

MONTCALM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Monday, February 27, 2023

4:00 PM

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Carr at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Petersen offered invocation.

Members present at roll call: Commissioners Baker, Johnston, Petersen, Mahar, Carr and Kohn.  
Members absent: Commissioner Painter.

Others present: Kristen Millard, Brenda Taeter, Michelle Becker, Doug Gietzen, Sarah Daily, Mark Sabin, Kim Kuhn, Matt Kuhn and Elisabeth Waldon.

Moved by Commissioner Johnston, supported by Commissioner Petersen to approve the February 13, 2023, regular meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Johnston, supported by Commissioner Mahar to approve the agenda with the addition of #2 under Old Business entitled Register of Deeds and Clerk Combination. Motion carried.

Public comments were offered. None were given.

At 6:03 p.m. Sarah Daily, Crystal Township Trustee, was in attendance to request the County's assistance with the Crystal Township park project. Ms. Daily informed the board that COVID affected both the budget and the timelines for completion of the park renovation. She anticipates the costs have increased by approximately \$250,000. Ms. Daily is asking the Board of Commissioners for \$100,000 to assist in the completion of the park project which will increase ADA access to the lakeshore. Ms. Daily stated that when she moved to Crystal the park fundraiser was one of the first things she became involved in.

Commissioner Johnston informed the Board that Crystal Township originally requested \$100,000 in ARPA funding from Montcalm County but the request was not granted in the beginning because Crystal Township had not allocated their own ARPA funds yet. He stated that the Crystal Township Clerk had sent a request to the County when the ARPA funds were being distributed and didn't think they had to come back to the Board of Commissioners to submit an additional request since they already has submitted a request.

Chairman Carr explained to Ms. Daily how the ARPA funds were distributed and that all of the ARPA funds have been expended. He explained that it would be a slippery slope to designate additional county funds to fund local government. Discussion took place on possibly using some of the Marijuana Funds to help Crystal Township, but Brenda Taeter reminded the board that the Drug Court will need to be funded and that is an appropriate expenditure for the Marijuana funds.

Ms. Daily was told that the Crystal Lake Park project will be kept on the Board of Commissioner's radar should funds become available.

At 6:20 p.m. Mark Sabin, Solid Waste Committee member, and Doug Gietzen, Maintenance Director, were in attendance to request converting all of the remaining recycling sites to compacting units during this fiscal year. Additionally, they are requesting that the Board develop a plan to modify the existing lawn behind the Court Complex in order to accommodate the compacting units on the County's property and keep the recycling center where it has been in Stanton for the past 5 years.

Mr. Sabin informed the board that since he last met with the Board he has visited 9 townships and has financial commitments from 8 of those. He stated the current compactor sites are doing very well, contamination has been reduced. The Stanton site behind the Court Complex will require a 40' x 50' concrete pad for the compactors to sit on. Mr. Gietzen estimates that it could cost approximately \$30,000 to prepare the site.

Mr. Sabin explained that the compactors help eliminate rejected loads when people put things in the dumpsters that contaminate the load. A rejected load has cost the Solid Waste Committee over \$3,000 in the past.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to allow the Maintenance Director to move forward on a plan to modify the existing law behind the Court Complex to accommodate two compacting units. Motion carried.

Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, presented the Board with a proposed resolution recognizing the Michigan Association of Counties 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to approve and adopt **RESOLUTION 2023-04, A RESOLUTION HONORING THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ON ITS 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY** with a change to the resolution adding that the County of Montcalm was one of the original 16 counties:

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's 83 county governments play a central role in the proper delivery of, and oversight for, critical public services for the state's approximately 10 million residents; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan county governments are led by Boards of Commissioners, who are elected from their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the State Association of Supervisors of Michigan was formed by representatives of 16 counties on Feb. 1, 1898, in the Senate chamber of the Michigan State Capitol in Lansing; and

**WHEREAS**, the association's name was changed to the Michigan Association of Counties on July 17, 1969; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Association of Counties is the oldest association representing local governments in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, 48 of Michigan's 83 counties have had at least one of their commissioners (or supervisors prior to 1968) serve as president of the association's Board of Directors; and

**WHEREAS**, the association created the Michigan Counties Workers' Compensation Fund in 1979 to help county members provide workplace safety and injury insurance services to its employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the association created the Michigan Association of Counties Service Corporation in 1986 to partner with service providers to help counties save money on everything from health insurance to telecommunications services; and

**WHEREAS**, the association hosts two major conferences every year to bring together county leaders for briefings on trending public policy issues and to hear from state newsmakers and others; and

**WHEREAS**, the association's advocacy work in Lansing and beyond has advanced the interests of county governments and the residents they serve; and

**WHEREAS**, no fewer than five association presidents have served or are serving in the Michigan Legislature in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a testament to the culture of public service inculcated by the association

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that MONTCALM COUNTY** wishes to commend and honor the Michigan Association of Counties on its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.

Motion carried.

Discussion took place on a Malibu purchase the Sheriff made that was in the warrant report. Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, explained that the Sheriff was slated to purchase a Marine truck in this years budget, but one was not available. Therefore, Sheriff Williams went to Ms. Taeter with the option to purchase a Malibu for a detective vehicle. Brenda explained that the Sheriff uses the State Bid program therefore the purchase of the vehicle does not have to come before the board before the purchase takes place.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Kohn to approve warrant report number 02272023 in the amount of \$443,368.85. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Johnston to approve consent agenda items 3 through 6 and move stated action:

Controller	Reynolds Township Police Protection Agreement	Place on file
Controller	Village of Howard City Police Protection Agreement	Place on file
Controller	Building Department Dodge Report	Place on file
Controller	Medical Examiner Report	Place on file

Motion carried.

Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, gave the Board an update on the Opioid Settlement. The first disbursement of funds has been received. Ms. Taeter informed the Board that planning needs to take place on how that money will be spent. She explained that there are specific rules on how the opioid funds can be spent and who should serve on the committee that decides how those funds will get expended. Ms. Taeter explained that originally there was supposed to be specific reporting requirements, however since that time it appears that the reporting won't be that stringent.

Discussion took place on the Administration Building use and keys. Brenda Taeter, Controller/Administrator, stated that she does not feel that people who are not county employees should have keys to the Administration Building, as the Court Complex and Sheriff's building keys are not distributed to the public. Ms. Taeter also stated that there could be significant liability should someone fall down the stairs at night or get trapped in the elevator after hours.

Chairman Carr recommended that one solution could be for every elected Republican official to attend the Republican meeting and rotate who would be responsible to open the building for the Republican Party.

Ms. Taeter stated that Justin Johnson, Democratic Chairman, has indicated to her that while he hasn't used the building in the past few months he still is interested in being able to use the Administration Building in the future, so it isn't just the Republican Party using the building.

Discussion took place on reaching out to County Employees to see who may be interested in acting as a monitor to let people in and out of the building during these meetings.

Ms. Taeter reiterated that she doesn't like the idea of someone who doesn't work for the county having a key to the building. She stated that it is the principle of it all.

Moved by Commissioner Baker, supported by Commissioner Kohn to reach out to county employees to see if they would be interested in serving as a monitor to let individuals in and out of the Administration Building for the Democratic and Republican meetings each month for a fee of \$20 - \$25 per hour. Motion carried with Commissioner Petersen voting no.

Moved by Commissioner Kohn, supported by Commissioner Baker to direct the County Controller to retrieve all keys to the Administration Building from all non-county employees within the next 90 days. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioners Johnston, Kohn, Baker and Carr. Nays: Commissioners Mahar and Petersen. Motion carried.

Commissioner Petersen added the possibility of combining the Register of Deeds and County Clerk offices to the agenda under Old Business. He stated that he feels that by taking no action at the last meeting there isn't any closure on the topic. He stated that Lori Wilson would like to retire and she has a 20 year employee that is capable of running the office, therefore he would like to see the board vote to not combine the offices. He stated that to instill some confidence in both offices there needs to be taken action either one way or another. He stated that the issue shouldn't be left in limbo and needs to be resolved.

Commissioner Mahar stated that he feels that there are two good offices that are functioning really well and there's not a reason to upset the apple cart at this time.

Moved by Commissioner Baker, supported by Commissioner Petersen to not combine the Register of Deeds and County Clerk's offices for this election cycle. Motion carried.

Public comments were offered. Sarah Daily, Crystal Township, addressed the board regarding having the public in the building after hours.

Stephanie Rectenwal, Eureka Township, thanked the Board for changing the meeting time to 6 p.m. for the second meeting of the month. She addressed discussion she has heard on a countywide trash pickup millage and questioned how that would work.

She also questioned as to whether the Board would reconsider making Montcalm County a 2A Sanctuary County.

Commissioner Petersen addressed the board and stated that he feels a thank you note needs to be sent to the Road Commission thanking them and commending them for the job they have been doing.

Moved by Commissioner Petersen, supported by Commissioner Kohn to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried.

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Kristen Millard, County Clerk

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Patrick Q. Carr, Chairman