

CALHOUN COUNTY
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

December 7, 2006

The Regular Session of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners convened at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, December 7, 2006 in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, County Building, Marshall, Michigan.

Roll Call: Present: Comrs. Bolger, Miller, Moore, Segal, Solis, Strowbridge and Todd.

INVOCATION:

A Moment of Personal Prayer was observed.

COLOR GUARD PRESENTATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Boy Scout Troop 344 presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

“Motion by Comr. Bolger, supported by Comr. Solis, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the December 7, 2006 agenda, as amended, to revise Item No. 9. C. - 2007 County Budget Public Hearing to Item No. 9. D. and replace Item No. 9. C. with a Meth Watch Task Force Presentation.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

“Motion by Comr. Bolger, supported by Comr. Solis, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the November 2, 2006 and November 16, 2006 minutes as presented.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

ELECTED/APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICIALS' COMMENTS:

Prosecutor John Hallacy advised that the Advocates Program held its Fall recognition gathering at which some of the Office's staff were recognized.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS:

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month Proclamation

Comr. Moore read and presented the proclamation to Battle Creek Area Transportation Study Executive Director Patricia Karr.

Res. 184-2006

“Motion by Comr. Moore, supported by Comr. Segal, resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, motor vehicle crashes involving alcohol kill over 16,000 people and injure hundreds of thousands more every year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, alcohol-related crashes, as a significant portion of overall crashes, lead to one death every 31 minutes, one injury every two minutes and 1.4 million arrests nationally each year; and

WHEREAS, the December holiday season is traditionally one of the most deadly times of the year for alcohol-impaired driving; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, based on the current rates, three in every ten Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, organizations across the nation are joining together to promote the “*Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.*” national public awareness campaign and law enforcement initiatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Benjamin A. Miller, do hereby proclaim December 2006 as **National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Awareness Month** and encourage promotion of the awareness campaign this December holiday season and throughout the year.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

Ms. Karr stated that there will be increased enforcement activities going on at this time of the year, and presented Board members with red ribbons.

Special Recognition to Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire

Chairman Miller read and presented the tribute to Steve Conrad and Silver Leaf staff. Mr. Conrad thanked the Board and the Road Commission.

Res. 185-2006

“Motion by Comr. Moore, supported by Comr. Segal, resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the following:

WHEREAS, for the first time, Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire successfully held their annual event at Kimball Pines County Park for 5 weekends from July 8th through August 5, 2006; and

FURTHER, that the Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire offers a unique experience to people of all ages and has helped in improving tourism and economic growth in Calhoun County; and

WHEREAS, the Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire in collaboration with the Calhoun County Road Commission and the County Parks Department, voluntarily completed improvements to Kimball Pines County Park for their event and for the community; and

FURTHER, the Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire plans to hold this event annually for the next 30 years as well as continue in collaborating with the Calhoun County Road Commission and the County Parks Department in planning and developing additional events and improvements to Kimball Pines County Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners hereby offer our Congratulations! to **SILVER LEAF RENAISSANCE FAIRE** on the establishment of their annual event held at Kimball Pines County Park. We wish you much success.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

Meth Watch Task Force Presentation

Prosecutor Hallacy presented a new road sign and yard signs, and advised that methamphetamine started in the west coast with usage by motorcycle gangs and now is used nationally, even in the rural communities. Prosecutor Hallacy advised that Calhoun County formed a task force with partners from the Substance Abuse Council and other agencies. Prosecutor Hallacy stated that as the task force began they started with educating themselves and the first responders, and the education is on-going. Prosecutor Hallacy advised that the task force conducted several public forums for realtors, exterminators and those that must come into contact with the drug; and two training sessions in the City of Albion with presentations by the Michigan State Police.

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Prosecutor Hallacy pointed out that meth can be made from items that can be acquired from grocery stores and the local merchants have received training to notice multiple purchases of such items. Prosecutor Hallacy advised that on National Meth Awareness Day the dangers of meth labs was discussed. Prosecutor Hallacy stated that tonight the new signs will be unveiled and posted around the county.

Substance Abuse Council of Greater Battle Creek Executive Director Suzanne Horsfall stated that meth is the most destructive drug and is very difficult to recover from. Ms. Horsfall stated that prevention is the answer. Ms. Horsfall stated that the task force has improved the education and awareness to the extreme dangers of the drug. Ms. Horsfall advised that last Thursday the Office of Drug Control Policy in Lansing congratulated Calhoun County for their prevention program. Ms. Horsfall further advised that Calhoun County is one of ten counties to implement a meth watch program.

Prosecutor Hallacy advised Board members that if they are interested in any yard signs, to contact him.

2007 County Budget Public Hearing

County Administrator/Controller Greg Purcell stated that it is his pleasure to present the 2007 budget in the amount of \$38,900,000, which is 3.4 percent greater than the 2006 budget. Mr. Purcell advised that the budget includes transfer of \$1.5 Million from the Delinquent Property Tax Fund and \$100,000 from the Inmate Concession Fund, provides for the charging of indirect costs to non-General Fund departments in the amount of \$236,000; and provides for total staffing of 524.525 full-time employees, which is a decrease of one Assistant Prosecuting Attorney which had been under a grant that ends December 31, and a part-time casual worker at the Juvenile Home.

Mr. Purcell addressed cost savings; i.e., no salary increases for Board members or elected officials and their deputies. Mr. Purcell further addressed highlights of the budget; i.e., Medical Care Facility expansion/renovation totaling \$15 Million; 85 percent voter support of Medical Care Facility millage renewal and the senior millage; a centralized law enforcement information system, which will be implemented in the first quarter of 2007; Kellogg/Keebler Renaissance Zone payment in lieu of payment of taxes; jail revenue increase in per diem rate for federal detainees; replacement of the jail security system; savings from Corporation Counsel; the Toeller and Albion Building plan, and energy conservation.

Mr. Purcell addressed budget percentage changes from 1997 to 2007, the summary of revenues and expenditures by function, revenue trends by category, and mills levied. Mr. Purcell pointed out that county taxes have decreased from 7.2120 mills in 2000 to 6.3713 mills for 2004 through 2007, a decrease of .8407 mill providing a savings of \$42.03 annually for homeowners of a \$100,000 home. Mr. Purcell further addressed expenditures by function; and expenditure trend by function, pointing out that the greatest expenditure percentage is for public safety.

Mr. Purcell advised that the hiring and travel freeze and the moratorium of the Career Development Program shall be continued for 2007.

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Res. 186-2006

“Motion by Comr. Segal, supported by Comr. Todd, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners open for discussion the 2007 County Budget Public Hearing.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

The 2007 county budget public hearing opened at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Gardy Berezonsky, Marengo Township resident, stated that he cannot envision how the county can justify a marine officer, pointing out that there is only one large lake in the county.

Mr. Berezonsky addressed the law enforcement services agreement with Pennfield and Tekonsha Townships, pointing out that it costs the county \$20,000 more than what the Townships pay.

Mr. Berezonsky inquired where within the budget document are the monies that the Calhoun Intermediate School District paid the county for the Sheriff Department to fingerprint school employees.

Prosecutor Hallacy pointed out that as with last year, the Prosecutor’s Office leads the way in personnel reductions. Prosecutor Hallacy stated that he understands that the grant cycle ended, however, pointed out that the juvenile justice grant was put into place because after a lot of thought and vision the Board determined that juvenile justice was a priority. Prosecutor Hallacy stated that he disagrees with the elimination of the grant position when the crime rate in this county is above the state average. Prosecutor Hallacy stated that he looks forward to discussing the position further at the December 14 Budget Committee Meeting.

Res. 186-A-2006

“Motion by Comr. Todd, supported by Comr. Segal, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners close the 2007 County Budget Public Hearing.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

The public hearing closed at 7:42 p.m.

Comr. Bolger voiced concern regarding public safety and its tie to economic development, pointing out that when the crime rate rises it is hard to attract businesses. Comr. Bolger stated that he hopes over the next few weeks that the Board can review this issue.

Comr. Bolger asked the County Administrator/Controller whether he has made any progress on the five-year financial forecast. Mr. Purcell responded that Administration is working on it and that Rehmann Robson is

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assisting. Mr. Purcell advised that the five-year financial plan will be ready for the Board Retreat in January. Comr. Bolger stated that he is concerned regarding that, pointing out that the county paid to have that plan available for evaluating the budgets.

Comr. Segal stated that right now the staff is “tapped out” in getting the figures for the budget.

Chairman Miller inquired of the \$1.2 Million in additional expenditures, what the dollar amount related to health care costs is. Interim Finance Director Pam Kline responded that she does not have the figure with her, and offered to provide it.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Res. 187-2006

“Motion by Comr. Bolger, supported by Comr. Segal, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the following December 7, 2006 Consent Agenda as presented:

A. Petitions, Communications, Reports:

- (1) Resolution received from Oceana County supporting stronger enforcement of Michigan’s casino gaming compacts. (Referred to the Legislative Liaisons)

B. Resolutions:

- (1) Calhoun County Retirement Committee {401k & 457 Plans} Appointments
 - {a} Kirk Blackwood -- Juvenile Court Representative
(Replacing Michael Boltz)
 - {b} Michael Boltz -- Probate Court Representative
 - {c} Thad Lane -- Juvenile Home Representative
 - {d} Tom Whitesell -- Friend of the Court Representative
- (2) Community Corrections Advisory Board Appointment

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{a} Kimberly Luther -- Circuit Court Probation Representative
(Replacing Laraine Van Lopik)”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

SPECIAL COMMITTEE/WORKSHOP/BOARD REPORTS:

Information Technology Executive Committee

Committee Member Bolger reported that the Committee had a meeting to discuss an imaging system and moving towards a paperless system. Comr. Bolger stated that he is very excited about the new system.

County of Calhoun Land Bank Authority Board of Directors

Authority Member Todd reported that the Authority had a very informative meeting today at 4:00 p.m. at the Bedford Township Hall.

Road Commission Applicant Review Workshop

Workshop Chairman Miller advised that the deadline for submitting applications has passed and Workshop members shall be setting a date for the interviews. The Workshop will present a recommendation at the last Board meeting.

PETITIONS AND NEW BUSINESS:

County Administrator/Controller’s Report

2007 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule

Res. 188-2006

“Motion by Comr. Bolger, supported by Comr. Todd, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the 2007 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule as presented.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

Moratorium on County Policy No. 351 - Career Development Program

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Asst. County Administrator Wendee Woods advised that the Budget Committee supports the recommendation to place a moratorium on tuition reimbursement. Ms. Woods advised that the moratorium was first approved for the 2006 budget, and that a savings of between \$5,000 to \$9,000 is anticipated.

Res. 189-2006

“Motion by Comr. Moore, supported by Comr. Todd, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners impose a moratorium on County Policy No. 351 - Career Development Program for 2007.”

Chairman Miller inquired how many employees shall be affected. Ms. Kline responded 12 to 15. Chairman Miller inquired whether a number of employees were continuing their education, or whether there was a select group of employees requesting tuition reimbursement. Ms. Woods responded that the same employees were requesting reimbursement. Ms. Woods advised that some union contracts provide for tuition and education reimbursement and that the moratorium does not supercede those labor agreements. Chairman Miller pointed out that the moratorium affects non-union employees while only a select number of union employees.

Roll call vote: Yes - 6 (Comrs. Bolger, Miller, Moore, Segal, Solis and Todd)
No - 1 (Comr. Strowbridge)
Motion CARRIED

2007 Hiring Freeze

Ms. Woods advised that the freeze shall require vacancies to remain unfilled for a minimum of 60 days while the Freeze Waiver Review Committee analyzes possible departmental reorganizations. Ms. Woods stated that the resolution advises regarding procedures for submitting waiver requests.

Res. 190-2006

“Motion by Comr. Segal, supported by Comr. Solis, resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners adopt the following:

WHEREAS, in view of declining revenues and increasing expenditures, Calhoun County must implement cost saving measures; and

WHEREAS, by taking prudent measures, we can absorb some of the impact of the current financial environment on the County by delaying the filling of vacant positions and avoiding the possibility of filling positions now that may have to be cut later.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT:

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1. No County Department shall hire any person to fill any vacant position, unless the position is fully 100% grant funded.
2. No associated savings from the vacancy or hiring freeze may be spent unless approved by the Administrator/Controller.
3. Waivers from this resolution may be approved by a Freeze Waiver Review Committee consisting of the Administrator/Controller, the Assistant County Administrator and the affected Department Head or Elected Official.
4. Prior to submitting a waiver, the Department Head or Elected Official is requested to analyze the possibility of a reorganization.
5. The Review Committee will consider the following aspects of each vacancy:
 - ☆ Impact on operations and budget if not filled or if hiring is delayed
 - ☆ Ability of department to receive assistance from other departments during vacancy
 - ☆ Ability to re-organize the department to meet workload demands
6. The Board requests that all positions remain vacant for a minimum of 60 days, while some may remain vacant for a longer duration. The Review Committee will determine by consensus, if possible, the duration of any freeze/delay; the Administrator/Controller will retain final authority to determine the duration of the vacancy.
7. A quarterly written report on all hiring waivers requested and granted shall be submitted to the Board of Commissioners by the Human Resources Department.
8. The hiring freeze will remain in effect through December 31, 2007 unless specifically revoked by the Board of Commissioners.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

2007 Out-of-State Travel Freeze

Ms. Woods advised that the freeze was first implemented for 2005.

Res. 191-2006

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Motion by Comr. Segal, supported by Comr. Todd, resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners adopt the following:

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan is experiencing a significant budgetary shortfall that requires curtailment of various appropriations and revenue payments to local units of government; and

WHEREAS, in view of declining revenues and increasing expenditures, Calhoun County must implement cost saving measures; and

WHEREAS, by taking prudent measures, Calhoun County can absorb some of the impact of the current financial environment on the County by restricting out-of-state travel; and

WHEREAS, Calhoun County has implemented a number of cost saving measures to balance the 2007 budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. All County Departments should restrict and curtail travel to only essential travel required to perform the functions of departments and carry out requirements of grants and other agreements.
2. Out-of-State travel is prohibited for all County Departments unless 100 percent of the cost of such travel is funded by grant or other funds exclusive of the County General Fund.
3. Waivers from this resolution may be approved by a Travel Review Committee composed of the County Administrator/Controller, the Assistant County Administrator, and a Department Head to be selected by the Department requesting the waiver, but separate from the Department making the request.
4. The Committee may approve the waiver request if, in their judgement, proper documentation is provided to determine the following:
 - Travel is necessary to carry out a critical function of county government.
 - Travel will result in benefits to the County that outweigh the cost of the travel.
 - Travel outside of the state is essential for meeting the requirements of an agreement or other binding commitment previously approved by the County.
5. Out-of-State travel associated with mandated law enforcement activities, such as extraditions is exempt from this policy.

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6. A quarterly written report on all travel waivers will be submitted to the Board of Commissioners by the Finance Department.
7. The travel restriction will take effect January 1, 2007 and will remain in effect until December 31, 2007 unless specifically revoked by the Board of Commissioners.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

2006-2007 State Byrne Adult Drug Court Grant Agreement

Family Court Administrator Michael Boltz advised that the grant is from the state for the Drug Court and was effective October 1. Mr. Boltz advised that the funding shall be utilized for the Men’s Drug Court Program, and that Judge Sindt will continue to preside over that Court for the next two years. No local match is required.

Res. 192-2006

“Motion by Comr. Segal, supported by Comr. Bolger, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve acceptance by the Thirty-Seventh Judicial Circuit Court of a State of Michigan Byrne Drug Court Grant from the State Court Administrative Office for 2006-2007 in the total amount of \$170,000 (all federal funds through SCAO) for the Adult Drug Court Program; further, authorize the Board Chairman to execute the Grant Agreement (SCAO contract # SCAO-2007-007) on behalf of Calhoun County.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

Comr. Segal inquired whether the amount of funding is more or less than previously received. Mr. Boltz responded that the amount is the same, however, that this shall be the final year for the federal grant.

CITIZENS’ TIME:

Mr. Berezonsky inquired whether the new public parking spaces are available to anyone.

Mr. Berezonsky stated that he has heard that Board members are hoping to purchase new lap-top computers. Mr. Berezonsky stated that he hopes that the computers will be left in the offices.

COMMISSIONERS’ TIME:

Comr. Bolger advised that at the Information Technology Executive Committee meeting the Clerk offered her imaging system to the other departments attending.

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Comr. Bolger thanked Administration and the Commissioners in support of the parking plan. Comr. Bolger stated that the Facilities Services Department did a great job. Comr. Bolger advised that five spaces with two hour parking close to the building have been reserved for the public.

Comr. Moore thanked Kathy Brummell, Emmett Township resident, for bringing forth the meth watch signage issue. Comr. Moore advised that he read an article in the Battle Creek Enquirer which stated that in 2004 through 2005 there were 42 meth charges and that in 2006 there were 6.

Comr. Moore congratulated Jimmy Russell who has retired from the Road Commission after 36 years.

Comr. Segal reminded Board members of the holiday party for the employees.

Comr. Solis advised that Carbonics in Albion opened, bringing in new jobs.

CLAIMS PAYABLE LISTINGS:

Res. 193-2006

“Motion by Comr. Bolger, supported by Comr. Todd, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve payment of the list of claims against the county in the total amount of \$1,254,393.06 for the week of November 17, 2006; further, approve payment of the list of claims against the county in the total amount of \$156,106.50 for the week of November 21, 2006; and finally, approve payment of the list of claims against the county in the total amount of \$919,610.27 for the week of November 28, 2006.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Sheriff Allen Byam advised that Prosecutor Hallacy and he served on the United Way Campaign of Battle Creek and that the goal had been to raise \$4.6 Million. The result was \$5 Million. Sheriff Byam congratulated Co-Chairpersons Kathy and Dan Lucas. Prosecutor Hallacy thanked Michelle Hill for Calhoun County’s effort.

RECESS:

The meeting recessed at 8:13 p.m. at the call of the Chair.

mlb