

MONTCALM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Monday, April 10, 2023

4:00 PM

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Carr at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Dennis Ross from Nevins Lake Church in Stanton offered invocation.

Members present at roll call: Commissioners Baker, Johnston, Petersen, Painter, Mahar, Carr and Kohn. Members absent: None.

Others present: Kristen Millard, Brenda Taeter, Michelle Becker, Jeremy Miller, Armon Withey Kim Kuhn, Kathy Bresnahan, Deb Ballard, Kristi Jeffrey, Eric Smith and Elisabeth Waldon.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to approve the agenda with the addition of #4 under New Business entitled *Blight Ordinance* and #5 entitled *Veterans Affairs*. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Johnston, supported by Commissioner Painter to approve the March 27, 2023, regular meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Public comments were offered. Kathy Bresnahan, Pine Township, and member of the Commission on Aging Executive Board member addressed the Board regarding an email Chuck Hazekamp, Commission on Aging Executive Board member, sent to the Board regarding Ryan Dreyer, Commission on Aging Director, and a request Mr. Dreyer made to the Board of Commissioners to add a Transportation Director position. Mrs. Bresnahan also addressed a secret meeting that allegedly took place between Mr. Hazekamp and board members and stated her disappointment in the meeting and the fact that Mr. Dreyer was directed to go back to the Commission on Aging and get 100% consensus from the COA Executive Board before bringing his request back to the Board of Commissioners.

Mrs. Bresnahan encouraged the Board of Commissioners to visit the Commission on Aging Department and ask the opinions of the other 5 Executive Board members. She stated that she does not feel that Board of Commissioners should require Mr. Dreyer to get a 100% consensus of the Executive Board to get something approved when the Board of Commissioners don't required that of themselves when approving requests.

Mrs. Bresnahan thanked the one Board of Commissioner's member that contacted her for her input about why Mr. Hazekamp would email the Board, come to the meeting to speak against Mr. Dreyer, and ask to meet secretly with the Board members. She encouraged the Board to do better.

Correspondence was received from Kristi Jeffrey, Juvenile/Family Division of the Circuit Court, regarding the State of Michigan increasing the Basic Grant Funding from \$15,000 to \$56,520 beginning in the FY23 budget. The funding is 100% reimbursed through the Child Care Fund and does not affect the General Fund. Ms. Jeffrey stated that this additional funding will allow for increased in-home programming opportunities for youth who have delinquency or educational neglect cases with the Court and they would like to hire a part-time Family Support Worker/Resource Navigator and potentially find a better electronic monitoring system.

Ms. Jeffrey was in attendance to answer questions. She stated that the increase is money that must be spent. She anticipates that a part-time employee will cost between \$25,000 to \$50,000. The current monitoring system has flaws and a better solution is needed for the more difficult children.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Baker to increase the overall FY23 Child Care Fund from \$726,500 to \$768,020 to include increases in the Basic Grant Funding from the State of Michigan and allow the hiring of a part-time staff person in the Juvenile Court. Motion carried.

Brian Wagner, District Court Administrator, presented the Board with a request to reclassify a Clerk I to a Clerk II in order to recruit and compete with surrounding counties and ensure that staff are compensated for the complexities of their duties. Judge Adam Eggleston and Mr. Wagner were in attendance to answer questions. Mr. Wagner stated that there has been a Clerk I vacancy in the Probation office since early March and they have held off posting it in hopes of reclassifying to a Clerk II.

Mr. Wagner informed the board of all of the technical changes that have taken place over the past 6 months and what is coming in the very near future. He stated that the Collection Application is up and running and has been successful; LEIN entry in District Court is happening and they will soon be entering the Circuit Court warrants as well; Clean Slate legislation goes into effect tomorrow where qualifying convictions are automatically set aside; and District Court is slated for MiFile, which is an online filing system.

Mr. Wager informed the board that Montcalm County's \$13.50 Clerk I wage is much lower than Gratiot County, which is \$16.50 and Ionia County which is \$18.50. A Clerk II would start at \$16.52 per hour.

Mr. Wagner stated that this year District Court can cover the additional expenses associated with the reclassification, as they are over their budgeted revenues. The overall increase in next year's budget would be \$6,600. He is hoping with an increase to the pay that they will be able to recruit from another court.

Commissioner Petersen stated that he feels like the Board keeps increasing wages and people still are quitting. Mr. Wagner stated that being in a position of hiring at a considerably less hourly wage than other courts is a definite disadvantage.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Mahar to authorize the District Court Clerk I position to be reclassified to District Court Clerk II. Motion carried.

Doug Geitzen, Maintenance Director, provided the board with the bids for various concrete projects. Mr. Geitzen recommended either accepting a single contract with Trademark Construction in the amount of \$52,385.00 for the concrete projects needed around the court complex areas or to create two contracts for various portions of the concrete projects, one with Trademark Construction for \$25,740.00 and one with Flat River Concrete for \$26,100. Mr. Geitzen stated that he split the bids between the two local contractors to make the amounts similar and is hopeful that by splitting the projects between two contractors that the projects would get completed quicker.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Kohn to create two contracts for various portions of the concrete projects, with the projects outlined by the Maintenance Director, one with Trademark Constructions for \$25740.00 and one with Flat River Concrete for \$26,100.00, to be paid from the Capital Improvement funds and the Solid Waste Fund. Motion carried.

Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, presented the Board with the Republic Services Compactor Proposal. Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Mahar to allow the Controller

to sign the new service/lease proposal with Republic Services for the Stanton compacting units, with the monthly expense to come from the Solid Waste Fund. Motion carried.

Ms. Taeter also presented the Board with a request to close the Administration and Court Complex an hour early for employees to attend safety training. Retired Sergeant Gary Valentine has offered to conduct the safety training.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to allow the Controller to close the Administration Building on June 14th, and the Court Complex on June 19th, at 3:00 p.m. to allow for employee training. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to approve warrant report number 04102023 in the amount of \$360,788.86. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Painter to approve consent agenda items 7 through 10 and move stated action:

Controller	Two Seven Oh Inc., Grant Agreements	Place on file
Controller	Resolution 2023-05, Opiate Litigation Settlement Proceeds	Place on file
Controller	Emergency Medical Services Quarterly Reporting	Place on file
Controller	FY2023 Budget Review	Place on file

Motion carried.

Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, presented the Board with a proposal for putting together an Opioid Committee. Ms. Taeter stated that she met with Liz Braddock, MMDHD Health Officer, and they came up with a proposed listing committee:

Brenda Taeter, Controller, County of Montcalm
Liz Braddock, Health Officer, Mid-Michigan District Health Dept.
Juliana Kozara, Clinical Director, Montcalm Care Network
Andy Doezema, Undersheriff, Montcalm County Sheriff Dept/Jail
Kristen Lindsey, Mental Health and Homeless Coordinator, Montcalm Area ISD
Jim Dimitriou, Compliance Officer, Sheridan Community Hospital
Kate Behrenwald, Addition Medicine PA, Kelsey Hospital
John Kroneck, Health Promotion Supervisor, MMDHD/SUDAC

Commissioner Mahar informed the board that Aimee Johnson, Nurse Practitioner affiliated with Sparrow Hospital, has contacted him and expressed her interest to serve on this committee as well.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Mahar to appoint the following individuals to the Opioid Committee:

Brenda Taeter, Controller, County of Montcalm
Liz Braddock, Health Officer, Mid-Michigan District Health Dept.
Juliana Kozara, Clinical Director, Montcalm Care Network
Andy Doezema, Undersheriff, Montcalm County Sheriff Dept/Jail
Kristen Lindsey, Mental Health and Homeless Coordinator, Montcalm Area ISD
Jim Dimitriou, Compliance Officer, Sheridan Community Hospital
Kate Behrenwald, Addition Medicine PA, Kelsey Hospital
John Kroneck, Health Promotion Supervisor, MMDHD/SUDAC
Aimee L. Johnson, Nurse Practitioner, Sparrow Hospital

Chairman Carr informed the Board that Ms. Taeter provided himself and Vice-Chairman Petersen with the proposed Blight Ordinance as prepared by the county's legal counsel. He stated that the draft ordinance is exactly what he was hoping for and he would like to move forward with disseminating it to all of the other Board Members for their review. If approved, then he would like it sent out to the Township Supervisors for presentation to their individual boards for hopeful adoption. The county's legal counsel has stated that the townships will not need to hold a public hearing to approve the ordinance, they can each vote on it at their regular meetings.

Commissioner Petersen stated that it has been brought to his attention that the Veterans Affairs Office is growing and they are in need of additional space so their offices can provide privacy for those they are meeting with and providing services to. He is proposing the following moves to provide the Veteran's Affairs Office more space:

- Vital Records/Elections Office to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in the Court Complex
- Equalization moved up to the County Clerk's space
- Veteran's Affairs would expand to have all of the space they currently have as well as the Equalization Office

Commissioner Petersen stated that in talking with some people that there is enough room between the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in the Court Complex and Retention to move the Vital Records/Elections Office there as well. He referred to a 2017 memo from the Clerk that stated if her office was cut so drastically she would be forced to consolidate them to the Court Complex. But no progress was made for the consolidation. He proposed contracting with Graphic Sciences to image and microfilm the County Clerk records and stated it would provide better services to the constituents to have both offices in one location.

Commission Kohn questioned how many usable square feet are in the Clerk's Office in the Court Complex and how much space the Clerk feels is adequate. Kristen Millard, County Clerk, stated that she had no idea of the square footage as she was not made aware of plan until hearing of it right now, nor was she consulted prior to today's meeting. Doug Geitzen, Maintenance Director, stated that he could find out the square footage of each of the Clerk's office spaces.

Ms. Millard stated that she does not feel it is appropriate for an item of this magnitude to be added to the agenda without notification to the Elected Official affected. She stated that she has been completely blindsided by this topic and feels that Commissioner Petersen should have had the courtesy to at least discuss options with her prior to a public meeting. She stated that she does not feel there is adequate space in the Court Complex to put both functions out there. She stated that building was constructed with the plan to keep Vital Records and Elections in the Administration Building and to try to force both functions into such a small space would not be sufficient.

Commissioner Petersen stated that moving her office is completely the Board's decision and is well within the Board's purview. He stated that the Board must provide adequate space for Veteran's Affairs and the Clerk.

Commissioner Baker stated that he is not comfortable with the way this discussion is taking place and things need to be worked out so that it is workable for all involved. Commissioner Mahar stated that more information is needed to decide if there is or is not enough space in the Court Complex for both of the Clerk's functions. Commissioner Petersen stated that everything is subjective and the Veteran's Office needs room.

Commissioner Baker feels that the board does need to look at the space requirements and the Clerk's memo from 2017. The space situation does need to be worked on. Commissioner Kohn stated that he wants a blueprint or a footprint plan from each building. He would like to see on paper the space occupied and where people are working. Additionally, he wants to see how many cubic yards of paper are occupying space in the vaults.

Commissioner Painter asked if it is possible for someone to come in to do a study? He stated that the State does it all the time for their state-owned buildings. He would like someone from the outside to come in to do a study. Commissioner Mahar stated that in theory it makes sense to combine the Clerk's functions in the Court Complex, and if Commissioner Petersen is right, then great. But Commissioner Mahar wants assurances in case Commissioner Petersen isn't right and there is not enough space to combine them in the Court Complex and it just doesn't work.

The consensus of the Board was to task the County Controller to contact Graphic Sciences to digitize all the County Clerk's records so it's a non-issue. Doug Geitzen, Maintenance Director, stated that he could do the space allocation. This topic will be added to the agenda for the May 8, 2023, Board meeting agenda. The Board members will individually look at the Clerk's space on their own.

Public comments were offered. Commissioner Kohn feels compelled to address Ms. Bresnahan's public comment and stated that if she is going to accuse him of attending a secret meeting, then she should be compelled to provide him with proof that he attended a secret meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to adjourn at 5:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Kristen Millard, County Clerk

Patrick Q. Carr, Chairman