

BRANCH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JULY SESSION (SECOND DAY)
July 28, 2020

1/ The Board of Commissioners of the County of Branch met, pursuant to adjournment, on Tuesday, July 28, 2020.

Chairman Gordon called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm via video conference call.

Present: Commissioners Ted Gordon, Tom Matthew, Leonard Kolcz, Randall Hazelbaker, and Terri Norris via video conference call.

County Clerk Teresa Kubasiak and Administrator Bud Norman were present in the Boardroom at the Courthouse.

Commissioner Hazelbaker led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2/ Motion by Commissioner Norris, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to approve the agenda.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

3/ Motion by Commissioner Kolcz, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2020 Board meeting.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment:

James Webb, Chairman of the Commission on Aging Board (COA), read the following letter submitted to the Board of Commissioners regarding the Community Action Agency (CAA) millage proposal:

The Branch County Commission on Aging Board of Directors met on Monday July 27, 2020 via Zoom. The board discussed the senior meals millage that is being considered for the November 3, 2020 ballot. The BCCOA Board has expressed to you in the past the recommendation not to place this millage on the ballot. Today we would like to outline some of our concerns.

1. The Commission on Aging has worked diligently over the course of its existence to maintain a balanced budget without requesting additional millage money. The Commission on Aging has never asked for an increase to its two existing millages. Carving out this additional millage for meals could jeopardize the future of existing services if additional funding is needed for those services.
2. The Commission on Aging director has not been included in the planning and preparation of this millage proposal. This proposal came from another company.
3. As the commissioners are aware, the COA has ongoing HVAC issues from equipment installed during the renovation for which the cost to remedy is still unknown.

4. The amount of administrative and program costs related to this proposal are not clear.

The mission of the Branch County Commission on Aging is to support programs, services, and activities that help seniors live as healthy and independent as they can. The senior meals program certainly qualifies as one of those. However, the BCCOA board of directors is uncomfortable supporting a millage proposal that may require COA involvement without having first been involved in the planning and research of the program so that we could properly assume the responsibility of tax payer money to fund the program. It will take the collaboration of multiple agencies to make this program work. The Commission on Aging would welcome the opportunity to discuss options in the future but recommends against placing this proposal on the November 3, 2020 ballot.

John Hutchinson, Meals on Wheels volunteer, stated that COA has had an opportunity to voice their concerns. Participants are deserving of the meal service and they will not be able to continue to receive meals if the proposal isn't passed.

Mike Murphy, Meals on Wheels volunteer, stated that he has been with the program since 1998. There is a tremendous need for this program and it should be up to the voters to decide if they want to support it.

Joel Cooper with the Disability Network stated that he appreciated the Board's support of the ADA resolution that is being considered.

Michelle Williamson of the CAA supports the proposal for the senior meals program. There has been an increase in clients, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic started. She noted that 10% of the funds from the proposed millage would go toward administrative costs and that if it were passed there would be an increase in Federal money.

Bob Mullaly, Meals on Wheels volunteer supports the program. He noted that meal delivery is the only contact some clients have.

Alicia Carr, Meals on Wheels coordinator, read comments from actual clients of the program.

4/ Motion by Commissioner Norris, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to approve the resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**2020-06
RESOLUTION**

Support of 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

WHEREAS on July 26, 1990, President George H. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities. This legislation established a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers and changing perceptions, increasing full participation in community life. However, the full promise of the ADA will only be reached if public entities remain committed in their efforts to fully implement the ADA; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that disability is a natural part of the human condition. A disability is simply a characteristic of a person and doesn't exist until someone encounters a barrier; and

WHEREAS, ON THE 30TH anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, in collaborations with Disability Network Southwest Michigan, we celebrate and recognize the progress that has been made by reaffirming the principles of equality and inclusion and recommitting our efforts to reach full ADA compliance.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Branch County Board of Commissioners does hereby reaffirm our commitment to work toward full accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

5/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to approve the Bills and Accounts in the amount of \$264,938.35.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

6/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker seconded by Commissioner Norris to approve the resolution for the Community Action Agency proposal, .15 mills for 5 years, dedicated to the Meals on Wheels program, to be put on the November 3, 2020 General Election ballot.

During discussion the following motion was made:

7/ Motion by Commissioner Gordon, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to table the motion regarding the CAA proposal until the August 4, 2020 working meeting.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

8/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to approve the resolution allowing a 911 Surcharge increase of \$2.52 for a total of \$2.94 per device, per month, for 6 years, to be put on the November 3, 2020 General Election ballot.

2020-07

RESOLUTION SUBMITTING TO A VOTE OF THE ELECTORATE AUTHORIZATION OF THE TELEPHONE SURCHARGE FOR EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SERVICES (ENHANCED 911 CENTRAL DISPATCH SERVICES) AND CERTIFYING BALLOT LANGUAGE

WHEREAS, Branch County has established a county-wide system of emergency telephone and dispatch services for the benefit of the citizens of the County; and

WHEREAS, 911 emergency telephone and dispatch services are of substantial benefit to the citizens of the County of Branch; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act, Section 401b(1), being MCL 484.1401b(1), the Branch County Board of Commissioners may with voter approval authorize a telephone surcharge of up to \$3.00 for each service user, except for users of a prepaid wireless telecommunications service, for recurring emergency telephone operational costs and charges; and

WHEREAS, under the Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act the County is currently charging \$0.42 for each service user; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners believe a telephone surcharge at the level of up to \$2.94 for each service user (a \$2.52 per month increase) is necessary to provide an adequate and equitable financing mechanism for the needs for the Branch County 911 Emergency Center, which increase would be utilized for the procurement of an 800/700 MHz Radio System for Branch County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following proposal be submitted to the qualified voters of the County of Branch at the Election to be held in said County on Tuesday, November 3, 2020:

**ENHANCED 911 CENTRAL DISPATCH
SURCHARGE PROPOSITION**

Shall the limitation on the total amount of local surcharge which may be assessed against all landline, wireless, and voice over internet protocol service users located in Branch County, Michigan with communications devices, which have the capability of contacting 911 or central dispatch services, be assessed at the rate of up to \$2.94 per month for a period of six years, commencing July 1, 2021 and expiring June 30, 2027, for the purposes of funding 911 and central dispatch facilities, equipment, operations, and maintenance, and for the purchase, installation and maintenance of an 800/700 MHz radio system. This includes the base radio, consoles, mobile radios, portable radios and pagers for all Branch County Law Enforcement Agencies and all Branch County Fire Departments, as well as Branch County Central Dispatch?

The current surcharge is authorized by the Branch County Board of Commissioners Resolution at the rate of \$.42 per month per device, and generates approximately \$345,000.00 annually for 911 and central dispatch facilities, equipment, operations and maintenance. The increase being sought is an additional \$2.52 per month per device, and would increase the local surcharge funds annually by \$2,070,000.00. The total local surcharge would then be assessed at up to \$2.94 per month per device, and would generate \$2,415,000.00 annually. The increased funds (\$2,070,000.00) would be utilized for the procurement of an 800/700 MHz Radio System for Branch County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this question is hereby certified to the County Clerk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all Public Officials of the County of Branch, State of Michigan, and all Governmental units thereof, within such time as shall be required by law, are directed to perform all acts which shall be necessary to be performed in order to submit the above stated proposition to the duly qualified voters of the County at the Election to be held in the County on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

9/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to accept the recommended lowest bids for Security Sealants, Flooring, Painting, Food Service, Fencing & Gates and Landscaping, as presented.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment:

John Hutchinson and Michelle Williamson both commented about communication between CAA and COA regarding the Meals on Wheels proposal.

10/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to accept the Community Action Agency 2019 Annual Report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Norris, Matthew, Kolcz, Hazelbaker, Gordon – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Committee/Liaison Reports:

Kolcz- the Airport Board is questioning an invoice noted in the Bills & Accounts report. The Administrator will provide more information at the next work meeting.

Hazelbaker – the Chamber will be announcing a new director this week.

11/ The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:55pm.

Chairman

Clerk