

LEGISLATIVE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, April 11, 2006 – 8:00 a.m.  
Board Room – County Administration Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Dean Agee; Commissioners Dick Bulkowski, Marvin Hiddema, Jack Horton, Nadine Klein, Harold Mast, Paul Mayhue, and David Morren

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Ted Vonk (excused)

ALSO PRESENT: County Administrator Daryl Delabbio; Assistant Administrators Mary Swanson and Wayman Britt; Executive Assistant to the Board Jim Day; Board Chair Roger Morgan; Civil Counsel Sherry Batzer; Legal Analyst Sangeeta Ghosh; Management Analysts Darwin Baas, Jennifer DeHaan, and Matthew VanZetten; Office Administrator Kelly Berendsen; Human Resources Director Donald Clack; Human Resources Deputy Director Gail Glocheski; Fiscal Services Director Bob White; Fiscal Services Deputy Director Steve Duarte; Facilities Management Director Bob Mihos; Information Technology Director Craig Paull; Network 180 Executive Director Paul Ippel; Drain Commissioner Doug Spote; Parks Director Roger Sabine; Manager of Parks Operations Gary Huizenga; Undersheriff Jon Hess; Chief Deputy Tom Hillen; CMH Authority Board candidate Charles Brown; Sr. Administrative Specialist Pam Van Keuren

NEWS MEDIA: Rick Wilson, Grand Rapids Press

Chair Agee called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

I. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS REVIEW – PARKS DEPARTMENT

The Committee and Parks Manager Roger Sabine reviewed the performance measurements for the Parks Department. A copy of the performance measurements is on file in the Board of Commissioner's Office.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Klein moved to approve the March 28, 2006, minutes as written.

Supported by Mr. Bulkowski.

Motion carried.

IV. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS / DRAIN COMMISSION – PUBLIC HEARING – APPOINTED DRAIN COMMISSIONER

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to conduct a public hearing on April 27, 2006, to consider the option proposed by pending legislation to

have an appointed, rather than elected, Drain Commissioner. This request is proposed to go to the Board on April 13, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- Legislation has been proposed to provide county boards of commissioners of counties with populations of more than 500,000 people with a vacancy in the elected position of Drain Commissioner, the option of having an appointed, rather than an elected, Drain Commissioner.
- This legislation is being supported by Kent County and is one of the legislative priorities identified by the County's Legislative & Human Resources Committee and Board of Commissioners.
- The legislation, if enacted into state law, will require the Board of Commissioners to conduct a public hearing on having an appointed Drain Commissioner not less than 10, nor more than 30, days prior to making a decision on creating an appointed position.
- Also if enacted into law, the legislation would require the County to exercise its option to have an appointed, rather than an elected Drain Commissioner, "before the deadline for filing nominating petitions for the office of Drain Commissioner." The deadline to file such nominating petitions is May 16, 2006.
- Attached is a copy of the legislation as well as an action timeline and proposed public hearing notice.
- It is recommended that the public hearing be held in conjunction with the Board of Commissioner meeting scheduled for April 27, 2006.

No additional general funds required.

Mr. Morren moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to conduct a public hearing on April 27, 2006, to consider the option proposed by pending legislation to have an appointed, rather than elected, Drain Commissioner.

Supported by Mr. Mast.

Mr. Bulkowski asked what advantages there are to the County if the Drain Commissioner position were to be an appointed position rather than elected.

Mr. Delabbio stated there are potential opportunities for cross-training between the Drain Commissioner's office and the Department of Public Works; there are a number of opportunities that exist for removing silos that county government sometimes can have; and there are advantages to streamlining operations which can't be done under an elected position and could potentially be done under an appointed position. The Drain Commissioner as an elected position is independent of anyone including the Board of Commissioners and may conduct business independently based on what he/she feels is in the best interest of the County contrary to what the Board of Commissioners feels is in the best interest of the County. It could provide some oversight of the position from the Board of Commissioners' perspective.

Mr. Mayhue feels an appointed position would create more hidden silos because of the given authority the position holds. He talked about the Silver Creek issue from years ago which

ultimately turned into an issue of eminent domain and would hope this would be prevented from happening again.

Chair Agee commented he does not think this Board has ever had interest in eminent domain and thinks a drain commissioner reporting to this Board would approach eminent domain very cautiously.

Mr. Morren stated he is supportive of this as it is an effort to streamline overhead in our community as well as other government entities, is consistent with what this Board should be doing, and is a cost-savings to the taxpayers both in terms of holding an election and ongoing operations. He does not feel there is a need to have this position be elected and thinks there is sufficient accountability to the Board for the Drain system and that people have access to an elected official via the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Bulkowski said he would like to see more specifics on streamlining overhead and what kind of cost savings there would potentially be to the County. He added he is supportive of the public hearing because it would be good for public debate and it does provide opportunity for input from those who oppose this change.

Mr. Mast asked why this legislation is geared towards counties with a population of 500,000 and is specific to Kent, Macomb, Oakland and Wayne County.

Chair Agee replied that this legislation was tailored narrowly to affect Kent County in order to avoid creating a wider issue across the state and to gain the most support within the Legislature.

Mr. Mayhue stated he is supportive of holding a public hearing but will hold on his support in terms of supporting the concept of having an appointed drain commissioner versus an elected one. He referenced discussion that took place during the Finance Committee meeting on April 4 in terms of decision making and including people who have a vested interest in making these decisions and relative to the Drain Commissioner requiring cash deposits which does not give the Drain Commissioner any flexibility or negotiating ability. This clearly takes a permissive action and turns it into a mandatory action and therefore creates a hidden silo.

Mr. Spote addressed the issue of drain boards and explained how the various drain boards operate. He said there is a good cross-section of representatives who are selected to sit on various drain boards that understand and have knowledge of the issues at hand including those that are developing in urban areas.

Motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY / NETWORK 180 –  
APPOINTMENT TO THE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY BOARD

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to appoint Charles Brown to the Community Mental Health Authority Board for the unexpired term April 1, 2004 – March 31, 2007. This request is proposed to go to the Board on April 27, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- The governance section of the resolution creating the Community Mental Health Authority Board states, in part, "...at least one and up to four members of the Kent County Board of Commissioners."
- Commissioners Boelema, Klein, Rolls, and Voorhees currently serve on the Authority Board. It is recommended Commissioner Rolls' remaining term (expires March 31, 2007) be completed by a citizen member, thereby resulting in 9 citizens and 3 Commissioners serving on the 12-member Authority Board. Commissioner Rolls concurs with the recommendation.
- Resumes on file were reviewed and interviews were conducted by the CMH Authority Board Appointment Subcommittee (Commissioners Mast – Chair, Bulkowski, Klein, and Morren). Charles Brown is recommended to fill the unexpired term.

No cost or funding is required.

Mr. Mast moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to appoint Charles Brown to the Community Mental Health Authority Board for the unexpired term April 1, 2004 – March 31, 2007.

Supported by Mr. Mayhue.

Mr. Mast stated the subcommittee interviewed five candidates and felt that Mr. Brown is a qualified candidate who has an interest in serving on this board.

Mr. Charles Brown introduced himself. He has been employed at Touchstone Innovare for 8 years and has worked in the mental health field for almost 20 years. He thanked everyone for the vote of confidence and is glad to have the opportunity to serve on the CMH Authority Board.

Ms. Klein commented that the subcommittee was impressed with Mr. Brown's qualifications and is happy to make this recommendation and would encourage everyone to support it.

Mr. Mayhue said he too is supportive of this appointment and feels the County is on the right track in terms of recommending qualified candidates who have experience and knowledge of the system.

Mr. Bulkowski inquired about the makeup of the CMH Authority Board, the number of Commissioners appointed to this board and where the Board might position themselves for future appointments relative to the number of Commissioners versus citizens who serve.

Chair Agee agrees this is worth looking at although having this flexibility is a good thing. He suggested this issue be reviewed before the appointments for 2007 are determined.

Motion carried.

## VI. HUMAN RESOURCES – MPP BENEFIT CHANGES

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve changes in Management Pay Plan (MPP) benefits to make them consistent with recently negotiated benefit changes for bargaining unit employees. This request is proposed to go to the Board on April 27, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- The County has recently settled contracts with three bargaining units, including UAW Local 2600, the County's largest bargaining unit.
- These contracts include a number of changes to benefits, including moving to a 10% uncapped premium contribution for medical and prescription benefits, changing prescription drug co-pays, changing dental benefits, increasing the County supplement for retiree health care, and adding additional bereavement time for death in family.
- The following changes will maintain consistency between MPP and bargaining unit benefits:
  - Change prescription drug co-pays from \$10 for all prescriptions to \$10 generic, \$15 formulary/brand name, and \$30 non-formulary prescriptions.
  - Increase the dental benefit annual maximum family reimbursement amount from \$1,600 to \$1,800 for 2006 and to \$2,000 for 2007.
  - Increase the maximum County supplement for retiree health insurance from \$200/month to \$250/month for 25 years of service.
  - Add brothers- and sisters-in-law to the list of family members where up to three days of paid funeral leave are provided.
- Changes will be effective as soon as administratively possible after approval by the Board of Commissioners.

No additional funding is required.

Mr. Mast moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve changes in Management Pay Plan (MPP) benefits to make them consistent with recently negotiated benefit changes for bargaining unit employees.

Supported by Ms. Klein.

Mr. Hiddema inquired about the above mentioned changes and noted there is no additional funding required as a result of these changes.

Mr. Clack explained some changes reduced the County's cost which then offset some of the added costs for other changes being recommended.

Mr. Hiddema asked if these benefit changes are considered an improvement.

Mr. Clack said the prescription drug change is not an improvement. He explained that these changes are designed around the bargaining that has taken place over the last year and will maintain

consistency between the bargaining units in addition to having the insured health care plans be more consistent which gives the County more ability when negotiating contracts with various providers.

Motion carried.

VII. SHERIFF – ALGOMA TOWNSHIP – AGREEMENT FOR TOWNSHIP LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve an Agreement for Township Law Enforcement with Algoma Township and the addition of one County Patrol Officer (POAM) position. This request is proposed to go to the Board on April 27, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- Algoma Township has made a request for law enforcement services to establish a community policing officer program initiative to assist in identifying and developing long term solutions to changing concerns and issues in the community and to establish a positive law enforcement presence in the community.
- The estimated cost of the County Patrol Officer position is \$82,669, including wages and benefits. Algoma Township will fund the cost of the position. The cost for the balance of the 2006 budget year with a May 1, 2006, start date is approximately \$55,112.
- The township will lease a fleet vehicle for \$350 per month.
- In the event township funding is eliminated or decreased, the position will be eliminated unless continuation funding is approved pursuant to the Fiscal Policy on Grants.

No additional General Funds required.

Mr. Mast moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve an Agreement for Township Law Enforcement with Algoma Township and the addition of one County Patrol Officer (POAM) position.

Supported by Ms. Klein.

Ms. Klein asked if a new position will be created as a result of this.

Chief Deputy Hillen replied this action creates a new road patrol position.

Mr. Hiddema asked if the cost of leasing the vehicle has been averaged out.

Chief Deputy Hillen explained the department has been doing this practice for quite some time and has established a formula to determine the cost.

Mr. Mast commented on the demise of small town police departments and because of the lack of finances are being forced to consolidate. He asked if the County is open to assume more responsibilities of providing policing services to these smaller communities if the need is there. He believes this would be more efficient for the community and for the County.

Chief Deputy Hillen replied it would be mutually beneficial to consolidate services. In fact, the County has been approached in the past and has had some dialogue with other communities about this but it has not happened yet.

Mr. Mayhue asked what types of concerns and issues there are that have prompted a request for community policing in this area.

Chief Deputy Hillen explained Algoma Township has expressed interest in having its own dedicated officer to patrol and deal with child watch issues, community policing issues, neighborhood dispute problems etc. Therefore, this officer will be assigned to deal with these issues specifically for Algoma Township and will serve as a first responder for incidents that happen within the township as it is a growing township with increasing calls for service and have a need for a more direct source to deal with these issues on a timely basis.

Mr. Horton asked if this is the first request from Algoma Township for community policing.

Chief Deputy Hillen replied yes.

Mr. Horton added there are surrounding cities and township who may want to participate in this process but feel the reality is that because of their economical differences they can't compete with the County because it is big enough to absorb the cost, which creates further tension that may already exist.

Chair Agee feels the Sheriff has done a very good job with being open to such agreements but not pushing those; it has been driven by the local units of government.

Mr. Morren stated this has been somewhat of a contentious issue with the townships but feels the community policing programs have worked out well and agrees is a cost efficient way to deliver services to the community.

Mr. Bulkowski asked if the secondary road patrol in Algoma Township will continue.

Chief Deputy Hillen said yes.

Motion carried.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Chair Agee adjourned the meeting at 9:13  
a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL FOR DISTRIBUTION \_\_\_\_\_

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