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Kent County Board of Commissioners Approves COVID-19 Grants and Rejects Proposed Salary Increase

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (April 23, 2020) – The Kent County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously today to support two federal grants for COVID-19 activities and to reject the Officers Compensation Commission’s (OCC) recommendation to raise the annual salaries of commissioners.

The Board approved a \$93,331 federal Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program Grant which will be used by the Sheriff’s Office to purchase personal protection equipment and support overtime costs. Additionally, the Board appropriated \$1,606,792 in revenue to the Community Services Block Grant CARES Act Supplemental (CSBGCAS) program. This funding, which will be reimbursed by the federal government, will allow Kent County Community Action to financially assist more community members with utility and mortgage payments, purchase of personal products, etc.

“We have weathered many storms by keeping our focus on the well-being of our community,” said Kent County Board of Commissioners Chair Mandy Bolter. “We understand the problems people are facing as a result of this pandemic and we hope the expansion of these programs will address some of the needs of our community.”

Also, the Board rejected the OCC’s recommendation to increase the salaries of the Board of Commissioners to:

	Current Wage - 2020	Proposed Wage - 2021	Proposed Wage - 2022
Commissioners	\$23,089	\$23,667	\$24,259
Chair – Board of Commissioners	\$41,108	\$42,136	\$43,190
Vice-Chair – Board of Commissioners	\$30,183	\$30,938	\$31,712

Michigan statute requires the OCC to meet every even year to determine the compensation for the following two calendar years for the Board Chair, the Board Vice-Chair, and the 17 Board Commissioners and the county’s five nonjudicial elected officials (Treasurer, Clerk/Register of Deeds, Drain Commissioner, Sheriff, and Prosecuting Attorney).

The commissioner's salaries will remain at their current amounts for 2021 and 2022 as a result of the Board voting down the OCC's salary recommendation.

"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be asking all of our departments, offices and agencies to make sacrifices to ensure we have a budget that is sustainable," concluded Bolter. "It was important for the entire Commission to lead by example and reject this proposed pay raise."

The Board of Commissioners is not required to approve the OCC's salary recommendations for the five nonjudicial offices. Therefore, the salaries for these officers are planned to go into effect January 1, 2021.

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