

Jackson County Board of Commissioners Meetings Minutes
March 20, 2007 - Regular Meeting
Jackson County Commissioners Chambers: 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Steve Shotwell, at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Poleski

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL - Sandra L. Crowley, County Clerk

Roll Call: (12) Present: Cmrs. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way, Elwell & Shotwell. Absent: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Brittain to approve the Agenda as Published. Motion carried unanimously.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

A. Presentation to the Finance Officer, Gerard Cyrocki, of a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Fiscal Year Ended 12/31/05. Presented by Chairman Shotwell.

B. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Signing Ceremony.

Gary Aten, Executive Director, Michigan Committee for ESGR conducted a signing ceremony for the Jackson County Board of Commissioners to sign a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve, following the lead of the President and Governor Granholm and local leaders.

Chairman Shotwell signed the Statement of Support while Gary Aten handed out patriotic pins.

COMMUNICATIONS/PETITIONS - None

SPECIAL ORDERS/PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert McNitt asked for re-appointment to the LifeWays Board.

Bill Bockwitz asked for re-appointment to the LifeWays Board.

Mike Hoover, Chairman of LifeWays, supports McNitt and Bockwitz.

Chris Backus asked for support for appointment to the Veteran's Affairs position.

Public Comment was closed at 7:13 p.m.
(Short recess for County Affairs to meet)

SPECIAL MEETINGS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A. County Affairs

1. Appointment - Lifeways - two public members with terms ending 3/31/2010.

Meeting called back to order at 7:18 p.m.

MINUTES:

A. Minutes of the 2/20/07 Regular Board Meeting

Moved by Herl, supported by Brown to receive the 2/20/07 Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Duckham to Accept the Consent Agenda Items A through E as follows:
Commissioner Brittain asks that Item A.2. be pulled.

A. County Affairs

1. Dissolve Emergency Medical Services Commission (EMS)
2. Jackson County Road Commission (JCRC) Non-Motorized Pathway Agreement for 2007.
3. Dissolve Cascades Ad-Hoc Committee
4. Grant Application to Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for the Cascades Park Renovation Project.

B. County Agencies - None

C. Human Services

5. JCHD 2006 Annual Report (Provided under separate cover)

D. Personnel & Finance

6. Authorize Chairman of the Board of Commissioners to Sign Building Lease Documents
7. Budget Adjustments - Parks Equipment Fund
- Child Care Fund - PROPS
- Carryover Monies - Drunk Driving Assistance Funds/Judicial Technology Fund/Capital Outlay

E. Claims

8. Claims dated 2/1/07 - 2/28/07 as presented to and approved by the Standing Committees
Motion carried unanimously.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

A. County Affairs - Commissioner Lutchka

1. Consent Agenda Item A.2. - Jackson County Road Commission (JCRC) Non-Motorized Pathway Agreement for 2007.

Moved by Lutchka, supported by Mahoney to Approve the Jackson County Road Commission (JCRC) Non-Motorized Pathway Agreement for 2007.

Commissioner Brittain doesn't have a problem with the contract, but the reason he voted against it in Committee is because they didn't get 3 bids. If they would have had 3 bids and this was the lowest out of 3 bids, he wouldn't have a problem, but there was only 1 bid.

Roll Call: (10) Yeas: Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Poleski, Videto, Shotwell, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way and Elwell. (2) Nays: Cmr. Brittain and Duckham. Motion carried.

2. Appointment of five public members to the Economic Development Corporation with staggered terms.

Moved by Lutchka to appoint the 5 candidates that were recommended to the Board. It's a Chairman appointment. The candidates are: Dennis Hill, Douglas Finch, Phil Willis, Lynn Vermeulen and Jason Sanders. No other nominations from the floor. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Appointment of 2 public members appointed to the LifeWays Board with terms ending 3/20/2010.

Moved by Lutchka to go with the Committee's recommendation of Robert McNitt and William Bockwitz.

Commissioner Brittain nominated Anthony Raduazo and Rhonda Applegate-Nelson.

The Clerk proceeded to ballot. Roll Call: (7) - McNitt (Cmrs. Herl, Duckham, Brown, Smith, Way, Elwell and Shotwell); (4) - Bockwitz (Cmrs. Lutchka, Poleski, Videto and Mahoney); (1) - Raduazo (Cmr. Brittain). McNitt is appointed to the first seat.

The Clerk proceeded to ballot for the second seat. Roll Call: (11) - Bockwitz (Cmrs. Herl, Lutchka, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way, Elwell and Shotwell); (1) - Applegate-Nelson (Cmr. Brittain). William Bockwitz is appointed to the second seat.

4. Appointment to Veterans Affairs - one Persian Gulf veteran with term ending 4/2011.

Moved by Lutchka to appoint Christopher Backus, Sr. *Moved by Elwell* to appoint Mike O'Keefe.

The clerk proceeded to ballot: Roll Call: (11) - Backus (Cmrs. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way and Shotwell); (1) - O'Keefe (Cmr. Elwell) Christopher Backus, Sr. appointed to Veterans Affairs.

5. Appointment to LifeWays - one Commissioner member with term ending 3/2010.

Moved by Lutchka to appoint Commissioner Mahoney to the LifeWays Board. No nominations from the floor. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Resolution (03-07.13) Amending the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Plan to Include the Cascades Park Master Plan.

Moved by Lutchka, supported by Herl to Adopt Resolution (03-07.13)
Roll Call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

B. County Agencies - Commissioner Mahoney
No matters to come before the Board.

C. Human Services - Commissioner Mike Way
1. 1 st Reading of Cremation Fee Increase. (No action needed)

2. Resolution (03-07.12) to Authorize a Contract with Livingston County to Provide Services of the Director of Public Health to the Jackson County Health Department.

Moved by Way, supported by Mahoney to Adopt Resolution (03-07.12)
Roll Call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Personnel and Finance - Commissioner James Videto
No matters to come before the Board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Potential Changes in Standing Committees

Moved by Elwell, supported by Mahoney to Approve Priority 1. Mahoney concurs with the Administrator's recommendations. Chairman Shotwell read from the March 20, 2007, handout regarding Committee Schedules which are: County Affairs - 7:30 a.m., County Agencies - 10:00 a.m., Human Services to follow lunch at 12:30 p.m. and Personnel & Finance at 3:00 p.m. Commissioner Poleski questioned what day the meetings will be held as it doesn't say. He assumes it's Monday. Roll Call: (12) Yeas. Motion carried unanimously. This will start in April, 2007.

B. New Policy

1. Fiscal Policy No. 1150 - Full Faith & Credit

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Lutchka to send this back to the Committee for some additional revisions. Motion carried.

C. Revised Policies

1. 1 st Reading - Board Rules Policy No. 4040 on Agenda changes.

2. 1 st Reading - Board Rules Policy No. 4070 - Committees.

No comments.

D. Resolution (03-07.14) Urging the Governor and the Legislature to Fully Fund the Michigan State University (MSU) Extension at the Current Budgeted Level.

Moved by Herl, supported by Lutchka to Adopt Resolution (03-07.14)

Commissioner Poleski will be voting against this and the next Resolution. There are a lot of problems in Lansing and for us to request that monies be spent before the revenues are determined, he thinks is presumptuous on our part. Mahoney knows the great work that MSU Extension does for the county and also our conservation district, but something has to be cut. She doesn't like asking for something and we don't know where the money will come from. For that reason she's having difficulty supporting these tonight. Videto will be supporting both resolutions tonight because as he's watched over the years, both of these departments have taken numerous financial hits for many years. We know there's going to be cuts. Some departments in the State of Michigan have not been cut for the last three or four years like these two have. Elwell is opposing both also. He can't support giving a blind endorsement to fully fund it. There are many other areas that have been cut already and continue to be cut and we need to be very judicious in deciding whom we want to pick to be fully funded. Lutchka asks if they are worried about "fully" funded, thinking it's going to expand, then the word could be changed. He believes the Cooperative Extension Budget at the State level has taken a harder cut than any other department. The Conservation Department took a 50% cut at the State level for this year and next year they aren't even listed in the budget. Brittain will be opposing both of the motions, but with the economy the way it is, there are other areas that really are going to need support. Way is supporting these for the main reason that it's working and teaching our youth and without our youth, we won't go anywhere. Brown supports this because our community needs this and it's not the area to cut. Herl supports because of youth involvement. Duckham also supports these. Let the State find their cuts someplace else other than Jackson.

Mahoney could support them if the word "fully" was removed from both of them. She would like to see them still in the budget.

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Brittain to make that a friendly amendment to the Resolutions to remove the word "fully".

Roll Call on Amendment: (10) Yeas. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Poleski, Shotwell, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way and Elwell. (2) Nays. Cmr. Duckham and Videto. Motion carried.

(Chairman Shotwell advised you will be voting yes in favor of the amendment or you're voting no against the Resolution with the Amended version.)

Roll Call on Resolution (03-07.14) after Amendment: (11) Yeas. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Duckham, Poleski, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith, Way and Elwell. (1) Nay. Cmr. Shotwell. Motion carried.

E. Resolution (03-07.15) Urging the Governor and the Legislature to Fully Restore the Budgeted Funding for the State's Conservation Districts.

Mahoney offers an amendment to strike the word "fully" from this Resolution. Chairman Shotwell asks for a motion and support first.

Moved by Mahoney, supported by Herl to Adopt Resolution (03-07.15) Urging the Governor and the Legislature to Restore the Budgeted Funding for the State's Conservation Districts.

Elwell thinks taking the word "fully" out of it doesn't really change it. If you're leaving it restored, you're saying to fully fund it and thinks some other language is needed to give the essence of what we're talking about. Mahoney stated that that was the essence of her thought. Elwell suggests a friendly amendment of Giving Consideration to the Budgeted Funding for the State's Conservation Districts. Chairman Shotwell asked Elwell to repeat his amendment. Elwell states it would be to remove the words "fully and restore" and insert the words "give consideration" to the Budgeted Funding for the State's Conservation Districts.

Lutchka can't support that because consideration is, you look at it and throw it away. It's not even in the next budget right now. If you said fully restored, it would be half of what it was two years ago. I suggest we vote this down and change it to funding at the current level and that would still be at 50% of what it was beforehand. Poleski feels that both of these Resolutions are urging people in Lansing to continue to rearrange deck chairs on the Titanic. Until they come up with a business tax solution and an appropriate budget, it doesn't really matter what we urge them to do. Videto feels that if we pass these Resolutions, we're sending a message to Lansing that we as County Commissioners feel the importance of both of these programs for the members of Jackson County and other communities statewide. You can play with the words all day long, but the crutch of the message is that we feel that these programs are important. Elwell feels it would be more effective to contact our Legislators and let them know how we feel.

Roll Call on Amended Resolution (03-07.15): (6) Yeas. Cmr. Brittain, Videto, Mahoney, Brown, Smith and Elwell. (6) Nays. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Duckham, Poleski, Shotwell and Way. Motion defeated.

Chairman Shotwell asked for any other New Business to come before the body.

Moved by Poleski, supported by Mahoney to reconsider Resolution (03-07.14) Urging the Governor to Fund the Michigan State University (MSU) Extension at the Current Budgeted Level.

Elwell asked why the reconsideration. Poleski responded for the same reason we discussed on the soil conservation. We all find them to be excellent programs, no question about it, but our State is in an absolute fiscal crisis and the folks in Lansing need to deal with huge budget issues. He thinks it's inappropriate for us to be urging them to support any particular program. Poleski asked Shotwell that in order for his motion to be successful, do we have to have a majority to which Shotwell responded, yes.

Elwell responded that in looking at the wording, we did amend this one in the past, but if you read the last part of the last sentence, it again says at the level already approved in the current budget. It really is the same objection we had to the fully funded part, if you think about it. Mahoney supported the reconsideration because after what Cmr. Elwell said, she thinks that we would be doing this every single month. Lutchka doesn't feel it has to be done every month. Lutchka asked if the next vote to be taken is on reconsideration or is it on the Resolution? Shotwell responded that it would be on reconsideration. Duckham supports reconsidering this. Any budget cut is better than a tax increase. Lutchka reminded everyone that Extension is getting harder cut than the rest of the programs. Treat everyone the same if you're going to cut them like this.

Roll Call on Reconsideration of Resolution (03-07.14): (6) Yeas. Cmr. Duckham, Poleski, Shotwell, Mahoney, Smith and Elwell. (6) Nays. Cmr. Herl, Lutchka, Brittain, Videto, Brown and Way. Motion defeated.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Hoover thanked the Commissioners for their support of Bob and Bill to the LifeWays Board. He's also looking forward to working with Gail who, he thinks, will be a huge asset to the Board.

Phil Tocco thanked the Commissioners for approving the Resolution on MSU Extension. Bob McNitt thanked the Commissioners for his appointment. Bill Bockwitz thanked the Commissioners for his appointment. Chris Backus thanked the Board and looks forward to serving the Veterans and taking care of business at hand for all of the Veterans. Public Comment closed at 7:55 p.m.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Lutchka reminded everyone that a week from today, March 27 th, is Project RED (Rural Education Days) at the Fair Grounds. We need as many volunteers to guide the 3 rd graders around the stations. Would like to have 5 or 6 Commissioners to help this year. Be there between 8:00 & 8:30 a.m. and it ends around 2:15 p.m.

Brittain spoke regarding the resolutions and state budget problems. Jackson is losing a lot of good paying jobs and no one has a solution. He was at a meeting where Mike Riscowski (sp) brought up an idea of bringing a refinery to Jackson County. Jackson is centrally located and we have the old rail station and the old Clark Equipment Plant in Leoni Township is not far. It's a common sense thing and it would bring a lot of jobs to Jackson County. We should seriously look into this.

Elwell spoke regarding the Planning Sessions that have been scheduled. He's disappointed that he'll be gone for 2 of the meetings and thinks they should have been consulted about the dates.

Poleski attended the MAC Economic Development and Taxation Committee on Friday. There was a significant amount of discussion about HB 4440 - "pop-up" legislation. No Road Commission report tonight and he hopes it can be discussed next month. He also noted that no action is being taken on the JTA millage.

Randy Treacher addressed HB 4440 and the "pop-up". Thanks to some quick work by Julie and our Equalization Dept., she was able to provide an estimate of what the "pop-up" tax as proposed at this time would cost Jackson County. In the first year (remember this is a sliding 18-month deal) it would be a loss of revenue of about \$450,000. And then the ensuing two years about \$110,000 each year. As he understands it, that loss would be permanent.

Duckham advised that Greg Wilson would like to be involved with the private fund-raising for the Cascades Project. He's also undergoing his surgery tomorrow at U of M.

CLOSED SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Shotwell adjourned the March 20, 2007 meeting of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners at 8:05 p.m.

James E. Shotwell – Chairman, Jackson County Board of Commissioners
Sandra L. Crowley – Jackson County Clerk