

MACKINAC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS
Monday November 27, 2023

The Mackinac County Board of Commissioners held a Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday November 27, 2023 in the Boardroom, Courthouse Annex, 100 S. Marley Street, St. Ignace, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patrick at 2:32 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America was recited.

Roll Call: Jodi Kaiser, Mike Patrick, Dan Litzner, Judy St. Louis-Scott. Absent: Corina Clark.

Agenda Approval: It was moved by Commissioner Kaiser second by Commissioner St. Louis-Scott to approve the agenda as presented. VVMC

Public Comment:

Kelly Moran – Court Reporter/Assignment Clerk addressed the board on her concerns regarding the wage study results. She thinks the employees should be able to submit a response on their feelings with the wage study and how it depicts their actual job descriptions.

Business:

Final FY2024 budget review:

Commissioners discussed some changes that were made from the previous budget meeting. They discussed the status of the recycling initiative; still waiting to hear from the State on this. The requests for funding increases were approved for MDHHS and EUP Regional Planning. Commissioner Kaiser reviewed the changes made to the Veterans Office budget. Veteran Chair Dick Pershinske had some questions on the changes to their budget and their current fund balance. If they expend their budget before the end of the year then some of their fund balance can be transferred as needed. If there are any more changes needed before the next regular board meeting; Clerk Vowell needs to be contacted regarding this. Salary resolutions were reviewed and decided to act on after the January 1, 2024. A fixed amount was proposed for the elected officials instead of a percentage increase. The non-elected and non-union salary resolution also needs to be reviewed.

The wage study might play a part in the salary resolutions. Commissioner Litzner thinks a small sub-committee should be created to go over the study more closely and then present the options to the full board. E911 Coordinator Bryce Tracy had comments on the wage study and how Mackinac County is affected by tourism and the larger work load for the employees related to tourism. Mackinac County has a very much larger population at any given time from tourism and the revenue this brings in. Also, the longer the board waits on the Wage Study the more the numbers will not be current.

Probate Judge Graham spoke on how tourism can cause problems as well with summer employees having legal issues causing a larger workload for court employees. And Mackinac County only has a 35-hour work week, 40 hours would make a huge difference for employees. He also said if you hire this person to do the comprehensive wage study and then to ignore his advice would be a bad idea.

Commissioner Kaiser liked Kelly Moran's idea and would like to have more employees' thoughts on the wage study. And would like to look at Kelly Moran's and Heather Wilks reclassification. Sheriff Ed Wilk said we are already having a hard time finding and retaining employees. We need to stay ahead of this and not come from behind, he's hoping this happens quickly so the county is fully and properly staffed. He said the pay scale has been skewed for years and this needs to be corrected. And the negotiations with the union will not be difficult if raises are given the union would be in agreement. Commissioner Kaiser said this wage study could be used as a bargaining tool with negotiations. Sheriff said it should not be used as a negotiating tool but the pay should be brought to where it should be and then could negotiate when the contracts open for further raises. Commissioner Patrick would like to go forward with sending the employees a letter requesting feedback on the wage study and he thinks we spent a lot of money on this study and it needs to be implemented.

More discussion of the salary resolutions was had. Commissioner Kaiser wants a flat rate for the elected officials, and the Sheriff should be raised more than the rest. Commissioner Litzner thinks \$1500 for Clerk, Register of Deeds, Treasurer and he thinks the Sheriff should be \$3000 and freeze the Prosecutors salary. Commissioner Kaiser said \$5000 additional for the Sheriff to be at least \$80,000. Emergency Manager Mike Kasper has been grossly underpaid for a long time. This would be an opportunity to correct his wages. Commissioner Kaiser would like him moved to \$45,000. Commissioner St. Louis-Scott thinks E911 Coordinator Bryce Tracy needs to be at \$50,000, and the 911 Board proposed \$50,000 as well. Bryce is the Emergency Manager back up when Mike Kasper is not available. Commissioners think Equalization Directors pay should remain the same with no raise. There were questions on the Airport Managers salary. The Board is looking at \$45,000 for him. Veterans Committee is requesting \$50,000 salary for the Veterans Service Officer. The Veteran's Committee is not backing down on this request. They have the money in their fund balance. They are willing to take legal action if this request is not granted. Corporate Counsel is currently working on an opinion regarding some of these issues. Further action will be taken after the opinion. 3.5% increase for the non-union non-elected salary resolution was discussed.

Additional Board Member Business:

Commissioner St. Louis-Scott - had some questions for Insurance Committee Chair Bryce Tracy regarding the post 65 retiree health coverage.

Commissioner Kaiser – housing meeting scheduled for next week with housing developers and contractors.

Public Comment:

Dick Pershinske - the Board of Commissioners is putting themselves in a precarious position. Why are they following wage study for everyone but the Veterans Office.

Rebecca Jackson – what are the Boards plans with the wage study. The Board told her that a letter will be going out to all employees with the option to respond to the Board regarding their feelings on the wage study.

Under Sheriff Ron Umbarger – has the Board thought about increasing the insurance opt out for employees, this might encourage some to opt out of the County’s insurance plan which would save the county.

Sheriff Ed Wilk and Bryce Tracy – still need to be paid out their remaining sick/vacation time before end of the year. This was negotiated and agreed upon with the previous board.

Adjournment: It was moved by Commissioner Litzner second by Commissioner St. Louis-Scott to adjourn the meeting at 5:10pm. VVMC

Stephanie LaTour
Chief Deputy Clerk