

CALHOUN COUNTY
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 1, 2007

The Regular Session of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners convened at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, March 1, 2007 in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, County Building, Marshall, Michigan.

Roll Call: Present: Comrs. Arnquist, Bolger, Moore, Rae, Segal, Solis and Todd.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

A Moment of Personal Prayer was observed; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Comr. Todd.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUMS:

“Motion by Comr. Rae, supported by Comr. Moore, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the March 1, 2007 agenda and addendums as presented.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

“Motion by Comr. Rae, supported by Comr. Moore, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners approve the February 1, 2007 minutes as presented.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

ELECTED/APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICIAL’S COMMENTS:

Sheriff Allen Byam introduced Deputy Todd Turner to announce a forthcoming event.

Deputy Turner advised that the Sheriff’s Department is again hosting its Annual Outdoor Family Safety Day on March 8 and 9 at the Belcher-McPherson Auction Facility. Deputy Turner advised that “hands on” education shall be provided; and that all the food is free, paid for by the hosts; e.g., the area fire departments, Calhoun County ALURT, Pheasants Forever, the Bass Club, and Trout Unlimited. Deputy Turner stated that 950 students are scheduled to attend.

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Greater Battle Creek/Calhoun County Visitors and Convention Bureau Annual Report

Bureau President Dwight Butts stated that the Bureau has made significant changes and progress in its programs. Mr. Butts addressed the Bureau's marketing plan and the economic impact of tourism in Calhoun County. Mr. Butts advised that the report was prepared for the Bureau by Global Insight, Inc. and that this is its first presentation. The consultant shall be presenting the report to the Bureau's Board of Directors on Tuesday.

Mr. Butts stated that the study provides a comprehensive account of the economic and tax impacts generated by travelers visiting Battle Creek/Calhoun County in 2005, and is broken down into three markets; e.g., sports related; conventions, trade expositions and shows; and e-marketing and group travel. Mr. Butts advised that spending by travelers in Battle Creek totaled \$200 Million and that the economic impact totaled \$113.2 Million. Traveler spending supported 3,500 jobs and \$73.9 Million in wages; and generated \$33.1 Million in federal, state and local tax revenue.

Mr. Butts continued that sports promotion led to \$13.1 Million in traveler spending and created an economic impact of \$7.6 Million which supported 225 jobs in Calhoun County and generated state and local tax receipts totaling almost \$1.2 Million.

Mr. Butts advised that the report is available on the Bureau's website. Mr. Butts stated that the Bureau is proud of where they are heading.

Comr. Rae inquired whether the Bureau has given any thought to partnering with Kalamazoo. Mr. Butts responded that the Bureau works very closely with Kalamazoo and is in communication with Kalamazoo three to four times per week. Mr. Butts advised that the Bureau and Kalamazoo have some joint projects and advertize and promote in each others visitor guides, plus share resources. Mr. Butts further advised that the Bureau is talking with other counties regarding regional sports promotions.

Comr. Rae stated that he believes the Bureau should enter into a formal partnership agreement with Kalamazoo. Mr. Butts responded that the Bureau and Kalamazoo did have such an agreement, however, that Kalamazoo "stepped out" of it.

Comr. Arnquist addressed the vacant Cereal City building and inquired whether the Bureau is working on locating another owner, advising that there has been discussion regarding the possibility of a movie cinema. Mr. Butts responded that the Bureau is involved, however, that the Heritage Board owns the building and owes some taxes. Battle Creek Unlimited has taken over the administration of the assets and is attempting to find someone to purchase the building or take it over.

Comr. Bolger inquired regarding the Bureau's plans for other areas of the county. Mr. Butts addressed the Bureau's promotion of the equestrian center, and advised that the Bureau will do anything it can to bring tourist functions into the county.

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Comr. Bolger advised that there continues to be talk regarding people breaking away from the Bureau. Mr. Butts responded that he believes it would be a mistake and would be detrimental to the tourism industry in Calhoun County.

Comr. Bolger urged the Bureau to keep in mind the Calhoun County Fairgrounds, especially for sports promotions.

Comr. Moore inquired whether there has been collaboration with the Binder Park Zoo. Mr. Butts responded that the Zoo is the Number 1 attraction in the county and is doing a good job. Mr. Butts stated that in the history of the Bureau, the Bureau and the Zoo have not worked as collaboratively as during the present time. Mr. Butts advised that the Bureau has formed a partnership with the Zoo and placed a staffed brochure booth at the Zoo. Mr. Butts stated that the Bureau has made strides and continues to work with the Zoo.

Comr. Solis inquired whether the Bureau shall be proactive with the proposed casino. Mr. Butts responded that he has met with the representatives on numerous occasions. Mr. Butts stated that the casino will be helpful to attracting tourism and the Bureau plans on being helpful to the casino. Comr. Solis inquired whether the Bureau shall be promoting the casino. Mr. Butts responded yes, and advised that the Bureau has received verbal commitments from the tribe to help fund that promotion.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Res. 33-2007

“Motion by Comr. Solis, supported by Comr. Bolger, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners remove Item A.(1) - Road Commission Composition Workshop Creation/Appointments from the Consent Agenda for further consideration.”

Voice Vote: Motion CARRIED

Res. 33-A-2007

“Motion by Comr. Rae, supported by Comr. Arnquist, adopt the following, as amended: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners create the Road Commission Composition Workshop and appoint the following members:

Eusebio Solis, Chairman
Sharon Drumhiller
Rob Behnke
Todd Wildt
Scott Brown
Betty Branche

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Mark Stuart
Jase Bolger
Mike Rae
Gardy Berezonsky

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Workshop shall automatically dissolve on December 31, 2007, or at such time when the Workshop presents its report to the Board of Commissioners, whichever is first.”

Comr. Moore inquired regarding the charge of the Workshop. Chairwoman Segal responded that the Workshop’s assignment is to discuss the new legislation allowing for Road Commissions to be comprised of between three to five Road Commissioners and to provide a report/recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Chairwoman Segal advised that to change the composition a public hearing would be required.

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

SPECIAL COMMITTEE/WORKSHOP/BOARD REPORTS:

Chairwoman Segal reported that February 27 the Summit Pointe Board of Directors held a mini-conference to discuss what substance abuse should be for Calhoun County, and shall provide a report at the March 15, 2007 Board of Commissioners Meeting. Chairwoman Segal advised that after the report the Board shall determine what agency will be the substance abuse coordinating agency for Calhoun County.

PETITIONS AND NEW BUSINESS:

County Administrator/Controller’s Report

District Court Staffing Increase Request

County Administrator/Controller Greg Purcell advised that the District Court requests to implement a plan to add a .8 FTE while providing a salary savings.

District Court Administrator Michelle Hill advised that collections for February were \$146,000 and that collections for January and February total \$260,000. Ms. Hill stated that the collections program work is increasing to the point where the current position cannot address all the returned mail and answer all the telephone calls. Ms. Hill stated that to enhance the program the Court has decided to use the money from a vacant Probation Officer position to hire a .8 part-time Collections Clerk and increase the current part-time Warrant Clerk position from .5 FTE to .8 FTE. Ms. Hill advised that during the 2008 budget negotiations the Court will discuss the vacant Probation Officer position, as well as the collections staffing.

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Res. 34-2007

“Motion by Comr. Solis, supported by Comr. Todd, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners grant the Tenth District Court’s request to utilize salary monies budgeted for a vacant part-time Probation Officer position to create a new .8 part-time Collections Clerk position and to increase the current part-time Warrant Clerk position from .5 FTE to .8 FTE to enhance the collection efforts of the Court.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

2007 Budget Adjustment

Res. 35-2007

“Motion by Comr. Rae, supported by Comr. Bolger, adopt the following: Resolved by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners table the 2007 budget transfer of \$50,189 from the Contingency Fund to the Finance Department’s budget until the March 15, 2007 Board of Commissioners Meeting.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

Marshall City Manager Candidate Announcement

Mr. Purcell announced that Ms. Woods is a candidate for Marshall City Manager. Mr. Purcell stated that Ms. Woods has done a great job for Calhoun County and that he believes she is a good candidate for the City Manager position. Mr. Purcell stated that should Ms. Woods become Marshall’s City Manager he shall personally miss her services as she has done a fantastic job.

COMMISSIONERS’ TIME:

Comr. Rae inquired regarding the method for voting. Chairwoman Segal explained that voting is conducted on an alphabetical rotating basis.

Comr. Bolger wished Ms. Woods well in her upcoming employment interview.

CLAIMS PAYABLE LISTINGS:

Res. 36-2007

“Motion by Comr. Rae, 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 \$717,713.54 for the week of February 14, 2007; further, approve

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payment of the list of claims against the county in the total amount of \$891,540.05 for the week of February 21, 2007.”

Roll call vote: Yes - 7 Motion CARRIED Unanimously

RECESS:

The Board recessed at 7:58 p.m. at the call of the Chair.

mlb