

**BUDGET COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 11:30 a.m.
Howard Male Conference Room**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: John Kozlowski, Burt Francisco, Treasurer Kim Ludlow, Clerk Keri Bertrand, and Chair Bill Peterson.

OTHERS PRESENT: Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Jennifer Mathis, Home Improvement/Public Conservator Director Nicki Janish, Equalization Director Ted Somers, Maintenance Superintendent Wes Wilder, 911/EM Director Kim Elkie, 911/EM Assistant Director Al Rapson, Sheriff Erik Smith, and County Board Assistant Lynn Bunting.

The Budget Committee Workshop started at 11:30 a.m.

INFORMATION ITEM: Treasurer Ludlow reported she discussed the overpayment of the E911 Cost Allocation and the adjustment needed with the auditor and noted that this adjustment change will be spread through each department, not just the General Fund. Treasurer Ludlow passed out a E911 Cost Allocation 2019 through 2024 updated report as of April 22, 2024 to the committee for review and discussion. Treasurer Ludlow informed the committee that \$82,530.98 will need to be refunded to the 911 Fund for overpayment per the state audit.

911/EM Director Elkie reported she spoke with the state auditor and that informed her that this will need to be refunded this year and not next year. Director Elkie informed the committee that she will be working on a plan and timeline that she is required to get to the state auditor and within 10 days of that she will need to send them a receipt. Director Elkie reported she will speak with the state auditor to request a 30-day extension to allow time to obtain the information and send receipt of payment that the state requests.

Treasurer Ludlow reported that after she receives confirmation of the total from the state and verifies with the auditors, she will create the general ledger and adjustments for the county auditors to sign off on it, then the board will need to approve the adjustment and she will then transfer the funds.

INFORMATION ITEM: Clerk Keri Bertrand reported that she included a copy of the Sunset Law and House Bill proposals for the committee to review stating that the county will be impacted by loss of revenue estimating \$100,000 assessed, not collected, due to lack of court funding effective May 1, 2024. Clerk Bertrand noted that currently per defendant \$700 is assessed (revenue) which covers payroll, use of the building, etc. while a criminal case is taking place for every guilty case the sentenced fees get assessed and with the 2023 timeline there are a lot of outstanding fines, assessed fines not paid. Clerk Bertrand reported that there are two House Bills being presented for approval to extend the deadline and if not approved to extend the deadline the county cannot assess any new fines going forward after May 1, 2024 for court costs. Clerk Bertrand informed the committee that the individual counties are impacted in the state of Michigan of this loss of revenue and the Clerk Association is trying to fight this as well as Representative Cam Cavitt is trying to get these bills passed.

INFORMATION ITEM: Chair Bill Peterson presented the Space Needs Assessment bill from Plante Moran for services completed last year and did not pay this yet with nothing budgeted for 2024. Treasurer Ludlow noted that this project was approved in 2023 with \$75,000 budgeted then and was not

carried over into the 2024 budget and will need to be paid from the same fund. Moved by Commissioner Fournier and supported by Commissioner Kozlowski to approve a budget adjustment to increase the Building and Grounds line item #631-265-975.006 by \$6,558 to pay the bill and present to the full board today for approval. Motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Jennifer Mathis reported the Professional Services line item is budgeted only \$500 for 2024 and states there is possibly a typo as there was \$5,000 budgeted in 2023 and \$500 budgeted in 2024. Need \$5,000 budgeted for 2024 as there is a bill for Amy Cell Talent received that needs to be paid as well as future bills will be coming out of that line item for the remainder of the year.

Treasurer Ludlow reported that there was one adjustment made to cover an Amy Cell Talent bill in January of this year of \$9,444 and there is no separate line item as it all comes from the Professional Services line item to pay these bills. Treasurer Ludlow recommended to increase the Professional Services line item by \$10,000 and do a budget adjustment for 2024. Moved by Commissioner Francisco and supported by Commissioner Kozlowski to reduce the Contingency line item #101-941-955.000 by \$10,000 and to increase the Professional Services line item #101-200-801.000 by \$10,000 and to present at full board today for approval. Motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Treasurer Ludlow reported that there is no line item for the Medical Examiner Budget for 2024 for witness fees as a bill came in that was not budgeted to be paid. Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Mathis reported that she spoke with the Prosecuting Attorney and they will have a few more professional witnesses fees this year to pay and Mathis noted that this is required to pay in the Medical Examiner Contract. Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Mathis informed the committee that this is the first bill received for witness fees. Moved by Commissioner Kozlowski and supported by Commissioner Francisco to recommend reducing the Administrative Service Fees line item number by \$2,000 in the Medical Examiner budget for 2024 and to put the \$2,000 into the created line item #101-648-811.000 Professional Witness Fees by the Treasurer to pay the bill and have funds to pay future bills for the rest of the year 2024 and presented to the full board today for approval. Motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Finance Chair Burt Francisco reported that he reviewed the budget and shared his concerns for the outside attorney fees budget for 2024 will need budget adjustments due to legal reviews and no attorney assigned for the county. Discussion on legal reviews for the county and the need for representation. Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Mathis reported she spoke with previous attorney representative for the county Russ Rhynard to review for us as the county needs someone to review documents for the county and he will do a lower rate at \$200 per hour. Board Chair Kozlowski noted that he spoke with the prosecuting attorney's office to request doing legal review of documents for the county and not the extensive ones and they will not do as they were advised by the Prosecuting Attorney Association of Michigan not to do based on the POAM guidance. Interim County Administrator/HR Specialist Mathis reported that the prosecuting attorney stated she does not have the proper insurance nor the time management to do for the county. Board Chair Kozlowski recommended he asks another attorney he knows if she would be interested to make an offer and take recommendation

and both offers back to the board. Discussion and recommendation in the meantime to utilize Russ Rhynard for legal review on documents that are not extensive.

INFORMATION ITEM: Board Chair John Kozlowski reported on the status of the Tax Limitation Committee stating that he spoke with attorney John Axe and so far have 6 members of the committee in place and has spoken with the superintendent of the schools and another representative of the schools and found out that he only needs one school representative, and that the board of commissioners will need to select a member and he recommends Kevin Osbourne, which he already has talked with and accepted if approved by the commissioners. Kozlowski noted that he reached out to the township supervisors and all but one have responded on approving Nathan Skibbe as the township supervisor representative. Kozlowski reported that the Probate Judge needs to make a recommendation for an individual to sit on this committee and then once the committee is formed will have 10 days to meet and attorney John Axe will be attending the meeting as well to assist as well as Equalization Director Ted Somers with the language for the Headlee roll up for board review and approval to be placed on the August ballot.

INFORMATION ITEM: Finance Chair Burt Francisco presented the Youth & Recreation 2025 Grant Application for Wolf Creek Park for discussion stating that they would like to apply this year for a grant to purchase property next to Wolf Creek Park for recreation activities and extend Wolf Creek Park. Discussion on using tax levy to purchase land owned by Wilson Township for Wolf Creek Park.

Next Workshop Date: To be determined. The Budget Committee Workshop ended at 12:22 p.m.



Bill Peterson, Budget Committee Chair

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