

LEGISLATIVE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, October 10, 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, Dave Morren, and Ted Vonk

ALSO PRESENT: County Administrator Daryl Delabbio; Assistant Administrator Mary Swanson; Executive Assistant to the Board Jim Day; County Commissioner Tom Postmus; County Lobbyist Becky Bechler; Civil Counsel Sherry Batzer; Management Analysts Darwin Baas, Jennifer DeHaan, and Matthew VanZetten; Human Resources Director Donald Clack; Human Resources Deputy Director Gail Glocheski; Fiscal Services Director Bob White; Budget Coordinator Marvin VanNortwick; Information Technology Director Craig Paull; Undersheriff Jon Hess; County Clerk Mary Hollinrake; Deputy County Clerk Sonya Dean; Public Works Director Doug Wood; Sr. Administrative Specialist Pam Van Keuren

NEWS MEDIA: Rick Wilson, Grand Rapids Press; David Czurak, Grand Rapids Business Journal

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

I. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS REVIEW – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee and Public Works Director Doug Wood reviewed the performance measurements for the Department of Public Works. 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

Mr. Mast moved to approve the September 26, 2006, minutes as written.

Supported by Mr. Vonk.

Motion carried.

IV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASSOCIATES

Ms. Bechler reported the Legislature has been focusing much of their attention on the upcoming November election which includes the Governor's race, the race for several House and Senate seats, and also several ballot initiatives. She explained Proposal 1 deals with nature preserve funds, Proposal 2 deals with the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, Proposal 3 is the K-16 Coalition and if approved by voters, would be costly to the State and local units of government as the cost to fund is more than \$700 million dollars, Proposal 4 deals with a dove hunting initiative, and Proposal 5 deals with

Eminent Domain. After the election, the Legislature will return to Lansing on November 9 to elect caucus leaderships and will hold a brief legislative session thru November 14. It is anticipated the Legislature will have a lame-duck session to pass various bills they have been working on and desire to complete before the end of the year. It is likely the Legislature will hold off on any SBT proposals until next year. Legislation specific to Kent County yet to be accomplished before the end of the year include HB6239 which deals with budget year flexibility and HB5545 dealing with the Hotel/Motel Tax issues.

Mr. Mast inquired about the SPE legislation.

Ms. Bechler stated this legislation has passed the House and is in the Senate Health Policy Committee. It is likely this legislation will pass before the Legislature adjourns.

Mr. Mayhue asked what impact the K-16 ballot proposal would have on county governments should voters approve this.

Ms. Bechler explained there would be considerable impact on county and local governments because the requirement of how much money would be dedicated to education would deplete an already difficult State budget problem; and because the Legislature would be required to shift a significant amount of funds (up to \$700 million) from the State budget, it is likely these funds would be taken out of revenue sharing and other county and local entities programs such as health care and Medicaid.

Mr. Mast pointed out the County could take a bigger hit than other municipalities because of the many different programs the County and the State work together on such as public health, the court and justice systems are in addition to revenue sharing.

Mr. Mayhue asked if the K-16 proposal is an attempt to restore the elimination of the SBT which ultimately could have the same impact on the State and local governments.

Ms. Bechler explained the SBT is an amended piece of legislation and will not be eliminated until the end of 2007 therefore giving the Legislature a year to come up with a newer more appropriate business tax that is more equitable to all interested parties.

Mr. Horton commented that anything that is not constitutionally protected or protected by Headlee would be subject to cuts and this includes taking funding from county and other local units of government.

Ms. Bechler agreed and said if the K-16 proposal passes, the Legislature will have to decide where they will get the \$700 million from and is certain they would take a significant amount of funds out of Medicaid, county government, local governments and anywhere else there are funds available.

Chair Agee thanked Ms. Bechler for the update.

V. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – K-16 BALLOT PROPOSAL

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to adopt a resolution opposing the “K-16” Ballot Proposal. This request is proposed to go to the Board on October 26, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- Counties, local units of government, public transportation systems and other public service entities throughout Michigan rely on state revenue sources to provide a wide range of critical public services.
- An amendment to the Michigan Constitution, offered in the form of a statewide ballot proposal for the November 7, 2006 general election would, if approved by Michigan voters, guarantee a yearly increase in state funding equal to the rate of inflation for K-12 education, community colleges and higher education, which if approved, would cost the state general fund over \$1 billion annually.
- Due to state budget cuts, state shared revenue payments to Michigan counties have been eliminated and state shared revenue payments to local communities have been reduced by \$1.5 billion in the last four years, leading to numerous cuts in local government services.
- The County of Kent supports both adequate state funding of educational resources for Michigan student’s as well as adequate and fair funding for local communities, which are both necessary to provide the services essential to produce a high quality of life.
- Historically, the Board of Commissioners has not taken a position on ballot or other issues that have no direct impact on the County. The “K-16” proposal will have a direct impact on the finances of the County, as well as on the finances of other local units of government. Adopting this resolution is consistent with guidelines established by the Board Resolution Subcommittee. The proposed resolution states the County is opposed to the “K-16” proposal on the November 7, 2006 statewide election ballot.

Cost / Funding Recommendation: None / No general funds are required.

Mr. Mast moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to adopt a resolution opposing the “K-16” Ballot Proposal.

Supported by Mr. Horton.

Mr. Mayhue stated he opposes the K-16 ballot proposal and is aware of the impact it would have on the County if approved by voters; however, he will not be supporting this resolution because he feels the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, if approved by voters, would also have an effect on the County as well, and unless the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative is included in the proposed resolution, he will not be supporting this action.

Mr. Horton pointed out the Senate Fiscal Agency has projected a loss of up to \$750 million and the proposed resolution references a \$1 billion loss. He wondered if the resolution should be changed to be consistent with what has been reported.

Mr. Delabbio noted there have been variances in the amount of dollars that could be impacted and agreed changing the resolution to indicate the impact could be up to \$1 billion would be appropriate.

Mr. Horton said it would be beneficial to the County to forward a copy of this resolution to the Kent Intermediate School District as well as the Area Superintendent's Association so they are aware of the impact this proposal could have on them as well if this proposal is approved by voters.

Mr. Hiddema commented he too opposes the K-16 ballot proposal but he also opposes the County adopting a resolution opposing it. He feels this is a policy issue that does not fall within the guidelines set forth by the Board Resolution Subcommittee and is not an issue that should be taken up by the County Commission.

Ms. Klein stated she is supportive of this resolution and feels adopting this resolution does fall within the parameters set by the Board Resolution Subcommittee because it does have a direct effect on County government.

Mr. Bulkowski stated he too is supportive of this resolution and would also welcome a similar resolution regarding the Civil Rights Ballot Initiative should one be brought forward at the next Committee meeting.

Mr. Mayhue commented he does not see a willingness to introduce a resolution on the Civil Rights Initiative but would like to offer an amendment to the K-16 Ballot Proposal resolution to include opposition of the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative.

Chair Agee stated he will not allow such a motion as it is not germane to this particular action.

Mr. Horton pointed out one of the criteria set by the Board Resolution Subcommittee is not just whether the issue effects the County but that the resolution has merit. He feels this proposal regardless of some opposition will have a strong consensus and support from this Board but feels there may not be the same consensus on the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative should a resolution be brought forward to the Board.

Chair Agee said he agrees and added that this resolution is within the guidelines set forth by the Board Resolution Subcommittee because of the direct impact the K-16 proposal would have on County government and it has wide-spread support.

Yeas: Commissioners Klein, Bulkowski, Horton, Mast, Morren and Vonk

Nays: Commissioners Hiddema and Mayhue

Motion carried.

VI. CLERK/REGISTER OF DEEDS – POSITION CONVERSION – CLERK II

Mr. Delabbio stated approval is requested to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to convert two part-time Clerk II (UAW 15) positions to one full-time Clerk II (UAW 15) position. This request is proposed to go to the Board on October 26, 2006. A summary of the request follows:

- The County Clerk/Register requested the conversion of two part-time Clerk II positions into one full-time Clerk II position to result in improved operations in the Vital Records office. One of the part-time positions is vacant.
- The additional cost in salary and benefits resulting from combining the positions would be \$10,604 annually.
- The Clerk/Register has eliminated one full-time Clerk II position in the Register of Deeds office reducing budgeted 2007 salary and benefit costs by \$42,369.
- Therefore, the overall net savings to the County for budget year 2007 will equal \$31,765.

Cost / Funding Recommendation: None / No funding is required.

Ms. Klein moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to convert two part-time Clerk II (UAW 15) positions to one full-time Clerk II (UAW 15) position.

Supported by Mr. Mast.

Mr. Bulkowski asked if a full-time position will meet the needs of the department.

Ms. Hollinrake replied the office will operate well with one full-time position rather than splitting up the work between two part-time employees.

Motion carried.

## VII. MISCELLANEOUS

### Procedure

Mr. Mayhue questioned how is it the Committee Chair's prerogative to dismiss a motion that has been offered on the floor during the course of a meeting.

Chair Agee said he would be glad to discuss this issue after the meeting is adjourned.

Mr. Horton clarified there is a process for a ruling of the Chair to be challenged by a member of the committee and put to a vote, but a ruling of the Chair stands if there is no challenge.

Chair Agee responded there was no challenge in this instance.

Correspondence

Mr. Bulkowski commented he was glad to see a letter has been sent to Ms. Nancy Wilson addressing her concerns she expressed to the Committee; however, he is not certain that her concerns regarding department morale, staffing, and management and supervision at the Health Department have been properly addressed and would like the committee to investigate these issues further.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Chair Agee adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

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

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