

WORKING MEETING

May 7, 2020

Convened: 9:00 AM

Present: Commissioner Gordon, Commissioner Matthew, Commissioner Norris, Commissioner Kolcz and Commissioner Hazelbaker, via Video conference call.

Also Present: Undersheriff Eichler, Sheriff Pollack, State Representative Leutheuser, State Senator Shirkey, IT Director Matt Fosdick, via Video conference call.

County Clerk Terry Kubasiak and Administrator Norman in the Commissioners Boardroom.

The Agenda was approved.

PERSONNEL, PLANS & POLICY

(Commissioner Norris)

Staffing Request – Sheriff Department for Corrections Officer

The Sheriff is requesting to fill a full-time corrections officer position. This is a POAM union position with the starting pay at \$13.839 per hour, with full benefits. There is funding for the position in the 2020 budget. A current corrections officer was promoted to road patrol, with his last day in corrections being in July. The Committee Recommends:

Motion by _____ seconded by _____ that approval is given for the Sheriff to hire a full-time corrections officer at the POAM starting rate of \$13.839 per hour with full benefits, with funds to be taken out of the 2020 Sheriff Department budget.

Hazard Pay Requests

The Administrator provided a chart showing the several departments that have requested hazard pay for their employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. The requests range from \$2 per hour to \$1000 lump sum to \$750 per pay period. He also provided the results from surveys taken by two different entities, regarding how counties were paying employees during the shutdown. The surveys were sent to all 83 counties, with almost all counties responding. Those surveyed responded to several questions including questions regarding hazard pay, furlough days, layoffs, paid time off, comp time and no compensation. The Administrator provided information about HB 6433 – The HEROES ACT of 2020, which would help compensate emergency responders in counties with at least one confirmed case of COVID-19. The HEROES FUND is a proposal through the federal government. This fund would compensate essential workers, which includes government workers. It was noted that if hazard pay was given, the money would come out of the General Fund. After discussion the members decided that they needed more time to review options. The Committee Recommends:

Motion by _____ seconded by _____ to table the requests for Hazard Pay until the next work meeting.

Resolution – Branch County Comparable Hazard Pay-Risk of COVID-19 In Performance of Duties

The Administrator presented a resolution for review. The resolution urges the Governor and State Legislators to provide adequate funding to Michigan local governmental units so that they may provide comparable hazard pay for all local government employees who are at a state of increased risk of contracting COVID-19 in the performance of their duties. It was noted that the Federal government is providing funding to the State for State worker hazard pay. The Committee Recommends:

Motion by _____ seconded by _____ to approve the resolution requesting adequate hazard pay funding be provided to local governments units by the State.

Closure to Public

The Administrator noted that the building is closed to the public through May 15th, per Executive Order. After May 15th there are plans to have all employees to return to work and open the building up to the public. This will be done in phases. The plan includes spaced seating, installing protective counter shields, increased cleaning, increased sanitizer stations, social distancing and required face covering in public areas (hallways, bathrooms, etc.). A timeline was presented showing 50% of the employees would return the first week, 75% would return the second week and by the third week 100% of the employees would return. The following week the building would be open to the public by appointment and with escorts. There will be a COVID-19 committee established, that will meet weekly. The members will help with making sure departments have necessary supplies and that safety measures are being met throughout the buildings. The Committee Recommends:

Motion by _____ seconded by _____ to approve the building re-opening plan, as presented.

SHERIFF & PUBLIC SAFETY **(Commissioner Kolcz)**

None

HOUSE **(Commissioner Matthew)**

Jail Update

The Administrator stated that the building pad will be complete in the next couple of days. They will need three days for curing. The construction team will be sand filling the building pads and drains. The Sheriff’s team will be reviewing the data ports, furnishings, fixtures and equipment. The week of May 20th they will be working on auger casts, then they will work on cross road linkage and then the concrete foundation. This is all weather dependent. The construction crews are surveyed daily and are adhering to the required safety standards; wearing masks, social distancing, etc.

FINANCE **(Commissioner Hazelbaker)**

Bills & Accounts

Administrator Norman presented a summary of the Bills and Accounts (Jail Operations-Board & Care-61%, Jail Operations-Commissary Supplies—11%, Legal Fees-10%, Building Repair & Maintenance-5%, Vehicle Repair & Maintenance-3%) to make up 90% of the invoices. The Committee Recommends:

Motion by _____ and seconded by _____ to approve the Bills and Accounts in the amount of \$172,786.41.

COVID-19 Update

The Administrator stated that counties nationwide could see a \$144 billion hit to their budgets through the end of 2021, according to a report released by NACo. The estimate includes anticipated increases in expenditures, losses in sales tax revenue, business license tax revenue, and income tax revenue. The estimate does not include potential lost revenue from property taxes, state sales or income taxes that are shared with the counties. Current estimates range from a 15% - 30% reduction in local government funding. We receive at least 58% of our revenue from property taxes. Our amount would be reduced due to pending legislation.

We are also looking at a reduction in revenue sharing. The State budget runs on a fiscal year (July – June), where the County runs on the calendar year (January – December). The County receives state revenue sharing every two months. It is estimated that by the end of 2020, the County could see a reduction in the amount of \$315,500. Our fund balance is at 19%. With the reduction, our fund balance will be reduced to 15%. The Administrator is recommending that the Board implement a hiring freeze and capital expenditure freeze for the remainder of 2020, except for essential positions that must be filled and the Teen Share project that has been started. We will also need to pay close attention to the 2021 budget. The Committee recommends:

Motion by _____ seconded by _____ to approve a hiring freeze and a capital expenditure freeze for the remainder of 2020, except for essential positions and the Teen Share project.

LEGISLATIVE

(Commissioner Gordon)

Legislative Update-Senator Shirkey and Representative Leutheuser

Representative Leutheuser stated that the Governor extended the executive orders regarding electronic notary and Open Meetings Act. She also eased unemployment requirements. His office has been trying to get answers from the Unemployment Agency. Everyone is spending most their time trying to get answers. He stated that he believes that there are many things effecting the Governor decisions that shouldn't be considered, like political pressure. The Legislature doesn't know what the Governor is going to do until she does it. He noted that the State of Indiana has a great plan for re-opening. Our legislators keep putting ideas out to the Governor, hoping they will be considered.

Senator Shirkey has had discussions with the Governor about plans to open the State. He isn't getting a lot of cooperation. He stated that the State of Emergency must be approved by the Legislature. A lawsuit has been filed. He shares the County's frustrations.

Resolution-Request Great Lakes Shoreline be Declared Disaster (Delta County)

A resolution was submitted by Delta County for Committee review.

Resolution-Stepping Up Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illness in Jails (Livingston County)

A resolution was submitted by Livingston County for Committee review.

Public Comment

Security Officer Rod Olney asked if temperatures will be taken at the entrance of the building before anyone can enter? Commissioner Norris stated that thermometers have been purchased.

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 am.

Submitted by: Commissioner Matthew Commissioner Kolcz Commissioner Gordon
 Commissioner Hazelbaker Commission Norris