He said that this is a bargain because if they left him at \$56,000 and paid him for all of the different hats he wears, they would probably be up to around \$100,000.

Chairman Shotwell stated that it has been his honor and privilege since he came on the commission, to work with Mr. Treacher. He said that he has truly been an Administrator by being a leader when needed to be, assisting the commission to understand what their role is, helping them to craft policy, and helping them to become an example of government throughout the county and throughout the state. He looks forward to working with him as long as he would like to stay.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *Opened at 7:16 p.m.*

Jason Hammond spoke regarding the Jackson County Deputy's Association negotiations.

Lynn Bolenbaugh spoke regarding dogs barking at the Animal Shelter.

Janet Rochefort spoke in favor of the appointment of Randy Treacher as the Administrator/Controller.

Estelle Graves spoke regarding the JTA contract and the need for more hours.

Public Comment closed at 7:29 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETINGS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. Personnel & Finance

1. Parks Budget Adjustment

The meeting was adjourned briefly at 7:29 p.m. to allow the commissioners who are members of the Personnel and Finance Committee to meet behind Cmr. Videto's desk.

The meeting was called back to order at 7:33 p.m.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the 1/15/08 Regular Meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners Meeting minutes.

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Brown for approval of the meeting minutes from the 1/15/08 Regular Meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Cmr. Shotwell made a correction on #2 – Resolution (02-08.06) should be \$160,000.00 not, \$1600,000.00.

Cmr. Brittain asked to pull Item B -6, Bid Summary for Purchase of Patrol Cars – Sheriff's Office. This will be moved to County Agencies.

Moved by Lutchka, supported by Herl for approval of the consent agenda. Roll call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

A. County Affairs:

1. MDOT Contract for a Federal/State/Local Airport Project Under the Block Grant Program – Land Acquisition Costs of Parcel #85.

2. Resolution (02-08.06) Authorizing the County Board of Commissioners Chair, James E. Shotwell, Jr., to sign MDOT Contract #2008-134 (FEDERAL PROJECT #B-26-0051-2007), for Land Acquisition Costs of Parcel #85 (Macchia Hangar)

3. 2007 Annual Report – Jackson County Airport – Reynolds Field

4. Delinquent Tax Fund – RRF to pay a 4.5% Interest Payment on the Delinquent Tax Fund for the Period 2008-2013 Until the Loan is Paid Off

5. Storm Water Pollution Prevention Initiative (SWPPI)

B. County Agencies:

1. Bid Summary for Purchase of Patrol Cars – Sheriff's Office

2. Neglect and Delinquency Bids – Circuit Court

C. Human Services: None

D. Personnel & Finance:

1. Transportation Agreement Between the Jackson Transportation Authority and the County of Jackson for the Period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.

2. Budget Adjustments

3. Soil Erosion Fund

4. Claims – 11/1/07 – 11/30/07 and 12/1/07 – 12/31/07

STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. County Affairs – Commissioner Dave Lutchka

1. February 2008 Appointments

2. Hospital Finance Authority – one public member, term to 12/31/2008

Cmr. Lutchka stated that the committee recommended Jason Sanders. No other nominations from the floor. *Jason Sanders appointed.*

3. South Central Michigan Works – one Commissioner member (alternate), term to 1/09

No action taken by the board.

4. Economic Development Corporation – one City Council member, term to 2/2014

Cmr. Lutchka stated that the committee recommended Martin Griffin. No other nominations from the floor. *Martin Griffin appointed.*

B. County Agencies – Commissioner Gail W. Mahoney

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Herl to approve the RFP process for the new sheriff cars. Roll Call: (10) Yeas. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Poleski, Videto, Shotwell, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way, and Elwell. (2) Nays. Cmr. Brittain and Duckham.

Cmr. Brittain stated that he will be voting against it. He said that he could see replacing a few of the cars, but he didn't agree with the mileage on two of the vehicles.

Cmr. Duckham stated that he will be voting against it also. He said that with today's standard of vehicles, some of the cars aren't even due for a tune-up yet being that some of them are just at 100,000 miles and some under 100,000. He thinks that 100,000 miles is 100,000 miles, no matter how you go. He thinks they could get new suspensions put on the cars that need it, for about \$2,000 or \$3,000. His opinion is that when the legal system is making up 70% of the County's budget, they have to start finding ways to wrap their arms around this thing and start looking for ways to cut that part of the budget back.

Cmr. Elwell stated that from his experience, 100,000 miles on a patrol car is not the same as 100,000 miles on any other car whether it needs a tune-up or not. He stated that having driven a patrol car for 28 years, he doesn't think cars at 100,000 miles should be used as primary cars, which they currently are. He said that many years ago they went through a re-building process and it didn't work out because it wasn't worth the amount of money that they had to put into them. He thinks that \$20,000 for these cars on the state bid is the thing to do. He doesn't want deputies out there in patrol cars with 100,000 miles on them having to go on complaints at very high speeds. He will be voting for this.

Cmr. Brown echoed that 100,000 miles on a patrol car that is on the road 24/7 is not the same as on the average car that is driven everyday back and forth to work. He said that the wear and tear that he sees on these cars when they come into the shop is amazing, especially with all of the potholes in the roads and parking lots. He will be voting yes because he believes they need to keep their fleet up to date, and 100,000 miles on a patrol car is a throw away car to him.

Comr. Poleski stated that he agrees with Comrs. Ellwell and Brown. He thinks that they owe it to those who stand in harm's way to provide them with the best equipment they can. He also pointed out that several of the cars that will be taken out of the front line will not be retired, but used for some other purpose other than the kind of hazardous duty that they expect of road patrol deputies. He also thinks that the fleet management people have given them their best wisdom, and they should respect the view of their management.

Comr. Brittain added that those vehicles are not on the road 24 hours a day 7 days a week, but that they are on shifts. He also said that if someone has driven vehicles for 20 years, they would know that police cars had posi-traction on them which spins both wheels at the same time. He said that this was a problem with police cars because they were always pressing on the gas and it would cause the frame to bend. He also stated that if the purchase does go through, he wants to make sure that the new vehicles go directly to the patrol officers and not the Sheriff, Under-Sheriff, the Deputies, or the Captains. He wanted a guarantee that will not happen.

C. Human Services – Commissioner Mike Way

None.

D. Personnel and Finance – Commissioner James Videto

1. Parks Budget Adjustment

Moved by Videto, supported by Way to transfer \$67,500 from the Parks 208 fund to the golf course 218 fund to prevent a fund deficit for 2007 and approve the carry-overs for line items for the Falling Waters Trail Construction, the Falling Water Trail Maintenance, and the Park Equipment Fund from the 2007 to 2008 budget year. Roll Call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

Comr. Poleski asked for clarification on which fund the transfer was coming from and which fund the transfer was going to. He also wanted to verify that he was correct in thinking that the deficit was a result of revenues being inadequate to expenses there.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Animal Shelter Landscaping Report – A verbal report will be provided by the Acting Administrator/Controller, Randy Treacher

Randy stated that he has met with a landscape architect on two separate occasions and he will be coming back in March with pictures of the back of the area between the residents in question and the shelter, and he will have some recommendations. He thinks that by doing some ambitious planting, it will minimize any problems that the neighbors might see. He stated that they will be bringing it before the commissioners before they do anything, as well as talking with the neighbors and showing them before and after pictures of what it will look like. He said that the architect was very impressed with the setting and wants to keep it more of a meadow type setting. He believes that he has some pretty good ideas and has the kind of resources to take care of the noise and sight problems. He said the plan is to try to do this as soon as the weather breaks.

Comr. Way stated that he was contacted by one of the residents of Ganton Drive about the barking. He said that he went and walked the property line beyond Top Dog close to the residents, and did hear dogs coming from there. He has seen the Landscape Architect's work and has confidence that it will make a big difference once that is done.

NEW BUSINESS:

No New Business

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comment

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Comr. Brittain thanked the commissioners that attended the MAC Conference. He also thinks they should consider changing the bid process so the local bidder would receive preference over the out of town bidder if they were within a certain percentage of the bid. He would like to see them create some sort of policy stating that. He thinks that this should be something they should send to committee.

Comr. Lutchka reminded the commissioners that March 25th is Project R.E.D. at the Fairgrounds and they are in need of people to help guide 3rd graders around. Anyone interested should be there around 8:30 a.m.

Comr. Mahoney suggested that the Chair take Comr. Brittain's suggestion to the Policy Committee to see if they could come up with something to bring back to the board, if that is what the board chooses.

Chairman Shotwell stated that the Administrator will take it to the Policy Committee.

Comr. Poleski stated that he appreciated Estelle Graves' comments regarding JTA and they have already had some discussions on refreshing the committee they have had with the JTA. He is also looking forward to the Animal Shelter plans and the involvement of the community with the formulation of the landscapes. He asked how long it has been since they have had a contract with this particular union and thought that they had an agreement with this union at one point. He said that he knows there are questions with the PTO, but asked if the other terms were substantially consistent with those of other bargaining units. He stated that he looks forward to discussing a policy on local bidding. His initial impression is that to give any preference to local bidder would discourage outside bidders from bidding seriously. He thinks it would end up costing them money, and it is one of the most important jobs of the commission to spend wisely. He will counsel great care in the formulation of any policy that may tend to give preference to any bidder.

Randy Treacher stated that it had been since 2006 since they have had a contract with this particular union. He said that they did have a tentative agreement with them that was rejected by their membership. The simple answer to the consistency of the terms with other bargaining units is yes. He said they came to the board over a year ago for direction as to the terms of bargaining and they now have about 75% of their county employees union and non-union all under the same terms, with only a couple little exceptions. They are offering the same thing that they have offered to the rest of their employees, both union and non-union.

Comr. Brown stated that he would like to keep a handle on the 911 money that they might get from the state and wonders if there is anyway to track it over the next couple of months. He doesn't really know where to go on their web-site or who to talk to about this.

Randy Treacher reminded the commission that the 911 charge doesn't go into effect until July 1st, so nothing will be different between now and then.

CLOSED SESSION:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Shotwell adjourned the February 19, 2008 meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners at 7:54 p.m.

James E. Shotwell – Chairman, Jackson County Board of Commissioners

Amanda L. Riska – County Clerk

Respectfully submitted by Carrienne VanDusseldorp – Chief Deputy County Clerk