

CALHOUN COUNTY
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 12, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The Equalization Session of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners convened at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, 2011 in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, County Building, Marshall, Michigan.

Chairman Kale called the meeting to order and requested the Deputy Clerk call the roll.

Present: Comrs. Behnke, Todd, Frisbie, Camp, Kale, Haadsma (arrived at 7:40) and VanSickle (excused at 7:50)

Staff Present: Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, Assistant County Administrator Brad Wilcox, Corporation Counsel Richard Lindsey, Human Resources Director Kim Archambault, and Deputy Clerk Chris McComb

2 and 3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Comr. Julie Camp, followed by Comr. Frisbie leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"Moved Comr. Frisbie, supported by Comr. Todd to approve the agenda of the April 12, 2011 Calhoun County Board of Commissioners meeting as presented."

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

"Moved Comr. VanSickle, supported by Comr. Behnke to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2011 Calhoun County Board of Commissioners Regular Session as presented."

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Peter Kobs, Development Director at the Great Lakes Center to Prevent Gambling Addiction, stated that the County has an important problem and a growing addiction that is costing the County \$8.4 million each year. He stated there are at least 644 people in Calhoun County who are addicted to gambling. He stated the human cost is even higher than the financial and it's an issue they are trying to address. He stated the Local Revenue Sharing Board can only provide funds to government entities, and they are having trouble forming a line between casino operation and its impact on the County. But the biggest and easiest problem to document is gambling addiction. He thanked Comr. Behnke for his strong support and asked the County to join them in a partnership. He stated that the state isn't stepping up and has no intention of stepping up. He stated that up to 80% of therapy for gambling addiction fails, and so prevention is the way to go. He stated they were asking for co-existence, and were not anti-gambling. He asked the Comrs. to read their proposal and encouraged them to act as they were only asking for less than 1% of Local Revenue Sharing Board budget.

Dawn Smith, Executive Director of the Substance Abuse Council, told the Commissioners about the "Take Back" initiative being held at 9 sites throughout county. She stated it is co-sponsored with law enforcement. She stated that people will be able to bring in their unused medications and turn them in for proper disposal on April 30 from 10 – 2. She stated studies have found that kids are taking them and abusing.

7. ELECTED/APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICIALS' COMMENTS

There were none.

8. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. April Alcohol Awareness Proclamation

The Proclamation was read into record by Comr. Behnke.

APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, research continues to demonstrate alcohol use by young people poses dangers associated with acute impairment, threats to long-term brain development and overall safety and well-being, and

WHEREAS, 2010 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth data for Calhoun County shows:

35.5% of 7th graders, 58% of 9th graders, and 71.8% of 11th graders report alcohol as "sort of easy" or "very easy" to get

Calhoun County's 7th grade students report their first use of alcohol occurred at age 10

21.5% of 11th graders engaged in dangerous binge drinking, defined as having five or more drinks of alcohol in a row within a few hours

WHEREAS, it is illegal to give or allow underage youth to drink alcohol in your home, even with their parents' permission, and

WHEREAS, anyone found guilty of providing alcohol to underage youth can face up to a \$1,000 fine and sixty days in jail, in addition to any civil action resulting from damages or injury related to the offense, and

WHEREAS, nationally the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows:

28.3% of students rode in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol one or more times during the 30 days before the survey.

9.7% of students had driven a car or other vehicle one or more times when they had been drinking alcohol during the 30 days before the survey.

WHEREAS, alcohol abuse is linked to as many as two-thirds of all sexual assaults and date rapes of teens and college students and is a major factor in unprotected sex among youth, increasing their risk for unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections; and

WHEREAS, youth that consume alcohol before the age of 15 are 40% more likely to develop alcohol dependence as adults. However, if consumption of alcohol can be delayed until the legal age of 21, serious alcohol-related problems can be reduced by 70%.

WHEREAS, the Substance Abuse Council and Calhoun County ask residents to refuse to provide alcoholic beverages to underage youth and take necessary action to prevent this illegal and unhealthy practice,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners not only discourages the use of alcohol by those below the legal age of consumption but also exhorts all residents of Calhoun County to refuse to provide alcoholic beverages to those underage youth, and will continue to take necessary action to prevent this illegal and unhealthy activity. The Calhoun County Board of Commissioners calls upon all citizens, parents, youth, governmental agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and workplaces, hospitals, and schools in Calhoun County to support efforts that reduce and prevent underage drinking in our community.

The Proclamation was presented to Dawn Smith, Executive Director of the Substance Abuse Council, by Comrs. Behnke and Kale.

Moved Comr. Behnke, supported by

B. Greater Battle Creek United Way "Volunteer of the Year" Award Presentation

Marcia Starkey, United Way, stated that Matt Saxton joined the Battle Creek cabinet this year and has made a significant contribution. She stated the United Way has implemented several initiatives developed by Matt. She also stated that donations from the Sheriff's Department have increased because of Matt's efforts. Ms. Starkey stated the Greater Battle Creek United Way was proud to proclaim Matt Saxton as their "Volunteer of the Year" and presented him with a plaque to commemorate. Ms. Starkey also thanked Michelle Hill for her ongoing efforts and commitment to the United Way as the Calhoun County representative.

C. 2011 Equalization Report

Res. 39-2011

Moved Comr. Behnke, supported by Comr. VanSickle resolved the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners does hereby approve the 2011 Equalization Report.

Deputy Equalization Director John Hippensteel reviewed the 2011 Equalization Report's changes and highlights from 2010. He stated equalized values in the County have gone down 3.71% and taxable values have decreased 2.19%; both are smaller decreases than 2010. He stated there are no factors for any of the local units and asked that the report be accepted as presented.

On a roll call vote, Yes – 6, Excused – 1 (Haadsma), Motion CARRIED

D. National County Government Month

Res. 40-2011

“Moved Comr. Todd, supported by Comr. VanSickle to approve the National County Government Month Proclamation and proclaim April 2011 is National County Government Month.”

Comr. Frisbie read the proclamation into the record.

National County Government Month - April 2011
“Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families”

WHEREAS, the nation's 3,068 counties provide a variety of essential public services to communities serving more than 300 million Americans; and

WHEREAS, Calhoun County and all counties take seriously their responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in sensible and cost-effective ways; and

WHEREAS, Calhoun County honors and thanks our residents who have served this country through military service; and

WHEREAS, county government delivers many important services to America's veterans, military service members and their families, including physical and mental health, housing, employment, and justice; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties has encouraged counties across the country to actively promote their own programs and services; and

WHEREAS, Calhoun County and the National Association of Counties are working together to **Restore the Partnership** among all levels of government to better serve American communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim April 2011 as National County Government Month and encourage all County officials, employees, schools and residents to participate in county government celebration activities.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED

9. CONSENT AGENDA

There was none.

10. SPECIAL COMMITTEE/WORKSHOP/BOARD REPORTS

Comr. VanSickle reported that the Ag Preservation Committee did not meet because of a lack of quorum and they have rescheduled for June 13.

Comr. Camp stated she attended the quarterly meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee. She stated they had a speaker from the EPA who talked about their regional offices and their method of responding to a variety of incidents, including the possibility of reimbursements to the local entities for contamination issues.

Comr. Frisbie commented that the 911 Admin Board met and approved a tribute to Tom Harding, Athens Fire Chief who passed away. He asked Commissioners to continue to seek input from their local governments about what they would like to see in the future for funding 911.

11. UNFINISHED AND OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

12. NEW BUSINESS AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator/Controller Scott stated she attended The Coordinating Council's Substance Abuse Work Group, meeting the substance abuse prevention and treatment providers in the County were there and they heard presentations from the County's drug court, sobriety court as well as the Venture Behavioral Health Agency who provides mental health services. She stated it was very informational. She stated they also heard from Mike DeBoer, who is facilitating a sobering house in Calhoun County. She explained to the Board that every year they approve several hundreds of thousands of alcohol tax (PA2) dollars that the County is required to pass through to a coordinating agency to be spent on alcohol prevention and substance abuse services. She stated the funds are distributed with the State's fiscal year or October to September. Scott explained that when the coordinating agency closes out their books, there are typically unused funds that can be allocated. She stated when she receives the total of last year's unallocated amount she will prepare a resolution to pass down those funds to the services groups to use for the remainder of this fiscal year. She stated that she asked the work group to consider the proposals on how those funds should be distributed for the rest of the fiscal year. She stated in the past the work group hasn't provided the recommendation on what to do with it and this would be the perfect forum

to decide the priorities of substance abuse dollars in the County. She stated there will be a meeting of the Substance Abuse Council on Monday, April 18 then the work group will meet again on May 9 to consider proposals for carryover funds. She stated the carryover is estimated to be approximately \$125,000 and she hopes to bring back an amended PA2 budget on May 19.

Administrator/Controller Scott reviewed a list of County Government month activities.

Scott Losey, Veterans Affairs Director, and Service Officer Kristina Higgins presented an overview of the Veterans Affairs Department. Losey stated that their mission is simple: to advocate on behalf of veterans and families of veterans and primarily their everyday activities are to file claims for veterans. He claimed the pinnacle of their job is to provide clear and concise information for veterans to submit claims. He stated Michigan is in the top 10 states with the number of veterans, but the bottom 5 for benefits provided to veterans. He stated that 8 of 10 veterans that come in are from Vietnam and 6 of 8 have dioxin, a main ingredient of Agent Orange, related diseases. He stated current veterans are being offered more claim help when they are discharged.

Service Officer Higgins listed the eligibility requirements for the Calhoun County burial benefit as the veteran or spouse must be a resident of Calhoun County, the veteran must have served at least 90 days during a recognized time of war, and can possess no more than \$40,000 in assets at the time of passing. She stated they are then eligible for the onetime benefit of \$300.

A. Agreement with Calhoun County Animal Center

Administrator/Controller Scott presented a five year agreement with Calhoun County Animal Center. She stated the agreement was a renewal after a competitive bid and is a fixed amount of \$236,000. She stated the budgetary impact is already shown in the current budget.

Res. 41-2011

Moved Comr. Haadsma, supported by Comr. Behnke resolved to approve the five year agreement with Calhoun County Animal Center.

On a roll call vote, Yes – 6, Excused – 1 (VanSickle), Motion CARRIED

B. March 2011 Financials

Administrator/Controller Scott stated that financials are presented to the Board at the second meeting of every month beginning in March and this is the first one for 2011. She gave the Commissioners an overview of what was included in the report. She stated the summary through March, which is one quarter through the fiscal year and the only significant variance in revenue is that this is the first year we have come back on the State's Appropriation Bill for State shared revenue and the timing of the payments are different so it's nothing to be alarmed about. She stated expenditures for the General Fund are very much in line with what is expected. She also stated that taxable values are down 2% but that is what was budgeted for 2011.

13. CITIZENS TIME

There was none.

14. COMMISSIONERS' TIME

Comr. Todd thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He stated he has learned from being a man of God and there are a lot of people out there who are hurting from different issues. He stated that one thing he's learned personally is to trust in the Lord and he would encourage everyone to trust in God and He will help heal. He stated no one wants to be out doing the wrong things but only God can get them out of the corner they are backed into. He also stated he can point people to ministries to help.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comr. Frisbie stated that the Pennfield Exchange Club hosts a student of the month activity every year and they select three female and three male winners to be honored. He stated they then hold an essay contest with the theme of America. He stated they recently held that contest and Jason Hackett and Anna Stevens, both seniors, were selected to move on to the state competition. He commented it was a great day to see our youth actively telling us what they think of our country.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. at the call of the Chair.

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Chairman
Calhoun County Board of Commissioners

Clerk
Calhoun County Board of Commissioners