

MINUTES

KALAMAZOO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

NOVEMBER 17, 2015

PLACE: Room 207A, County Administration Building

TIME: 4:00 p.m. – 5:41 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners John Gisler, Scott McGraw, Stephanie Moore, Larry Provancher, Julie Rogers, Michael Seals, Dale Shugars, John Taylor, Roger Tuinier and Kevin Wordelman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Jeff Heppler

OTHERS PRESENT: John Faul, Thom Canny, Tracie Moored, Lisa Bradshaw, Vern Johnson, Lynne Norman, Kristine Cunningham, Jeff Getting, Tim Snow, Rick Fuller, Pat Crowley, Lotta Jarnefelt, Dina Sutton

Chairman Taylor convened the Committee of the Whole at 4:00 p.m.

1. Review of Transfers and Disbursements

Ms. Tracie Moored, Finance Director stated claims for November 17, 2015 totaled \$2,413,147.71. She indicated there was one item for disclosure for Commissioner Heppler for work that his company provided to the Treasurer's Office. She indicated there was one release of funds to Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health. She also stated there were some yearend budget transfers as well as some Allocated Fund balance transfers.

Commissioner Rogers inquired about the B&G \$200,000 in major repair/maintenance account and Ms. Moored indicated this was a compilation of various projects.

Commissioner Rogers inquired about the District Court imaging project and Ms. Moored indicated this was a project District Court brought forward in 2014 and finalized in 2015.

Commissioner Rogers inquired if there had been any requests from the Courts to utilize the Drug Court Reserve and Ms. Moored indicated there had not been any requests but Finance brought the funds forward as a backup.

Commissioner Shugars inquired about receiving an update on the Administration Building parking ramp/lot.

Commissioner Seals inquired if the 2015 alcohol tax collection had changed from 2014 and Ms. Moored indicated she would need to check.

Commissioner Seals inquired about receiving an update on PA Funding and Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health.

2. Southwest Michigan First Presentation

Mr. Ron Kitchens, CEO, provided an update to the Board.

Commissioner Rogers thanked Mr. Kitchens on his presentation and his emphasis on internships.

Commissioner Moore arrived at 4:26 p.m.

Commissioner Rogers stated the Catalyst Event was expensive to attend and urged SWMF to lowering the cost so small business owners could afford it. Mr. Kitchens stated the scholarships were mainly awarded to students.

Commissioner Tuinier inquired about focusing on young adults, non-college students, into skilled trades. Ms. Jill Bland, Vice President stated SWMF had been working with middle school aged children to meet with businesses. She stated on February 10th and 11th there would be an event at the Expo Center and would have companies at this event. She stated the focus would be on 8th and 9th graders.

Chairman Taylor thanked Mr. Kitchens and his staff for their hard work and dedication.

3. KL Avenue Groundwater Restricted Use Zone (GRUZ)

Mr. Thom Canny, Corporate Counsel reviewed his memo as included in the packet. He stated the questions from the June 2, 2015 meeting were included in the packet as well as the answers to those questions.

Commissioner Wordelman arrived at 4:32 p.m.

Mr. Daniel K. DeWitt, Legal Counsel for KL Landfill Group presented a Power Point presentation to the Board, as included in the Packet.

Commissioner Gisler inquired about notifying future home owners of the GRUZ and Mr. DeWitt stated there was no legal responsibility; however, homeowners could be notified during the buying process.

Commissioner McGraw stated he saw Dustin Lake was included in the GRUZ and wanted to know if there were any concerns and Mr. DeWitt indicated there were no concerns.

Commissioner Shugars urged the KL Landfill Group to work with the last remaining 7 families. He stated he would like to hear from the Oshtemo Township Supervisor. He also stated he felt the realtor should have some type of disclosure concerning the GRUZ.

Mr. DeWitt stated there would be educational material that would be sent out to homes periodically.

Mr. Canny stated that the County would put the GRUZ on the County's Environmental Health Department's website.

Commissioner Shugars stated his concerns were that citizens would not be aware and disclosure needed to be made. Mr. Canny indicated the KL Avenue Group would look into it.

Mr. DeWitt stated there was a State law that disclosure was supposed to be made, but was not always followed.

Ms. Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Oshtemo Township Supervisor stated Oshtemo Township had been involved in the process since the beginning and it had been a lot of work working with citizens. She stated there had been citizen concerns about hooking up to City water and would continue to work with them.

Commissioner Rogers stated she was pleased to hear the Group was being proactive. She wanted to know if the Board approved, would there be an annual update to the Board as well as a process to document complaints. Mr. Canny indicated the Group would provide an annual report.

Commissioner Rogers stated she was supportive of the GRUZ.

Commissioner Provancher stated he shared Commissioner Shugars' concerns about buyer notification.

Commissioner Tuinier inquired about the property value? Mr. DeWitt stated there were no indications that it had an affect on the property value.

Commissioner Shugars stated there were a lot of statues out there and maybe the County should work with the legislators.

4. Redevelopment & Purchase Agreement – Alcott Street

Mr. Canny reviewed his memo as included in the packet as well as a memo distributed to the Board.

Commissioner Seals inquired about the lease HCS currently had; Mr. Canny indicated the County would need to speak with the Sisters of St. Joseph about extending a lease with them, probably 12-18 months.

Commissioner McGraw inquired about the maintenance work that needed to be done at the Nazareth Facility. Ms. Moored indicated the County should be fine concerning the requirements and would not have to upgrade.

Mr. Canny stated the plan would be to explore environmental and building on the site. He stated the Board would need to hire an architect/engineer and would need to have a discussion concerning about whether to hire a general manager; how to finance, etc. He stated Administration would bring back some recommendations to either the December 1st or 15th meeting.

Discussion ensued.

5. County Administrator Search Update

Chairman Taylor stated Mr. Neuzil accepted a verbal agreement immediately following the Special meeting on November 12th. Chairman Taylor briefly outlined the benefits of the Contract.

Commissioner McGraw inquired about the length of the Contract and Chairman Taylor indicated it was three years but could be terminated by a 2/3rds vote of the Board.

Commissioner McGraw stated he researched Mr. Neuzil and indicated he was very active in the Democratic Party and Chairman Taylor stated he spoke with Mr. Neuzil and he was well aware of the requirement included in the Contract.

Commissioner Gisler wanted clarification that the position was for only Administrator position and Chairman Taylor indicated that was correct.

Commissioner Shugars stated he would like Mr. Neuzil to sign a letter resigning from the Democratic Party in Iowa. Chairman Taylor stated Mr. Neuzil indicated he would be willing to resign from such party.

Commissioner Tuinier wanted to know when it was feasible to abstain from voting. He stated it was his understanding that a Commissioner could only abstain if there was a conflict.

Mr. Canny stated the elected official had the responsibility to represent the public body. He stated it was also accepted if there was an appearance of impropriety. He did state there was no consequence if an elected official did not vote.

Commissioner Provancher inquired about a conflict of interest, could you be privy to the information but abstain from voting.

Commissioner Wordelman stated he was really looking forward to working with Mr. Neuzil. He thanked Commissioner Gisler for his comments made last week.

Commissioner Moore stated she felt it was a horrible process and was racist, sexiast, etc. She stated Ms. Balkema was held to a different level than the others. She stated she did not feel the recruiter did a good job.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Rogers stated she would like to review the minutes from those meetings.

Commissioner Tuinier stated he asked the question about abstaining and was not directed to Commissioner Moore.

6. Any other items

There were no other items.

7. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

8. Adjournment – no later than 6 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Taylor adjourned the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

John Taylor, Chairman
Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners