

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Session
April 10, 2017

The Chippewa County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 10, 2017 in the 91st District Courtroom of the Chippewa County Building.

Chairman Shackleton called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

Present: Commissioners Egan, Martin, McLean, Savoie and Chairman Shackleton

Absent: None

Also Present: Scott Brand, Evening News, Sheriff Mike Bitnar, Lana Forrest, Kaylynn Cairns, Rudy Johnson, Jim Traynor, Maria Brown, John Lechner, Deputy Administrator Kelly Church, Administrator Jim German, and Cathy Maleport, Clerk.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner McLean, seconded by Commissioner Savoie, to approve the agenda as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF COUNTY BOARD MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner McLean, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to approve the regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2017 together with the correction to the February 13, 2017 minutes as follows:

Hiawatha Behavioral Health Board appointment expiration date in the February minutes reflects 12/31/2020 and should be 12/31/2018. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner Savoie, to acknowledge the correspondence received in the clerk's office and, if necessary, forward to the appropriate committee. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Lechner addressed the commission regarding a variety of different topics. A summary of such is summarized below:

- 1) Mr. Lechner wanted to know if his 1900 and 1934 Cannons, that were seized by ATF, were found in the storage building in Kinross. He addressed Chairman Shackleton, indicating that

it was his belief that only he had access to that building and wanted to know if the cannons were found. Chairman Shackleton reminded Mr. Lechner that he can make his comments; however, there is not a discussion during public comments. He went on to say he wanted to know what is in that building and if his cannons are there, he wanted them back.

- 2) Mr. Lechner indicated he received a bill for \$8,000.00 for the Pepler matter. He indicated that he tried to contest the bill; however, the Judge said that it was a good bill. He stated “I’m a long ways from being done with Pepler” and indicated that he is not going to stop, and that, the bill for Pepler, is going to be a lot more than \$8,000.00.
- 3) Mr. Lechner discussed an issue with referencing Commissioner Savoie together with members of the sheriffs’ department which started with his excavator that was taken, and he believes they had no right to take it. He indicated he had a conversation with Mr. Bitnar and later Mr. Bitnar denied the conversation. He went on to say that Mr. Pepler (*former prosecutor*) chose to charge him with five felonies that he held onto until December 12, 2012, three days after he was sentenced to prison for 51 months for having explosives. He discussed charges being nolle prosequi and having to sit in prison for three more years for these lies.
- 4) Mr. Lechner indicated that Bruce Wagner accused him and his son of flying drugs from Cuba to Canada.
- 5) He also spoke of a lady who issues permits and that this lady indicated he never had a permit. He indicated she was lying about this.
- 6) He indicated that Christopher Reeves sent him a letter stating that he had a permit for blasting agents and high explosives and was a responsible person. He went on to say, yet he spent 51 months in prison because of lies. Every time you turn the TV on the news it’s about some politician lying. He went on to say, I’m not going to win, but I’m not going to stop either; I’m going to cost the tax payers so much money they’re going to ask you what’s going on, why are you letting these people lie. He asked the Commission to ask the following questions when paying the bills that are forthcoming or already here.
 - Why are we doing this?
 - Why did we put that man in prison?
 - Why do we have hundreds of thousands of people in prison?
- 7) Mr. Lechner spoke of his conditions in prison.
- 8) He spoke of the Government being stupid. He stated they would put any person in here in prison for telling a lie; but the government, there’s no end to it.

Other statements made:

- The Government lies and they lie because they have a suit on. He goes to school to learn to lie.
- Thank you for allowing me to go over my five minutes and indicated that Ms.

Kennedy is the best person in the county and wished everyone was as honest as her.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT– Jim German, given for informational purposes only – *no action items*.

NEW BUSINESS

A) **Resolution 17-9 Revise Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003**

It was moved by Commissioner McLean, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to adopt Resolution 17-9 as follows:

**RESOLUTION NO. 17-09
RESOLUTION TO REVISE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL OF 2003**

WHEREAS, health care costs continue to rise for all Americans and, for some Americans, this increase can be devastating; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is the focus of many lawmakers who portray it as an “entitlement” program that costs the Treasury too much money. Technically, the term “Entitlement” is correct but it has an unfortunate connotation; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is an essential medical plan that millions of seniors and disabled individuals depend upon to stay alive. Medicare is not a gift, as the term “entitlement” suggests. Many of the beneficiaries have worked their entire adult life and paid into the system in order to receive this crucial medical plan; and

WHEREAS, due to spiraling costs largely associated with the price of prescription medications, our elected officials find themselves passing on increased costs to those who can least afford that increase, namely senior citizens and disabled individuals who are on Medicare’s Part D Drug Program; and

WHEREAS, when congress enacted Medicare Prescription Drug Bill they enacted a law that does not allow Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for drug prices the way Medicaid and the Veterans Administration does; and

WHEREAS, one economist, Dean Baker, estimates that Medicare could have saved approximately \$332 billion dollars between 2006 and 2013 (approximately \$50 billion a year) had the Department of Health and Human Services been permitted to negotiate prices of drugs with the drug companies, as federal agencies do in other programs; and

WHEREAS, rising prescription drug costs have been the primary reason for the increase in health benefit costs; and

WHEREAS, the increasing cost of prescription drugs and outrageous profits made by pharmaceutical companies is a systemic problem that significantly affects our state and our nation. It deserves non-partisan effort; and

WHEREAS, we must prevent our elected officials from balancing the budget on the backs of those who can least afford it, the elderly and disabled. Increases in premiums and drug costs are unacceptable ways to deal with a flawed Medicare Prescription Drug Bill; and

WHEREAS, we must preserve the Medicare program as is currently exists and to do so requires immediate action to cut unnecessary costs, particular in the area of prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, we must revise the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper, drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, we cannot allow the previously approved bill to stand as adopted at the risk of having the Medicare program be the cause of a staggeringly increasing deficit which will require tax increases or cuts to the rest of the government, nor can we allow the continuance of price increases to our citizens, which may cause many to contemplate discontinuing medically necessary drugs in order to pay their bills, heat their homes and have food on the table.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners goes on record urging our legislators to immediately commence the process of revising the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to our area Federal and State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, the Michigan Association of Counties and the other Michigan Counties.

A VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS

AYES: Scott Shackleton, Don McLean, Jim Martin, Conor Egan and Bobby Savoie

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

B) Resolution 17-10 April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

It was moved by Commissioner Savoie, seconded by Commissioner Egan, to adopt Resolution 17-10 as follows:



Sexual Assault Awareness

Proclamation 17-10

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

WHEREAS, the statistics surrounding sexual assault are staggering with 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men experience sexual assault at some point during their life; sexual assault affects women, children and men of all racial, cultural and economic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault may also have associated consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, depression, homelessness, eating disorders and suicide; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault can be devastating for not only the survivor, but also for the family and friends of the survivor; at the Diane Pepler Shelter victims are provided help to rebuild and rejuvenate their life after this experience by providing them services like counseling, legal help, housing assistant, shelter, and so much more and

WHEREAS, no one person, organization, agency or community can eliminate sexual assault on their own, but we can work together to educate our entire population about what can be done to prevent sexual assault, support victim/survivors and their significant others, and increase support for agencies providing services to victim/survivors; and

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month provides an excellent opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing sexual violence, and to hopefully increase the number of conversations our community can have about healthy relationships;

NOW THEREFORE be it, Resolved, That we, the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the month of April, 2017, as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Chippewa County.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yeas: Commissioners Egan, Martin, McLean, Savoie and Chairman Shackleton

Nays: None

THE RESOLUTION WAS DECLARED ADOPTED.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

**PERSONNEL/EQUALIZATION AND
APPORTIONMENT/TRANSPORTATION/HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES**

Chair – Commissioner Egan
April 5, 2017

CCHD FLOW CART

A discussion took place on changes to the County flow chart as the Board of Health was dissolved. CCHD Administration is now reflected on the Chart to report to County Administration. A discussion ensued.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to approve the new flow chart reflecting the change that CCHD reports to the County Administration, that the names be removed from the chart and put into another easier to update format and supplied to the Commission periodically. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

2017 County Equalized Values.

Equalization Director Kennedy reviewed the process of arriving at equalized values, including land value, economic condition factor, appraisal, and sales studies, the assessor and boards of review function in the process, and ultimately the role of county and state in establishing equalized value.

Kennedy went on to present the 2017 County Equalized Values. The total 2017 Equalized Value for the county is \$1,335,561,219 (see page 1 of Equalization Report).

She explained that the values presented on the report are the basis for completing the State required forms which must be completed and sent to the State before the end of April. The equalization process and the valuations presented were discussed in detail.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner Savoie, that the equalized values as presented by Equalization Director Kennedy be adopted as reported and that all state required forms regarding same be completed and filed as required by statute. On a voice vote, the motion was carried.

Agenda Item: Tentative 2017 Tentative Taxable Values

As an informational item, Equalization Director Kennedy also presented the *TENTATIVE 2017 TAXABLE VALUES* and explained the capped value formula as it relates to taxable values. It was explained that the county's projected tentative taxable value is \$1,114,404,155 which is a projected increase of \$12,247,625 over the 2016 value. The final taxable values for the county will be calculated in May, after preliminary State equalization occurs and after school operating exemption information has been provided by the local assessors.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner Martin, that the Tentative 2017 Taxable Values presented by Director Kennedy be accepted in the minutes. On a voice vote, the motion was carried.

Agenda Item: Truth in Taxation Public Hearing

Director Kennedy reviewed the process of establishing the County's operating millage rates, the time table involved, and the necessity of holding a Truth in Taxation Public Hearing at the June 12th meeting of the County Board of Commissioners.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner McLean, that the information presented be accepted into the minutes and that the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing be scheduled for the June 12, 2017 meeting of the County Board, and that Director Kennedy, as soon as the necessary data is certified and compiled, submit the pertinent information to the Administrator's Office and the Board so that the hearing may proceed within the deadlines established by law. On a voice vote, the motion was carried.

Agenda Item: Other items of concern

Director Kennedy explained that continuing education requirements for certified personnel has increased to 20 hours per year and since none of the approved training is online, it is necessary to schedule staff to acquire those educational hours. The continuing education classroom courses have been scheduled to take place for all staff on April 21 and June 23 in St. Ignace which will necessitate the closing of the Equalization office to accommodate attendance of the courses. Additional training hours will be split up for staff to attend.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner Martin, should the need arise, and in the discretion of the Equalization Director, in order to accommodate attendance at continuing education classes, with advance notification of administration, the office may be closed to accommodate the required training. On a voice vote, the motion was carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner McLean, to accept the Personnel/Equalization and Apportionment/ Transportation/Health & Social Services Committee minutes of April 5, 2017 as presented. Commissioner McLean directed his concerns to Ms. Kennedy and asked if she would provide the answers to the following question at the next Board meeting.

- 1) How much of an increase can we expect in taxes that come to the county?
- 2) If Walmart prevails and we lose this Dark Store Issue what kind of a difference will that make in the amount that we would receive?

On a voice vote, the motion carried.

FINANCE, CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Commissioner Martin – April 6, 2017

AGENDA ITEMS

Emergency Management

Approval of Advanced EMT Course for Chippewa County EMS

The Committee reviewed a request from OES Director Michelle Robbins to approve EMS training courses in Chippewa County. The Advanced EMT course will be open to Chippewa County EMS personnel that are presently licensed as an EMT; and pending approval from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The course is \$7,645, sponsored by the Consolidated Community School Services, with a student cost of \$195. There are currently 20 students interested in taking the class.

It was moved by Commissioner Egan, seconded by Commissioner McLean, to approve the request as presented for an Advanced EMT Course for Chippewa County EMS at the cost of \$7,645 and student cost of \$195 per student. A discussion took place referencing how vital this is to our county residents. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Health Department – Pink Ribbon Expenditure (approve)

The Committee reviewed a Pink Ribbon expenditure 2017-02, which is all donated funds for those clients diagnosed with breast and/or cervical cancer requiring assistance with travel and lodging related to treatment, may apply for assistance, following policy 1.99.013.

It was moved by Commissioner Martin, supported by Commissioner McLean, to approve the Pink Ribbon expenditure 2017-02 of \$1,737.17, as presented following policy 1.99-013. A discussion took place with Commissioner McLean stating that it is extremely important that we look after this and that he appreciated what the Health Department does. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

FINANCE - Claims and Accounts

The Committee reviewed the bills and payroll presented for approval.

It was moved by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Savoie, to recommend the approval of March bills and payroll as follow: the general claims totaling \$241,951.03, other fund claims \$352,168.89, payroll \$681,557.36, Health Department claims \$271,228.32 and Health Department payroll \$292,806.92; total claims \$1,839,712.52 and vouchers H-1 through H-278. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Egan, to accept the Finance Claims and Accounts Committee Meeting Minutes of April 6, 2017. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT ON MEETINGS AS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Chairman Shackleton communicated the fund raiser for Judge Church at the Elks appeared to be a tremendous success and that he is always overwhelmed by people's willingness to pitch in, as well as, volunteer to help make a difference for people in need.

Having completed the agenda items, it was moved by Commissioner Savoie, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to adjourn. The Board adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine C. Maleport, Clerk

Scott Shackleton, Chairman