

July 14, 2020

The regular meeting of the Mason County Board of Commissioners was held at 9:00 a.m. at the Mason County Airport terminal conference room.

The meeting was called to order by Chair J. Andersen

Roll call was taken. Present: N. Krieger, G. Castonia, C. Lange, L. Squires,
S. Hull, J. Andersen, R. Bacon
Absent: NONE

Invocation was given by S. Hull. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America followed.

Motion by L. Squires and seconded by S. Hull to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by G. Castonia and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the minutes of the June 09, 2020 Regular meeting. Motion carried.

No correspondence was read.

Public comment:

Chad DeRouin introduced himself noting that he is running for the Mason County Prosecutor position. He currently serves as the Chief Prosecuting Attorney for Oceana County.

Lauren Kreinbrink also introduced herself stating that she too is running for the Mason County Prosecutor position. This will be determined at the Primary August 4, 2020. She is currently the Mason County Chief Prosecuting Attorney.

James Kelly, Michigan State University Extension Director (MSU-E) presented the quarterly report from MSU-E. Highlights centered on COVID-19 and how their office continues to respond to the needs of the community. Many of their services are now viewed remotely via webinars, Zoom, and Facebook.

Emergency Manager Liz Reimink presented her yearly report. Highlights included the drownings, the severe rain event that broke the State record last fall, high water levels, shoreline erosion, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. She alerted the commissioners that there may be a decrease in funding under the Homeland Security Grant. She also, has been voted in as the 2nd Vice President of the State Emergency Managers Association.

Chair Andersen noted that working with Liz at the beginning of the Pandemic was an eye-opening experience to see how broad based the job is. Chair Andersen thanked her for all that she does for Mason County and for all she does for the safety of the residents.

Dr. Lisa Hotovy-Williams presented the FY 2018/2019 West Michigan Community Mental Health (WCMCH) Annual report. Highlights include WCMCH becoming a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), the establishing of a Veteran's Navigator Services, and partnering with My Strength, a phone app to allow self-monitoring of behavior and feelings. Commissioner Squires inquired if the legalization of marijuana was a good or bad idea and is WCMCH seeing an increase in substance abuse treatment? Dr. Hotovy-Williams stated that there is not statistical information available, but that there are implications of using marijuana with psychotropic medications that are quite harmful. Commissioner Andersen inquired if there any benefits to partnering with the clinic. It was noted that COVID-19 restricted access to services at this time.

Motion by N. Krieger and seconded by G. Castonia to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Mason County Local Emergency Planning Committee has applied for a FY 2019-20 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant; and

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has awarded a grant in the amount of \$1,850.00 to the County of Mason.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves accepting the FY 2019-20 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant and directs the Board Chair to sign the agreement on behalf of the Board.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) N. Krieger

Motion by Public Safety and Courts Committee Chair G. Castonia and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Homeland Security Grants are now being given on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mason is a member of the Region 6 Homeland Security Governing Board; and

WHEREAS, the Region 6 Homeland Security Governing Board has designated West Michigan Regional Medical Consortium as the Fiduciary for the 2019 Homeland Security Program; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety & Courts Committee is recommending approval of an agreement with West Michigan Regional Medical Consortium.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves an agreement with West Michigan Regional Medical Consortium and authorizes the Board Chair to sign said agreement.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) G. Castonia

Motion by Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee Chair C. Lange and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee has negotiated the attached letter of agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police regarding vacation time.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached letter of agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police and further directs its Board Chair to sign said letter of agreement.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) C. Lange

Motion by Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee Chair C. Lange and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan is offering federal grant funds for a First Responder Hazard Pay Premiums Program; and

WHEREAS, Law Enforcement Officers and Local Corrections Officers are eligible for hazard pay premiums under this program; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee is recommending applying for up to \$1,000 per eligible employee to cover wages and eligible fringe benefits with amounts based on hours worked during the period of eligibility.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves applying for federal grant funds under the First Responder Hazard Pay Premiums Program and paying hazard pay to eligible employees based on the terms of any grant award.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) C. Lange

Motion by Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee Chair C. Lange and seconded by L. Squires to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, there is a vacancy in the Prosecuting Attorney’s office due to a resignation; and.

WHEREAS, Mason County Prosecuting Attorney Spaniola is recommending a temporary increase in the hours for the part-time crime victims advocate.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves a temporary increase in the hours for the part-time crime victims advocate from sixteen hours a week to twenty hours a week effective the week starting July 13, 2020 and ending the week ending on September 4, 2020.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) C. Lange

L. Squires reported there were no committee reports, but wished to inform the Commissioners that the Medical Control Commission did not meet due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion by Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee Chair S. Hull and seconded by R. Bacon to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee has reviewed the transfers for July 14, 2020

THEREFORE, we, your Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, request your approval of the following transfers:

Welfare Child Care	\$ 29,400.00
Road Patrol	\$175,750.00
Friend of the Court	\$119,750.00
Indigent Defense	\$ 38,375.00
Jail Operations	\$136,405.00
Law Library	\$ 3,750.00
Social Welfare	\$ 7,000.00
Probate Court Child Care	\$ 67,250.00
Property & Liability Insurance	\$ 10,250.00

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull

Motion by Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee Chair S. Hull and seconded by C. Lange to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Airport Manager O'Connor and the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee are recommending the attached lease with Ludington Rental LLC.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached lease with Ludington Rental LLC and directs the Board Chair to sign it on their behalf.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull

Commissioner Krieger noted that the individuals recommended are highly qualified, but that he has other concerns related to the position that was created without proper posting and interviewing. Also, with the understanding that the person hired will be appointed in the future without a proper job posting. He is unable to support this motion due to this reason.

Additionally, he was informed there was an internal candidate but that the Finance, Personnel & Rules Committee found this person unqualified for the job. Referral letters note that the individual is qualified and he feels that the Board should have advocated on the side of the employee verses management. The employee was never asked back for a 2nd interview to his knowledge.

Commissioner Castonia questioned if the internal candidate had the same chance as the other candidates and was informed by Chair Andersen that all candidates had the same interview.

Commissioner Castonia further notes that he received several emails and phone calls and was told that the interviewee did not interview well. Commissioner Castonia also had concerns regarding pay scale and was informed by Administrator Knizacky that the previous Director's salary (Tom Routhier) would go away. The Deputy's salary would be a county employee, along with the contracted services of Mr. Meygaard at \$10,000, are less than what Director Routhier was receiving. Finally, the question was asked if he would become the Director of Equalization. Chair Andersen stated that Assessing Solutions will be the Director; but after having had communication with the locals, a presence was requested in the office five days a week to provide a face-to-face service. The County will receive the benefits of Mr. Meygaard's experience but will have a Deputy Director in the office full time to service the needs of the community.

Commissioner Hull stated that the Finance, Personnel and Rules Committee recommended the hiring of Joseph VanHassel as Deputy Director.

Commissioner Lange noted that as chair of the Finance, Personnel and Rules Committee, interviews were conducted with a significant amount of discussion. Second interviews were established with potential candidates to discuss further options and references were called with positive recommendations being given for Assessing Solutions. In the end, the goal was to have the best qualified candidate to be able to serve the residents of Mason County.

Commissioner Squires inquired of the need for a Level 4 Assessor and was informed that the Consumers Pumped Storage project required Level 4 certification. Additional questions noting that the candidate to be hired for the in-office job is a relative of the contracted employee and that there needed to be a transparency issue. Commissioner Squires noted that he had concerns with relatives being hired.

Motion by S. Hull and seconded by C. Lange to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Equalization Director Tom Routhier has retired creating a vacancy in the Equalization Department; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee has sought applicants to fill the vacancy; and

WHEREAS, the Committee interviewed candidates and has concluded that the best option for providing this service is through a contract with Assessing Solutions, Inc.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached contract with Assessing Solutions Inc. naming Anthony Meyaard to serve as Mason County’s Equalization Director and directs the Board Chair to sign the contract on its behalf; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners creates the 40 hour a week position of Deputy Equalization Director with a salary of \$50,000.00 for 2020; \$51,500.00 for 2021; \$53,045.00 in 2022; and authorizes County Administrator Knizacky to fill this position.

Roll Call Vote was requested by Commissioner Squires

AYES: Castonia, Lange, Squires, Hull, Bacon, and Andersen

NAYS: Krieger

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull

Motion by S. Hull and seconded by R. Bacon to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee has negotiated the attached letter of agreement with the Teamsters State, County & Municipal Workers Local 214 regarding vacation time.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached letter of agreement with the Teamsters State, County & Municipal Workers Local 214 and further directs its Board Chair to sign said contract.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Airport Manager O’Connor is recommending the sale of an old mower; and

WHEREAS, the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee is recommending that the Board approve the sale of an old mower.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the sale of an old mower.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) R. Bacon

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, LIAA has worked with Mason County to build a website for Mason County Parcels; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee is recommending that the County approve the attached Website Support Agreement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached Website Support Agreement with the Land Information Access Association of Traverse City and directs the Board Chair to sign said agreement on their behalf.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) R. Bacon

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee has audited the County’s claims dated

June 11, 2020 totaling \$744,610.43; and

June 25, 2020 totaling \$565,505.28; and

The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee found these claims to be in order and asks the Board to approve these claims.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) C. Lange, J. Andersen, S. Hull.

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by G. Castonia to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has offered a 2020 CARES Act Agreement to the Mason County Airport; and

WHEREAS, the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee is recommending that the County approve the attached Agreement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached 2020 CARES Act Agreement with the State of Michigan and directs the Board Chair to sign said agreement on their behalf.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by C. Lange to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Mason County has been awarded a Veterans’ Affairs Service Grant for the 2019/2020 state budget year; and

WHEREAS, a number of activities that were planned under this grant have been cancelled due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the demand for services from the office has increased due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee is recommending increasing the hours for the Veterans’ Affairs Officer from 20 hours per week to 24 hours a week until September 30, 2020.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves increasing the hours for the Veterans’ Affairs Officer from 20 hours per week to 24 hours a week until September 30, 2020; funds to come from the attached budget amendment.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by R. Bacon to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, in the early 1990’s, a Citizen’s Advisory Committee was appointed by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason to examine the County’s financial situation and to make recommendations for improving it; and

WHEREAS, one of the recommendations made was that the County Board of Commissioners should evaluate fees and charges controlled by the County Board of Commissioners at least annually and adjust them as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Buildings, Planning, Drains, & Airport Committee has evaluated the Building Permit Fees related to fences and is recommending the elimination of the permit requirement and related fee.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the elimination of the permit requirement and related fee; effective July 15, 2020.

Moved for your adoption.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen

Treasurer A. Kmetz presented the monthly Treasurer’s Report. Treasurer Kmetz noted that the County foreclosed on fourteen parcels with one being active PRE. Personal visits were made to all properties to set up extensions and payment plans. His office is currently following Senate Bill SB943. The Treasurer’s office is reviewing demolition bids for the parcel at 2290 34th Street, Fountain, MI 49410. Treasurer Kmetz hopes to have the demolition completed by the middle of August 2020.

Clerk C. Kelly noted that the Clerk’s report was not included in the packet but would be emailed later this afternoon. Election Inspector Trainings will be held at five locations throughout the County due to the COVID-19 pandemic- Sherman, Hamlin, two with the City of Ludington, and at the Scottville Optimist hall. The August 4 Primary Election is coming up and she encourages everyone to get out and vote.

Administrator Knizacky presented the Administrator’s Monthly Report. Administrator Knizacky is currently working on three matters with the State of Michigan. The first is the impact of the State’s preliminary budget that will eliminate the August statutory revenue sharing payment of \$153,000.00. This will have a significant impact on the County’s budget. Secondly, working on grant opportunities to receive federal funding under the CARES ACT. This will assist the Mason County Airport and offer hazard pay to Road Patrol and Correction Officers of the Mason County Sheriff’s Office. Lastly, he and Emergency Manager L. Reimink are working on a FEMA grant application related to COVID-19 supplies & costs spent by various

departments. Administrator Knizacky also, is looking into a grant budget package that will offset lost revenue sharing and is currently working through those details.

There was no public comment:

Any other Business:

- Commissioner Squires respects the hiring process but requests future transparency. He feels that the County should utilize the talents of the staff already presently employed. He welcomed Anthony Meyaard.
- Commissioner Castonia stated that if the local level governments and residents are to follow the strict guidelines established of wearing a mask, then he feels that it would be in the best interest of the Governor to start practicing what she is preaching.
- Commissioner Andersen thanked the Elected Officials and Department Heads for keeping the staff and the public's safety at the forefront of all their decision making processes with the COVID-19 pandemic. All have risen to the challenge!

With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

CHERYL KELLY, COUNTY CLERK

JANET S. ANDERSEN, BOARD CHAIR