

MINUTES
Isabella County Board of Commissioners
REGULAR BOARD
HYBRID MEETING (IN-PERSON/ELECTRONIC)
Isabella County Commission on Aging Building
2200 S. Lincoln Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
April 16th, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Hope in conference room A/B of the Commission on Aging, 2200 S. Lincoln Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. Hybrid Meeting (In-person/Electronic)

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was led by Chairman Tobin Hope.

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present: Tobin Hope, Chris Embrey, Terry Hutchinson, James Moreno, Frank Engler, Jerry Jaloszynski and Steve Swaney.

Commissioner Absent: None.

Also present: Interim Deputy County Administrator/Controller Melissa Franquist and Deputy County Clerk Leann Ellis

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to amend the agenda and add as number 1 under Finance and Administration a Millage for Operations Law Enforcement Positions and renumber all following items sequentially. Motion passed.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Paul Lauria wanted to talk about teamwork. The public doesn't see a cohesive team. It would go a long way to own up to the mistakes made.

Maureen Moeggenberg reiterates that we can't lose the emergency management by 90%, let alone the road patrol.

PRESENTATIONS AND SPECIAL REPORTS: None

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve and place on file the March 26th Special Meeting Minutes, April 2nd, 2024 Work Session Meeting Minutes, the April 2nd, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes, the April 9th, 2024 Finance and Administration Committee Meeting minutes, the April 9th, 2024 Criminal Justice and County Affairs Committee Meeting minutes and the April 9th, 2024 Human Resources and Public Works Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Engler, Swaney, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance and Administration Committee:

- A. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to fund current law enforcement operation positions through the 2024 calendar year contingent on the passage of the County Operating Millage on August 6th, 2024 and to place on the November 5th, 2024 ballot a dedicated millage to support law enforcement operation positions beyond calendar year 2024. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Engler, Swaney, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- B. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to ratify and place on file the March 29th, 2024 Invoice List in the amount of \$1,757,874.63, the April 5th, 2024 Invoice List in the amount of \$2,470,581.01, and the Adjustment List dated April 11th, 2024. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Engler, Swaney, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- C. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve the 2024 Equalization Report on the STC form L-4024, as presented by the Equalization Department and required by State

- Statute and authorize the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners and the County Clerk to sign the same and direct it to be filed with the County Clerk's Office and with the State Tax Commission in a timely manner. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- D. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to approve the Prime Contract Change Order No. 17 with Clark Construction in the net additional amount of \$316,809.00, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- E. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to adopt Resolution #2024-06 to approve the Ballot Language for the Isabella County Parks Tax Rate Request on the August 6, 2024 Primary Election Ballot. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- F. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to approve the adoption of Resolution #2024-07 to approve the ballot language for the County Operating Renewal to be placed on the August 6, 2024 Primary Election Ballot. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to amend the motion to include to approve the ballot language of the County Operating Renewal pending Tax Allocation Board decision on the August 6, 2024 Primary Election Ballot. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Moreno to amend the original motion by adding ballot language for the County Operating Renewal on the August 6, 2024 Primary Election Ballot pending Tax Allocation Board decision pending legal counsel review. Commissioner Embrey moved that we withdraw the motion to approve the ballot language for renewal as amended. Commissioner Jaloszynski withdrew his motion to the amendment of the motion and Commissioner Moreno withdrew his second to the amendment of the motion. Commissioner Embrey withdraws his second to the original and Commissioner Jaloszynski withdraws the original motion.

- G. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve the ballot language for the renewal of the Isabella County Transportation Commission millage request, to be placed on the August 6, 2024 Primary Election Ballot. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.

Criminal Justice and County Affairs Committee:

- A. It was moved by Commissioner Swaney and seconded by Commissioner Engler to approve the FY2023 Homeland Security Grant Program Intergovernmental Agreement between the West Michigan Regional Medical Consortium and Isabella County, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.
- B. It was moved by Commissioner Engler and seconded by Commissioner Swaney to approve the submission of the FY25 Michigan Indigent Defense Commission Compliance Plan and Cost Analysis Grant Application, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same using EGRAMS. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.

Human Resources and Public Works Committee:

- A. It was moved by Commissioner Moreno and seconded by Commissioner Hutchinson to amend the language in the motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral and Physical Health and Aging Services Administration and the Isabella County Commission on Aging for the 2024 Senior Project Fresh, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.

Intergovernmental Affairs: None

Administrator/Controller: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to approve the contract dated April 11, 2024 between Isabella County and Mid-Michigan Water for operation, maintenance, treatment, and distribution of the Lake Isabella Water Supply in order to meet state requirements, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same, pending legal approval. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Hutchinson, Moreno, Embrey, Engler, Swaney, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.

Public Comment: None

Announcements:

Commissioner Jaloszynski extended an invite to the Shepherd Maple Syrup Festival starting on April 25, 2024 through April 28, 2024.

Commissioner Jaloszynski wanted to state that this is a difficult time in Isabella County government. Many employees are dealing with the stress of possibly loss of employment and everyone is being asked to maintain current services with less available financial and labor resources. Road Patrol officers, Detectives, clerical staff provide an important service that safeguards the well-being and lives of County residents and protects personal property. The daily risk to life and limb and the well-being of their families and diminished respect given in certain quarters of society make policing a career that fewer and fewer individuals are willing to pursue. Our officers and support staff are special individuals and we thank you. County Administrator Nicole Frost and her staff have provided outstanding and consistent performance in their duties. Administrator Frost has and continues to work under very stressful conditions and the never ceasing demands of her job. No one has ever served Isabella County government and its residents in a more caring and professional manner. The Commissioners appreciate Nicole more than she knows and they thank her. Elected officials, department heads and employees of the County government deserve to be recognized for their dedication, creativity and personal efforts to do the best job they can.

Commissioner Hutchinson states that he knows this commission has a lot of integrity and this is their baby and they stand behind it and will work their way through it.

Commissioner Swaney stated he has been a commissioner since 2019. He takes this position very seriously. He takes responsibility for his voting and votes how he feels his constituents want him to vote. He tries to provide them with the services that they need with the money that is provided through the property taxes and without waste. He is not saying he is above guilt but that he wants the best for the Isabella citizens.

Commissioner Moreno states he accepts the responsibility for the votes that he has made. He has been on the commission the longest. He got into government because he believes in government and looking out for his constituents. He has always tried to be responsive to the people that talk to him about this real frustrating time especially with a lot of disinformation. He is here now and is responsible.

Commissioner Embrey states that he appreciates the commissioner's that have been here a while taking responsibility for what happened in the past. He has huge respect for how they all have stepped up to right this ship. Everyone has been on board with fixing the problem and how we're fixing the problem.

Commissioner Engler acknowledges that mistakes were made but says that everyone thought at the time that it was the right decision but sometimes it turned out not to be. This commission has not always agreed but always came together in the end to an agreement. They will continue working together to move forward and fix the issues.

Commissioner Jaloszynski says they are a citizen's board and this board can make mistakes. He has been on the board for ten years and he says they have always tried to do the best to maintain the services that County residents have come to expect and enjoy. They have not added anything new. They have financial pressures that a lot of people don't understand, but they have always tried to make the best decisions. When they pulled the trigger on the County Jail, it was a good project, it is a good project and a needed project, but perhaps we should have at that time stopped and said we're going to go to the people to vote. What was on their mind at that time is that they had a USDA loan that was 2.125% that expired the next day. They knew they had a jail that was old and has a liability issue. There is a danger to the officers serving in the facility. In the

back of their minds, they worried about what happens if they have a catastrophic failure of the sewer system where they would have to rip up the floors and have to house all the prisoners elsewhere at great cost to the County. These things are difficult decisions. On the jail they spent years wondering how to proceed. They got down to having to make the decision and they thought they were doing the best they could because they could pay for it. Now because of all the other financial pressures, the jail is not the biggest portion of our financial pressure. It is a part of it, but not the biggest. With all the financial pressures and then all of a sudden, the revenues that we were going to put into paying off that bond is in demand elsewhere. With that happening it has put us in a bind. They could have said no let's go to the vote of the people, but that project would have gone up tens of millions of dollars. They hate asking people for taxes.

Commissioner Hope stated that tonight they voted unanimously to fund current law enforcement through the calendar year and place on the November 5, 2024 ballot a dedicated millage to support law enforcement. He is hopeful going forward. He has seen a lot of support from the public and we need to build on that momentum. There is a whole lot more people out in the county. We need everybody on board. We need to pass this thing and keep law enforcement in Isabella County.

Commissioner Hope stated that Party for a Purpose for the Restoration House is on April 20, 2024. If you want tickets for that see him.

Closed Session: None

Adjournment: Motion by Commissioner Jaloszynski and supported by Commissioner Embrey to adjourn at 9:09 p.m.