

**APPROVED
PROCEEDINGS OF THE OTTAWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Tuesday, February 8, 2005 1:30 PM
Fillmore Administration Building - Board Room
12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive**

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 8, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Chair.

Mr. Rycenga pronounced the invocation.

The Clerk led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present at roll call: Messrs. Kuyers, Swartout, Rycenga, Schrottenboer, Disselkoen, Berghorst, Holtrop, Vander Kam. (8)

Absent: Mrs. Kortman, Mr. Rinck, Mrs. Ruiters (3)

B/C 05-032

Mr. Rycenga moved to amend the agenda of today adding 5.(b) State of the County Address and Discussion Item 4. Closed Session to discuss Ongoing Labor Contract Negotiations. Mr. Berghorst supported the motion and the motion passed.

The Clerk read a letter of thanks from George and JoAnn Miles.

Al Vanderberg presented the State of the County Address.

Introduction – Chair Rycenga, Vice-Chair Disselkoen, and Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to give this first annual State of the County Address. The purpose of the address is to highlight challenges and initiatives of the past year and to also provide a general vision for 2005.

The year 2005 finds Ottawa County blessed in many ways: unique natural resources continue to provide residents with a high quality of life; many years of wise financial stewardship have led to a high degree of financial stability; and our leaders and citizens have a progressive “can do” attitude about the many challenges that we face.

And as a County government we will face many challenges in 2005. These challenges can be grouped into several broad areas: Finance; Technology; Land Use and Population Growth; Business Improvement and Strategic Planning; Justice and Human Services; and Legislative.

Finance – Throughout the years, Ottawa County has shrewdly spent and saved its money. Even so, the financial pressures that continue to affect the State of Michigan are affecting us. While we are not in serious financial trouble as many local governments in the state are, we are also not in a position to continue along the same path. We have permanently lost revenue from many sources; revenue that we will not recover when the economy improves. Thus, even without large increases in spending, we are facing a structural deficit.

To that end, in 2004 the Board of Commissioners approved a five-year plan to eliminate the \$3 million General Fund budget deficit that the County has experienced in each of the past two fiscal years and that is projected to grow to over \$4 million annually if not reigned in. A part of that plan involved a slight millage increase for 2005. While comparatively Ottawa County’s millage remains low, throughout the year we will be pursuing several strategies to reduce the structural deficit so that we are able to maintain high-quality services at the lowest possible cost to our citizens.

In 2004, Ottawa County’s revenue sharing was preserved for the next six years when the Governor’s Revenue

Sharing Proposal was enacted, gradually shifting county property tax collection to the summer. However, this stopgap is not a permanent solution. Revenue sharing from the State is in jeopardy. If the State does not statutorily restore county revenue sharing, we will lose an additional \$4 million in annual General Fund operating revenue. As part of the negotiations surrounding the revenue sharing proposal, the Governor's office committed that a local government finance task force including local government officials will be formed to fundamentally review the basic structure of local government finance in Michigan. We will monitor the progress of this task force and proactively work to preserve revenue sharing and other local government funding.

Technology – *Advances in technology continue to offer opportunities to provide service to the citizens of Ottawa County more efficiently and in new ways. This is demonstrated by several of our 2004 efforts. In the Register of Deeds office, the implementation of the e-recording of deeds transformed a process that used to be labor intensive for staff and citizens so that it is now seamlessly completed over the internet. The County Clerk's office offers an e-filing opportunity for court documents through LexisNexis that provides similar efficiency for court filing. The installation of the Equalizer software in conjunction with local units of government will streamline assessing and taxation throughout the County.*

In 2005 we will completely restructure our web presence and introduce a new website that will allow citizens to conduct business online. Interactive websites are increasingly essential pathways for government agencies to deliver services, and the ability to conduct transactions online saves time and money and allows citizens to interact with government at their convenience.

Our GIS services continue to grow and most communities in Ottawa County are now members of our system. ESRI, the major GIS software company, has completed its evaluation of our existing technology and services and we will be using that input to guide future system improvements. As an example of the ways in which GIS is transforming the way we do business, the Drain Commissioner received a \$250,000 federal grant to work with the GIS Department to update FEMA flood maps.

We will also receive the results of Plante and Moran's evaluation of our MIS department next week. The implementation of the action plan provided in the evaluation will ensure that we are structured to provide the best possible technology service to internal and external customers. Finally, our Planning Department will continue working with communities and businesses throughout the County to develop a countywide wireless system.

Land Use & Population Growth – *Ottawa County remains the second fastest-growing county in Michigan and is the fastest growing county with over 200,000 residents. We are the only Michigan county to grow by 10% or more in each of the past four decades. With this growth comes increasing pressure on land resources, and it is important to plan for the long-term because of the quality of life our beautiful beaches, farms, and open spaces provide.*

Population growth has required us to plan our facilities to distribute services throughout the county. In 2004 we finished expansion and renovation projects at the FIA building in Holland and the jail at West Olive. Construction began on the new Holland District Court and the renovation and expansion of the Grand Haven and Hudsonville Human Services buildings. In 2005, we will present options for future space needs in Grand Haven.

Looking at rural land use, a subcommittee of the Board of Commissioners will investigate Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and recommend action on that issue to the full Board. The Urban Smart Growth project in Hudsonville will continue in 2005 and will provide an important example for other communities in the county, by demonstrating new opportunities for and examples of urban land use. Throughout the year we hope to build on our facilitation work on such issues as Zoning Map Colors and the conflict between the blueberry farmers and the Road Commission over road salt application.

The Parks Commission continues to pursue acquisition of unique properties. Rosy Mound officially opened in 2004 and a public-private fundraising effort to raise matching funds for the North Ottawa Dunes property resulted in a major State grant.

Business Improvement and Strategic Planning – *As part of our stewardship responsibility and particularly in light of the changing financial situation, focus on strategic planning and improving internal processes is absolutely critical. This will not only permit us to provide the best, most efficient service possible to citizens, but will allow us to evaluate existing programs and new service opportunities. As the first step of that process, the Administrator's Office is completing a review of all of the services provided by the County and creating a comprehensive list of whether services are statutorily mandated, necessary for County operations, or operate at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners. This review will provide the basis for two Board activities in early 2005: prioritization of discretionary services and strategic planning. The prioritization of discretionary services*

will be facilitated by Dr. Lynn Harvey of Michigan State University. This process will not be used for immediate decision making, but will provide a forum for the Board to identify service priorities as we face increasingly tight revenues. It will also be an important vehicle for citizens to evaluate priorities and provide input to the Board.

Several additional pieces of information will be important for strategic planning. Data collected from the employee survey conducted in 2004 is in the final stages of analysis and the report will be presented to the Board and employees in February. Impressively, almost 70% of employees completed the survey, so we will have a comprehensive statement of how our employees feel about their jobs and work environment. Once the results are presented, we will form a team to develop recommendations and an implementation plan based on those results so that we can continue to improve as an organization.

Another essential component of strategic planning will be citizen input. As such, we will survey our citizens this year to have a better sense of community opinion. We will continue to expand our communication efforts to citizens and leaders of local units of government to provide them better information on our activities and services we offer. This will also provide more opportunities for dialogue and open communication.

Internal organizational improvements will be a key part of 2005's business improvement efforts as well. In late February, the Board will consider a resolution to consolidate the Accounting and Finance Departments into a Fiscal Services Department. With all financial services in a single department, communication and efficiency will be improved. As a part of the upcoming budget cycle, we will begin to restructure our departmental performance measures process to move from output-based measures to results-oriented outcome measurements.

In order to improve communication with and amongst our employees, we will establish a Labor-Management Committee this year. The committee will be a forum for discussion of issues and information sharing that will enhance employee relations and provide greater understanding of topics that impact the County and its employees.

Throughout 2005 we will also be reviewing all existing policies and codifying existing practices that should be written policies. Once this is complete, all policies will be placed on a schedule for review every two years.

Justice and Human Services – *Population growth and economic factors affect all of our operations, but probably none more so than justice and human services. At the beginning of 2005, Ottawa County Circuit Court added a new judge to the Circuit bench, the Honorable Jon Van Allsburg. The addition of Judge Van Allsburg will assist with caseload distribution and offer Ottawa County citizens a more efficient experience in the Circuit Court system.*

The Circuit Court completed a strategic planning process across all divisions in 2004 in an effort to improve service to the public, increase efficiency, and plan for the future. Implementation of the plan has already begun and will continue throughout 2005.

One of the more visible new programs in the Court system is the Ottawa County Drug Court. Judges Feyen, Jonas and Knoll have between them four "drug court" courtrooms in which individuals facing alcohol and/or drug offenses have the opportunity to receive assistance with their substance abuse problems. In the Circuit Court, Judge Feyen has an adult and a juvenile drug court, and Judges Jonas and Knoll each have a program in District Court. While each court has unique characteristics, the program is a strong collaboration between the Circuit and District Courts.

The drug court's prevention-based strategy, under the Judge's supervision, mandates counseling, intensive supervision, daily drug testing, and bi-monthly court appearances, and is designed to provide support and structure to people willing to work to change their behavior. Over the long-term, the drug court is designed to reduce recidivism, which will not only benefit the individuals and community, but will save on justice costs in the future. As with any program, evaluation and measurement of outcomes is critical, and at Ottawa County our evaluation system for the drug court is second to none. In fact, the evaluation system designed by Mark Knudsen and the Planning and Grants department is being considered by the State Court Administrator's Office for use as a statewide model.

Prevention is also a focus of the Circuit Court's Juvenile Division, and new efforts in that area are contributing to efficiency and improving service. In 2005, a web-based case management system will be implemented which will allow staff from all agencies involved with a particular case to share information electronically, reducing the time staff spends transferring paperwork and increasing the amount of time available for working with clients.

Ottawa County continues to lead in law enforcement. The Sheriff's Office completed installation and

implementation of the Automated Fingerprint Identification System in 2004, becoming one of only two Sheriff's Offices in the state to have a direct link into the State fingerprint database. Homeland security remains an issue of concern, and in 2004 the Sheriff's Office developed Emergency Action Guidelines as part of the countywide emergency response plan and received a \$1.2 million federal Homeland Security grant to address the security needs in our community.

Developments in human services funding over the last year have impacted Ottawa County departments in a variety of ways. In large part due to its strong relationships with community employers and organizations, the Workforce Investment Board received a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the federal Faith-Based and Community Initiatives program. This was one of twelve grants awarded nationwide, and the only grant awarded in Michigan. The Workforce Investment Board will work with Good Samaritan Ministries to distribute the funding over the next 18 months, and services funded will include career planning, job assistance, ESL, literacy, life skills training, work skills training, and budget counseling. These services will greatly benefit not just those in the target neighborhoods of high unemployment and poverty, but businesses and the community as a whole.

The Health Department is one of the County service areas most affected by the State budget situation. Many of the department's services are mandated by the State and are also required under the Health Code to be funded by the State. Unfortunately, many services are only being partially funded at this time, however thanks to our dedicated department staff and a Board that is committed to providing quality service to our residents, we have been able to continue to meet the community's health needs in spite of declining funding. The funding situation is critical and we will continue to monitor the State budget process and stay in contact with our legislators to let them know the importance of State health funding to Ottawa County. One program in particular that has been impacted by the State's funding decision is HIV Testing. On January 1, 2005, the Health Department discontinued its HIV Testing program even though it is mandated by the State and served 1200 people annually because the State stopped funding the program at the level that is statutorily required.

The shortage of flu vaccine in 2004 was a major management challenge for the Health Department. With changing eligibility requirements and a potential for chaos and misunderstanding, the Department smoothly managed the flow of information and vaccine recipients.

The Community Mental Health Department is continually dealing with major changes on the State level. A change in federal Medicaid funds allocation has significantly reduced the availability of these dollars. In addition, the Governor's Mental Health Task Force report recommendations remain to be implemented, and it is not yet known how the changes will impact local CMH departments and authorities.

Flooding along the Grand River in Robinson Township early this year resulting in a State of Emergency has required commitment of resources from the Health Department and other County departments and will continue to do so throughout 2005.

Legislative – Working for the passage of the Governor's revenue sharing plan was the County's main legislative priority in 2004, however other priorities included full funding of the State's Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) obligation and amendment of the Records Media Act to allow public bodies a wider degree of latitude in choosing media for the storage of official public records. Legislative priorities and issues we will be monitoring in 2005 include changes to the State remonumentation reimbursement guidelines to allow surveyors to use safer, more efficient technology to complete their work; mobile home taxation; MDOT transportation plan and funding, particularly for US-31 and the Baldwin Street interchange; single business tax restructuring; and the reauthorization of TEA-21, the federal transportation funding bill.

Conclusion – This is an exciting and challenging time in the history of Ottawa County. Unprecedented growth brings satisfaction in the creation of many new opportunities, however it also stresses government services at the state and local levels. The funding pressures faced by the State have increased the unfunded mandates it has placed on local government.

It has been said that creativity and problem solving are best served when many different governments try different solutions to problems based on local needs. We who serve local government are in an unprecedented battle to maintain our identity in a sea of state and federal regulation and unfunded mandates. I believe that in Ottawa County our record of excellence and vision for the future demonstrate that our citizens, elected leaders, and employees will lead our community through these difficult times and Ottawa County will remain the best place in Michigan to live, work, and play.

B/C 05-033 Mr. Disselkoen moved to approve the following Consent Resolutions:

1. To approve the Minutes of the January 25, 2005 Board of Commissioners Meetings.
2. To receive as information Correspondence Log 342.
3. To authorize the payroll of February 8, 2005 in the amount of \$395.33.
4. To approve the general claims in the amount of \$4,036,232.13 as presented by the summary report for January 17 through January 31, 2005.
5. To receive for information the Ottawa County Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report.
6. To receive for information the Ottawa County Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report.

Mr. Vander Kam asked that the January 25, 2005 minutes include the word "feet" for Discussion Item 1.

The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Schrotenboer, Swartout, Vander Kam, Kuyers, Holtrop, Berghorst, Disselkoen, Rycenga (8).

Discussion Items

1. Administrator's Evaluation – Roger Rycenga presented the Administrator's Evaluation.
2. Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report – Mike Galligan presented the Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report.
3. Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report – Mary Richardson presented the Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report.
4. Closed Session – To discuss Ongoing Labor Contract Negotiations. (2/3 roll-call vote required.)

B/C 05-034 Mr. Disselkoen moved to go into closed session at 2:55 p.m. to discuss ongoing labor contract negotiations. The results of the roll call vote are as follows: Yeas: Messrs. Vander Kam, Kuyers, Holtrop, Berghorst, Disselkoen, Swartout, Schrotenboer, Rycenga (8).

B/C 05-035 Mr. Berghorst moved to rise from closed session at 3:15 p.m. The motion passed.

The Administrator's report was presented.

Several Commissioners commented on meeting attended and future meetings to be held.

B/C 05-036 Mr. Holtrop moved to adjourn at 3:17 p.m. subject to the call of the Chair and the motion passed.

DANIEL C. KRUEGER, Clerk
Of the Board of Commissioners

ROGER RYCENGA, Chair
Of the Board of Commissioner

Agenda

February 2, 2005

To All Ottawa County Commissioners:

3/23/2006

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners will meet on **Tuesday, February 8, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.**, for the regular **February** meeting of the Board at the Ottawa County Fillmore Street Complex, West Olive, Michigan.

The Agenda is as follows:

1. Call to Order by the Chairperson
2. Invocation - Commissioner Ruitter
3. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
4. Roll Call
5. Presentation of Petitions and Communications
6. Public Comments and Communications from County Staff
7. Approval of Agenda
8. Actions and Reports
 - A. Consent Resolutions:
 1. Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Suggested Motion:
To approve the Minutes of the January 25, 2005 Board of Commissioners Meetings.
 2. Correspondence Log 342
Suggested Motion:
To receive as information Correspondence Log 342.
 3. Payroll
Suggested Motion:
To authorize the payroll of February 8, 2005 in the amount of \$_____.
 4. Monthly Accounts Payable for January 17, 2005 to January 31, 2005
Suggested Motion:
To approve the general claims in the amount of \$4,036,232.13 as presented by the summary report for January 17 through January 31, 2005.
 5. Ottawa County Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report
Suggested Motion:
To receive for information the Ottawa County Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report.
 6. Ottawa County Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report
Suggested Motion:
To receive for information the Ottawa County Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report.
 - B. Discussion Items:
 1. Administrator's Evaluation
 2. Equalization Department's 2004 Annual Report (Mike Galligan)
 3. Treasurer's 2004 Annual Report (Mary Richardson)

C. Report of the County Administrator

D. General Information, Comments, and Meetings Attended

9. Public Comments

10. Adjournment