

Regular Session of the Board of County Commissioners for the County of St. Joseph, State of Michigan, was held in the Commissioners' Room, Courthouse at the Village of Centreville, Michigan on April 3, 2007 at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Baker called the meeting to order.

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Pueschel.

The Pledge to the American Flag was given.

The Clerk, Pattie S. Bender, called the roll and the following Commissioners were present:

Eric Shafer	Gerald E. Loudenslager
Michael D. Dunlap	Robin Baker
Monte Bordner	David J. Pueschel
John Dobberteen	

Also present were Dan Carey, Finance Director and Charles Cleaver, Human Resource Director.

AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Bordner that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.

MINUTES APPROVED

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Dunlap that the minutes for March 20, 2007 be approved. Motion carried. Commissioner Loudenslager abstained due to absence.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from the Michigan Association of Counties, Re: MAC Legislative Updates, March 23 and March 30, 2007.
2. Letter from Indiana Michigan Power Company, Re: Notice of public hearing on April 17 regarding revised depreciation accrual rates for its electric utility plant.
3. Copy of letter to President Bush from Tim Carls, Re: Florence Township.
4. Resolution from Antrim County, Re: Support of Christine Alwood for the member-at-large position on the MAC Board.
5. Resolution from VanBuren County, Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 232 (Privatizing of the supervision of foster children.)
6. Minutes of the Community Mental Health Services Board meeting of February 20, 2007.
7. Minutes of the Community Action Agency Board meeting of February 26, 2007.
8. Minutes of the St. Joseph River Basin Commission meeting of December 5, 2006.

It was moved by Commissioner Loudenslager and supported by Commissioner Bordner that the communications be accepted and placed on file. Motion carried.

2006 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FRIEND OF THE COURT

William Thistlethwaite, Friend of the Court, gave an overview of the 2006 Annual Report of the Friend of the Court. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to present his 16th annual report.

The purpose of the office is to enforce child support ordered by the Circuit Court. In 2006 they collected \$12.2 million which is the 3rd year that the amount has been over \$12 million. Over the past 10 years they have had an annual increase of \$3 million.

Mr. Thistlethwaite also said that in 2006 he took over hearing all of the referee hearings which totaled 500. Phil Adams and staff renovated the referee room that he uses along with the District Court Magistrate and the Juvenile Referee. He has received many positive comments from the litigants and attorneys.

In 2006 Mary Herendeen was promoted to Customer Service Supervisor and no grievances were filed throughout the year.

Also, last year they changed the way they handle contested child custody cases. Previously there were home visits and then hearings. Now the first contact is the caseworker who sits and speaks with just the 2 of them without attorneys. All 4 caseworkers have been trained to mediate differences. In the first 7 months that they tried this there were 56 cases referred to them and they settled 53 of them which saves on litigation expenses and also these 53 are less likely to come back to the Court because they worked out the agreement among themselves.

Included in their webpage are the 10 most wanted child support non-payers. This will soon be published in the Sturgis Journal and hopefully in the Three Rivers Commercial.

The Jail Release Program has been a real success. In 2006 there were 21 in the program with 17 of them working to completion. Three were re-arrested. Many jail days were saved freeing them up for other more serious offenders and this saved approximately \$11,000.

In October of 2007 the federal government is on schedule to cut Friend of the Court Funding nationwide by 20%. There are currently bills pending to restore these cuts. Michigan's Governor is proposing that full funding be provided even with the pending 20% federal cut.

Mr. Thistlethwaite stated that he has been meeting with Doug Fisher, Prosecuting Attorney, to combine the Child Support Division of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office into the Friend of the Court by October of this year. This combination should be less expensive and more efficient.

Commissioner Dunlap stated that he likes the innovations that Mr. Thistlethwaite is trying. It should lead to more efficiency and he applauds him.

Commissioner Bordner applauded Mr. Thistlethwaite for using the work release program.

Mr. Thistlethwaite stated that they also use Michigan Works! and they have been very cooperative in taking on their clients.

Commissioner Loudenslager stated that the office appears to be efficient and he appreciates their innovations too.

Commissioner Pueschel stated that it is good to be thinking out of the box.

Chairman Baker thanked Mr. Thistlethwaite on doing a good job.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Shafer that the 2006 Annual Report of the Friend of the Court be accepted and placed on file. Motion carried.

HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION REQUEST FOR FUNDS

Mary Falbe, new Director of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Service (formerly Domestic Assault Shelter Coalition), requested \$7,000 for their Healthy Relationships program. The HSC has endorsed this program.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Pueschel that the request for funds in the amount of \$7,000 by the Human Services Commission for their Healthy Relationships program be approved.

The aye and nay vote was called as follows:

Aye votes cast: 7 - Commissioners Shafer, Loudenslager, Dunlap, Baker, Bordner, Pueschel and Dobberteen.

Nay votes cast: 0

Motion carried.

COUNTY POLICY AMENDMENT

Mr. Cleaver stated that this policy amendment is to transfer the non-union employees to MERS.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Dunlap that the County Policy Amendment transferring the non-union employees to MERS be approved.

The aye and nay vote was called as follows:

Aye votes cast: 7 - Commissioners Shafer, Loudenslager, Dunlap, Baker, Bordner, Pueschel and Dobberteen.

Nay votes cast: 0

Motion carried.

KEYSTONE PLACE REQUEST TO SOLICIT DONATIONS

Mr. Cleaver stated that a request has been received from the Keystone Place to place donation canisters in the offices of the County Clerk, Register of Deeds and Land Resource Centre during the month of April. The Department Managers have been contacted and are amenable to this request.

Commissioner Loudenslager stated that while the Keystone Place is a worthwhile organization he believes that this will open the door to other organizations that wish to solicit.

Commissioner Dunlap concurs with Commissioner Loudenslager. Keystone is a great place and Kelli Tackett, Executive Director, is doing a great job, but he does not feel that this request is appropriate.

It was moved by Commissioner Loudenslager and supported by Commissioner Dunlap that the request to place donation canisters in the 3 offices be denied.

Commissioner Bordner stated that solicitation at the County Buildings has been a highly debated topic, but we all have ownership in the Keystone Place as the County donated the property for the construction of the home and gave them \$20,000 in starter funds. He would be voting against the motion.

Commissioner Baker stated that the Executive Committee recommended that Ms. West-Wing contact the department managers to agree to put the canisters in their offices.

Commissioner Dunlap asked if just anyone could solicit.

Commissioner Shafer stated that the Board has denied requests before and he has no problem with this request. Any agency would have to request permission and each would be addressed on a case by case basis. He would also be voting no on the motion.

Commissioner Pueschel stated that he can see both sides of this issue and said that at least they asked.

Motion defeated.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Pueschel that the canisters for donations to benefit Keystone Place be placed in the County Clerk, Register of Deeds and Land Resource Centre's Offices. Motion carried.

HOMELAND SECURITY EQUIPMENT GRANT ACCEPTANCE

Mr. Cleaver stated that a grant has been approved for security equipment. We will receive the Optim Freedomview Fiber Optic Scope Kit which will be used for search and rescue, hidden compartment searches including gas tanks, contraband location and pre-entry intelligence.

It was moved by Commissioner Loudenslager and supported by Commissioner Pueschel that the grant be accepted.

The aye and nay vote was called as follows:

Aye votes cast: 7 - Commissioners Shafer, Loudenslager, Dunlap, Baker, Bordner, Pueschel and Dobberteen.

Nay votes cast: 0

Motion carried.

NOMINATIONS/APPOINTMENTS

Jury Board

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Shafer that Marie Schneider be nominated and appointed to the Jury Board for a 6 year term which will expire April 30, 2013. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Law Enforcement

Commissioner Dobberteen stated that the Law Enforcement Committee will be meeting in the next couple of days.

Judiciary

Commissioner Loudenslager stated that there was no report.

Physical Resources

Commissioner Shafer stated that the Physical Resources Committee had not met but Phil Adams is proceeding with putting a new roof on the gazebo.

Executive Committee

Commissioner Bordner stated that everything discussed at the Executive Committee Meeting on March 29th has been discussed tonight except that the next Executive Committee has been moved from April 20th to April 19th.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Mr. Cleaver presented the following report:

MISCELLANEOUS:

James Edward Rangler will change from part-time Corrections Officer to full-time Corrections Officer at \$16.28/hr. effective March 27, 2007.

Todd Bohm, Road Patrol Officer, is on medical leave commencing March 20, 2007 under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

NEW HIRE:

Susan Burke has been hired as Friend of the Court Medical Enforcement Clerk at \$10.53/hr. (Soltysiak system, grade 3, minimum) effective April 17, 2007. Ms. Burke will be working 24 hours/week.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Bordner that the personnel report be approved. Motion carried.

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Mr. Cleaver presented the following report:

BUDGET AMENDMENTS:

DECREASE JUVENILE DIVISION'S BUDGET:

Line item 101-149-802.020 (Court Appointed Attorney) \$ 1,000.00

INCREASE JUVENILE DIVISION'S BUDGET:

Line item 101-149-707.000 (Wages – Part time) \$ 1,000.00

DECREASE GENERAL FUND CONTINGENCY:

Line Item 101-890-941.000 (Contingency) \$14,698.00

INCREASE EXPENDITURES FRIEND OF THE COURT BUDGET:

Line item 101-141-981.000 (Vehicles – New Car) \$14,698.00

FROM APPROPRIATION:

\$30,000.00 from County Road Bridge Appropriation to County Road Bridge Fund.

\$14,000.00 from Soil Conservation Appropriation to Soil Conservation Fund.

\$8,000.00 from Soil Conservation (Soil Erosion Permits) Appropriation to Soil Conservation (Soil Erosion) Fund.

It was moved by Commissioner Dobberteen and supported by Commissioner Shafer that the budget adjustments be approved. Motion carried.

BILLS

Mr. Carey presented the following bills for payment:

<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>PAYROLL</u>
Employee Receivable	\$ 11,540.25	\$
Due from State	7,378.31	
Due to Townships	142.50	
Appropriations	95,173.50	
County Commission	187.50	9,028.54
Circuit Court	10,448.50	13,477.31
District Court	1,219.57	62,460.02
Friend of the Court	17,726.65	35,518.71
Probate Court	574.29	21,145.89
Juvenile Branch	17,195.51	37,814.63
Appeals Court	723.95	99.14
Administration		9,915.60
Finance Department	421.05	11,949.22
County Clerk		23,523.93
Equalization Department	2,549.00	15,637.03
Human Resources	528.95	7,091.08
Geographic Information Systems	789.04	6,580.46
Prosecutor's Office	4,434.32	42,773.54
Central Services	17,455.44	5,610.62
Register of Deeds	389.98	12,983.94
County Treasurer	3,930.00	15,179.26
Cooperative Extension	428.23	8,687.44
Information Technology	652.93	11,826.92
Buildings & Grounds	9,717.07	15,299.68
Courts Building Security		5,931.11
Drain Commission		5,512.97
Sheriff Department	13,530.73	89,821.00

<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>PAYROLL</u>
Sheriff Reserves	\$ 35.00	\$ 396.58
Marine Patrol	23.80	
Jail & Turnkey	27,920.20	98,897.19
Planning Commission	10,000.00	
Emergency Services	25.21	5,239.00
Animal Control	2,488.15	9,669.54
Board of Public Works		652.14
Medical Examiners	1,100.00	
Child Care - Probate	13,748.66	232.30
Department of Veterans' Affairs	300.00	
Veterans' Services		1,066.48
Utilities & General Services	37,584.82	
Total	\$310,363.11	\$584,021.27
<u>OTHER FUNDS</u>	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>PAYROLL</u>
County Road Commission	\$ 375,797.50	\$
Parks & Recreation	1,251.00	7,443.50
Emergency 911 Service	7,154.47	50,577.52
Central Dispatch - Wireless	1,286.96	4,254.17
Meyer Broadway/Coon Hollow Park	377.30	2,192.46
Family Counseling	280.00	
Cade Lake Park	157.53	
Waste Management Fund		
County Commission	17,181.76	
Traffic Safety Program Fund	22.74	
Economic Development Fund	10,414.04	4,179.36
Survey & Remonumentation	17,323.60	
Register of Deeds Automation Fund	7,813.88	1,248.00
Victims' Rights Advocate Fund		3,310.56
Community Corrections Advisory Board	6,541.67	2,108.81
Community Corrections Program	3,212.00	
Drug Law Enforcement Fund	1,097.30	
Law Enforcement Fund	18.01	11,431.87
Secondary Road Patrol		8,780.88
Homeland Security Grant Fund	9,331.92	
Principal Residence Denial Fund	315.00	652.74
Commission on Aging	42,221.26	45,245.61
Sheriff's Justice Training Fund	690.00	
Department of Human Services	24,846.92	
Child Care - Probate Court	18,536.00	3,636.62
Child Care - Department of Human Services	27,488.98	
Tax Payment Fund	6,139.20	
Inmate Store	111.27	
Three Rivers Community Center	2,289.16	857.35
Long Lake Level Revolving Fund	5.49	
Flexible Benefits Insurance Fund	149,519.64	
Total	\$731,424.60	\$145,919.45
Grand Total	\$1,041,787.71	\$729,940.72

General Fund Operating Expenditures		
Pre-Authorized	\$266,863.64	
Accounts Payable	43,499.47	
		\$ 310,363.11
General Fund Payroll Expenditures		\$ 584,021.27
Other Funds Operating Expenditures		
Pre-authorized	\$679,059.63	
Accounts Payable	52,364.97	
		\$ 731,424.60
Other Funds Payroll Expenditures		\$ 145,919.45
Total Recorded for the Month		\$ 1,771,728.43

It was moved by Commissioner Bordner and supported by Commissioner Shafer that the bills be approved for payment. Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Baker stated that the Farmland Preservation Committee formed from the Strategic Planning Sessions recently had a meeting. He reminded everyone of the Strategic Planning Work Session scheduled for April 11th at 3:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Chairman Baker stated that he would like to appoint Commissioner Dobberteen to the Executive Committee to replace Commissioner Shafer.

It was moved by Commissioner Shafer and supported by Commissioner Bordner that Commissioner Dobberteen be appointed to the Executive Committee. Motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commissioner Loudenslager stated that the Judiciary Committee will meet next Wednesday, April 11th at noon.

Commissioner Shafer stated that some constituents have asked him about the loan that the County made to the Commission on Aging. He asked Mr. Carey for the information. Mr. Carey stated that the County loaned the COA \$50,000 for 1 month and it was paid back with \$208 in interest fees. Commissioner Shafer reiterated that the loan was used to increase services to seniors while the COA was waiting for the tax money from their recently voted millage.

Commissioner Bordner reminded the Board members to talk to State Rep. Rick Shaffer regarding H.B. 4442.

Commissioner Bordner also mentioned that MSUE Director, Maury Kaercher's mother passed away last weekend.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Shafer and supported by Commissioner Dunlap that the St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners adjourn until April 24, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Pattie S. Bender, County Clerk

Robin Baker, Chairman