

October 2, 2019

The special meeting of the Mason County Board of Commissioners was held at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room located in the Mason County Courthouse in the City of Ludington.

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman J. Andersen

Roll call was taken. Present: G. Castonia, C. Lange, S. Hull,  
J. Andersen, R. Bacon, N. Krieger

Absent: L. Squires

Invocation was given by J. Andersen. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America followed.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Reading of Correspondence: Administrator Knizacky informed the Commissioners that he received an email from Al Deering requesting how much one mill generates in taxes and how much does Consumers Energy pay as a result?

Public comment: None

Work Session on 2020 Final Budget

Commissioner Lange opened the floor for the discussion for the special work-session for the 2020 Final Budget. He turned the meeting over to Administrator Knizacky at this time.

Administrator Knizacky noted that the budget as presented provides the same services in 2020 as what the County was able to provide in 2019.

Other items that were requested and unable to fund were the Clerk's office request for a part-time position and the Sheriff Department's request for increase in overtime for the Road and Jail operations.

Upcoming items to note that are not in this budget include Union Corrections Contract. Negotiations will start on October 10, 2019. Possible budget amendments may follow.

Commissioner Krieger inquired as to why the clerk request for a part-time position was not allowed as he feels that this request should be accommodated as the Clerk's office is notoriously know to be the "dumping ground" for all legislative issues and other responsibilities. Administrator Knizacky noted that the County is slowly addressing the staffing issues.

Commissioner Bacon requested to know what the impact of a part-time employee would be for the Clerk's office. Administrator Knizacky informed the board that a part-time position would cost approximately \$22,000.00 plus retirement benefits.

Of note were the changes that have befallen with the cuts from Governor Whitmer with the State budget for fiscal year 2020. One of the changes would be the removal of the Veterans Affairs Department. A decision will need to be made by the board as to how they want to proceed.

Commissioner Andersen requested from the Board how they wished to proceed with the Veteran's Services position. Discussion from all the Commissioners ensued. It was a unanimous decision that this position, since its inception earlier this year, has become a valuable asset to area Veteran's and that no commissioner on this board wished to see this office close. Thoughts included the County funding this office until the end of the year with a re-evaluation in January to see if Governor Whitmer may amend the budget and allow the Veteran's Affairs Grant to be funded. The board will re-evaluate in January 2020 and determine the fate of this office at that time.

Motion by S. Hull and seconded by R. Bacon to keep the Veterans Affairs office operating and will send this request to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee to recommend a budget amendment on how to pay for the months of October 2019, November 2019, and December 2019. Motion carried.

Recommendation by Administrator Knizacky to leave the Veteran's Affairs Line item in the 2020 budget as is and re-evaluate in January 2020.

Commissioner Lange wished to discuss the Commissioners budget and his request to possibly move to the use of iPads and a paperless system for all Commissioner meetings. Discussion followed with the pros and cons of use of a paperless system versus the current paper process.

The cost to use iPads are currently not in this proposed budget and a budget amendment would need to be done if that is the direction the Board wishes to move. Commissioner Andersen wished to continue this discussion when all Commissioners were present.

Commissioner Andersen thanked Administrator Knizacky, the Elected Officials and all department heads, as well as employees who have worked diligently with their resources as there will be no reduction in services provided by the County for 2020. Administrator Knizacky commended the Elected officials and department heads as well.

Motion by J. Andersen and seconded by S. Hull to send the 2020 Final General Budget to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee to ascertain where funding could be obtained to continue the Veteran's Affairs Office.

There was no public comment:

There was no other business:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM.

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CHERYL KELLY, COUNTY CLERK

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JANET S. ANDERSEN, BOARD CHAIR