

**BRANCH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**JUNE SESSION (SECOND DAY)**  
**June 26, 2018**

1/ The Board of Commissioners of the County of Branch met, pursuant to adjournment, in the Commissioners meeting room at the Courthouse, on Tuesday, June 26, 2018.

Chairman Gordon called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Ted Gordon, Leonard Kolcz, Don Vrablic, Randall Hazelbaker, and Terri Norris, County Clerk Teresa Kubasiak, Administrator Bud Norman.

Commissioner Vrablic led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2/ Motion by Commissioner Vrablic, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED.

3/ Motion by Commissioner Kolcz, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to approve the minutes of June 12, 2018 Board meeting. MOTION CARRIED

**Public Comment**

Representatives from DTE Energy introduced themselves. They stated that they have been working in Batavia, Matteson, Sherwood and Union Townships on developing the Wind Turbine Project. They would like to come back and address the Board at the July 19<sup>th</sup> work meeting.

Representatives from Elevantus, an architectural firm from Ft. Wayne, IN, introduced themselves. They stated that they have extensive experience in designing jails and have done so all over the country. They would be interested in working with Branch County on designing a new jail, should the millage pass.

4/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker, seconded by Commissioner Norris that approval is given to the Juvenile Department to purchase a refurbished Minolta Bizhub 454E B/W Copier, in the amount of \$4,100, to be taken out of Capital Outlay. MOTION CARRIED

5/ Motion by Commissioner Vrablic, seconded by Commissioner Hazelbaker, to approve the Bills and Accounts in the amount of \$161,912.62. MOTION CARRIED

6/ Motion by Commissioner Gordon, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, that approval is given to use the firm of Sommers & Schwartz P.C, to represent the County in the Opioid Litigation. MOTION CARRIED

7/ Motion by Commissioner Gordon, seconded by Commissioner Norris, that approval is given to adopt the Resolution opposing HB 6049 and SB 1025, as presented

**2018-09**  
RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO HB 6049 and SB 1025

WHEREAS, House Bill (HB) 6049 and Senate Bill (SB) 1025 seeks to completely restructure the tax assessing qualifications, process and boundaries of local assessing units in Michigan; and

WHEREAS, HB 6049/SB 1025 will impose a huge financial burden on Branch County as well as Michigan's other counties and local units because its mandates will require increased staffing levels and office space while providing a woefully inadequate 1% administrative fee and undefined "start-up funding" to compensate the counties and other local units for the drastic expenses that will surely accompany the new mandates; and

WHEREAS, HB 6049/SB 1025 will put Branch County at odds with its local townships by requiring us to take the 1% administration fee from the local units to pay for our increased costs; and

WHEREAS, HB 6049/ SB 1025 changes the manner in which local boards of review (BOR) are conducted. By putting specialized BORs at the county level, HB 6049/SB 1025 has the potential to strip elected township supervisors and local assessing units of control over the tax assessing process, depriving them of the ability to account for unique conditions and values unknown to county-wide, regional and/or statewide assessing units but well known in the local units; and

WHEREAS, HB 6049/SB 1025 appears to have been designed without any input from existing assessors or their associations and the previous drafts were not made public to the counties and townships directly affected by its sweeping changes until nearly ready for introduction into the Michigan Legislature. In this context, it is difficult to view HB 6049/SB 1025 as anything other than a power grab generating from Lansing; and

WHEREAS, there are no guarantees that quality education will be available locally or even regionally to allow for the increased certification levels imposed by HB 6049/SB 1025; and

WHEREAS, HB 6049/SB 1025's proposed levels of certification for assessors will not achieve the results that are being sought. The real problem is bad assessors, not their levels of certification. The solution lies in better policing of assessors by the State Tax Commission, not simply imposing increased educational requirements that may be impossible to achieve and that do nothing to weed out the bad actors; and

WHEREAS, Branch County views HB 6049/SB 1025 in its current form as an unconstitutional unfunded mandate which does little or nothing to accomplish its stated goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Branch County Board of Commissioners hereby opposes HB 6049/SB 1025 and asks that it be withdrawn from consideration until the funding issues and other problems identified above can be properly addressed.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows.

YES – Norris, Kolcz, Vrablic, Hazelbaker, Gordon - 5

NO - 0

MOTION CARRIED

8/ Motion by Commissioner Vrablic seconded by Commissioner Hazelbaker, to accept the 2017 Branch County Conservation District annual report and place it on file. MOTION CARRIED

9/ Motion by Commissioner Kolcz, seconded by Commissioner Norris, to accept the 2017 Probate/Juvenile Court annual report and place it on file. MOTION CARRIED

10/ Motion by Commissioner Norris, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to accept the 2017 Commission on Aging annual report and place it on file. MOTION CARRIED

11/ Motion by Commissioner Norris, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to accept the 2017 County Clerk annual report and place it on file. MOTION CARRIED

#### Committee/Liaison Reports

Commissioner Kolcz – attended the Medical Marijuana presentation recently held at the ProMedica conference center. It was very informative and well done; they are moving along on the upkeep of the grounds at the airport.

Commissioner Hazelbaker- The first Farmers Market was held last Saturday and the first Music in the Park event was held last Tuesday. The second concert is tonight.

#### Chairman's Remarks:

Commissioner Gordon also attended the Medical Marijuana presentation. He noted that the Medical Marijuana will be taxed quite highly, but if the ballot issue passes, that tax money will go away.

12/ Motion by Commissioner Hazelbaker and seconded by Commissioner Kolcz to adjourn at 4:25 pm. MOTION CARRIED

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Chairman

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Clerk