

Commissioners Minutes of October 28, 2008

The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 28, 2008. Chairman Whittington called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call found all Commissioners present.

Agenda –Chairman Whittington mentioned that City Administrator Bob Moffit would like to address the Board – but would do so in the Public Comment section. There were no other additions or deletions.

The **minutes of October 14, 2008** were then addressed. Clerk Laura Flach noted additions that had been requested by Commissioner Carl and distributed a copy of requested paragraph additions. Motion by Commissioner Posey, supported by Commissioner Carl, to approve the minutes with the inclusions. Ayes carried, motion passed.

The **semi-monthly Finance Report totaling \$153,349.51** was reviewed. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Hoag, to approve payment as presented. Ayes carried, motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Bob Moffit, Gladwin City Administrator, updated members on City activities – specifically the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone and also invited all to attend the EDC meeting. Mr. Moffit also commented on current EDC activities and projects being addressed.

Frank Starkweather, EDC Director, briefly commented on the recent EDC conference sponsored by East Central Michigan Planning and Development. Mr. Starkweather mentioned grant opportunities available for funding and noted that EDC board meeting notices as well as meeting minutes, will be sent to Townships to keep them informed of EDC activities.

Jan Stewart with recycling, commented on FORGE activities and funding.

Bev Przystas, MSU Extension gave notice of the upcoming County Board of Commissioner training. Ms. Przystas also commented on the Wind Energy workshop that has been scheduled – noting that she would be attending and members wishing to attend were welcome to ride with her.

Mike Hargrave commented briefly on Airport activities –noting that he will get on the agenda to more fully inform the Board. Mr. Hargrave noted that he is present to answer any questions the Board may have regarding the retiree insurance issue brought up by Mr. Wuelfing. Chairman Whittington noted that Mr. Wuelfing's matter would be addressed in Commissioner Rhodes' report.

Chairman Whittington reported:

- On receipt of an Antrim County Resolution regarding H. B. 6070 on 911.
- On the workshop for Commissioners – noting that those wishing to attend should contact the Secretary to make reservations.
- That a copy of a pending law suit had been made available to each member for informational purposes.
- On several notices and correspondence received.
- Communication from Attorney Pat Kaltenbach, concerning representation in a law suit against the County Road Commissioners, regarding a labor dispute. Members agreed that there would be no conflict of interest.
- That the regular **board meeting scheduled for November 11th** falls on Veterans Day and the Courthouse will be closed. Members agreed that the meeting would **be rescheduled for Monday, November 10, 2008 at 9 a.m.**

Commissioner Carl then moved to go into the required **Public Hearing on Truth and Taxation**. Motion supported by Commissioner Hoag. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Equalization Director Denise Hall explained the need for the public hearing which will allow the county to spread millage as allowed under the Headly Amendment.

Discussion on various millage issues affected by roll-backs.

Moved by Commissioner Carl, supported by Commissioner Walters, to **close the Public Hearing** and return to regular session. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Consideration was then directed to the **Resolution to set County Millage Rates**. Motion by Commissioner Posey, supported by Commissioner Rhode. Roll call vote as follows: Commissioner Walters-yes, Carl-yes, Rhode-yes, Reid-yes, Posey-yes, Hoag-yes and Whittington-yes. Ayes carried, **Resolution #2008-36 is declared adopted**. (Resolution attached)

Ms. Hall then presented the 2008 Apportionment Report, noting that the Report must be adopted in October – but would be amended pending outcome of the millage questions on the November 4th election. Review was then had of the report as presented. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Walters, **to adopt the 2008 Apportionment Report** as presented. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Mr. William Price came before the Board with a complaint against the Sheriff Dept. and specifically Officer Hamelink. Mr. Price alleges that he was the “victim” and on two separate instances was treated rudely and in an un-professional manner. Chairman Whittington referred the matter to the public safety committee, who will meet further with Mr. Price to address the matter.

Chairman Whittington continued reporting:

- On **Hospice and Home Care Month** and the request received to hold a gathering on the courthouse steps on November 6, 2008 in memory of Hospice care patients. Motion by Commissioner Posey, supported by Commissioner Carl, to allow the gathering as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.
- On communication from Walt & Linda Hart with the **Gladwin Ministerial Association**, requesting permission to place a manger scene on the Courthouse lawn as has been the past tradition. Motion by Commissioner Reid, supported by Commissioner Walters, to allow as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.
- On the **letter of resignation received from County Financial Coordinator Laura Brandon**. Commissioner Rhode commented on the resignation -- noting that in negotiations following receipt of the resignation --Ms. Brandon agreed to complete work on the 2009 budget as directed by the Board; and in exchange for payment of severance pay as stipulated in her contract with the Board, would continue to handle the bulk purchasing and grant administration work through December 31st 2009. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, to approve terms of the resignation as stated above and accept with regrets. Motion regrettably supported by Commissioner Hoag. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Reid commented on the challenge now faced by the Board, in working through the budget process without the knowledge and expertise of the financial coordinator.

Commissioner Whittington noted that he felt it was very unfortunate that some departments refused to work with Ms. Brandon; forcing her resignation and directly contributing to this sad situation.

County Clerk Laura Flach spoke on the need for a **Resolution approving MERS benefits** recently granted for Deputies and Dispatchers. Motion by Commissioner Walters, supported by Commissioner Carl, to approve the resolution as presented. Roll call vote as follows: Commissioner Carl –yes, Rhode-yes, Reid-yes, Posey-yes, Hoag-yes, Whittington-yes, and Walters-yes. Ayes carried, Resolution #2008-37 declared adopted. (Resolution attached)

The **2009 Salary Schedule** was then presented by Clerk Laura Flach. Ms. Flach explained that the wages and salaries listed were for “authorized” rates currently in effect –and that the Salary Schedule would be amended as contracts were settled or by future action of the board. Commissioner Rhode commented on the directive from the Court that Court non-union members receive the same raises as the union – noting that he could not be in agreement with that while wage freezes and staffing cuts were being considered for non-union county employees. Commissioner Rhodes then moved to approve the 2009 Salary Schedule as presented with exception of the Court non-union employees. Motion supported by Commissioner Carl. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Hoag had no committee reports.

Commissioner Walters reported:

- That on Oct. 14th he attended the Democrat meeting
- On the October 15th Veterans Affairs committee meeting, and that the Clare County veterans medical facility should be open in February. Commissioner Walters noted that Alpena already has a medical facility open and veterans may take advantage of that.
- That he attended the Sherman Township meeting and reported on the political activity there.
- On the Parks and Rec. meeting and the recommended change in rental and deposit fees for use of those facilities. After lengthy discussion regarding the use by non-profit groups and small group meetings, Commissioner Walters moved to do away with the current deposit/rental rates for non-profit, supported by Commissioner Hoag. Ayes carried, motion passed.
- On all the work the Boy Scouts have done on the trails at the Parks and Rec. facility and offered his thanks to that group for a “job well done”.

Board then recessed for short break. Recalled to order by Chairman Whittington.

Commissioner Posey reported:

- On attending the October 15th Meet the Candidates night.
- That she attended the annual fair board meeting on Oct. 21st.
- On the solid waste committee Recycling Summit held at the Beaverton Presbyterian Church on Oct. 22nd.
- That she had also attended the Council of Local Government fall banquet held on October 27 in Bentley Township.

Commissioner Rhode reported:

- On the October 17th Personnel committee meeting with **Steve Wuelfing regarding retiree health care**. It is the committee recommendation to allow the retiree (Mr. Wuelfing) to pick-up health care insurance as per the contract in effect at the time of his retirement. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Carl, to approve recommendation of the committee. Discussion with comments by retirees Kerry Posey and Mike Hargrave as well as Commissioner Walters. Ayes carried, motion passed.
- On the **Court's Child Care Program** –and that Clare County has hired an outside person to monitor the child care program (\$60,000 in wage with ½ paid by County and ½ paid by State) and is saving dollars. Discussion. Motion by commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Reid, that Judge McLaughlin be approached to look into such a program for Gladwin County. Ayes carried, motion passed. (Commissioner Whittington voting no)
- That he will be attending the Oct. 29 meeting in Mt. Pleasant regarding health care and options available.
- That he attended the Economic Development meeting on October 16th.
- On the Personnel meeting of Oct. 17th.
- That he attending the City Council meeting on Oct. 20th.
- On the Health and Human Services meeting of Oct. 21st.
- On the October 22nd Finance committee meeting.
- That he also attended the EDC meeting on October 23rd.
- On meeting with the Courts on October 27th regarding budget issues.
- On matters before Finance as follows:
 1. **Budget amendments needed for the 244 Fund (EDC)** and creation of budget line #244-000-998.254. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Walters to approve amendments noted. (Copy of Budget amendments attached) Ayes carried, motion passed.
 2. That **Gina Conrad, Gypsy Moth Suppression** Coordinator, has requested authorization to purchase a software upgrade/extension to administer her spray blocks. The total cost could be up to \$2000.00 which would be shared by up to 4 counties, leaving Gladwin's share approximately \$500.00. If approved the cost would be taken from 239-000-727.000. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Posey, to approve purchase as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Rhode continued reporting on matters before finance:

3. That Lt. Troy Rabidue has requested **retro wages for the Command Unit** as the Deputy and Dispatcher Contracts have been settled and those units received retro wages. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Reid, to pay retro as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.
4. **Prosecutor Mary Hess** has requested that she be allowed **to hire a temporary part-time employee** to cover for an employee who will be going on Family Medical Leave in the near future. Ms. Hess is asking that the employee be hired for 6.75 hours per day at 80% of union scale with no benefits. Funds are available within her 2008 budget to accommodate this expense. Motion by Commissioner Rhode, supported by Commissioner Carl, to approve as requested. Ayes carried, motion passed.
5. That the **Judicial Management Fund 231 is in need of funding to cover bills totaling \$30,324.27**. Commissioner Reid commented on recent discussions with the judges and Mr. Schlese regarding budgeting and payment of bills. Motion was then made by Commissioner Reid to approve “loan” to the 231 and cover payment of the bills by recording said amount as “due to” / “due from”. Motion supported by Commissioner Carl. Ayes carried, motion passed. (Commissioner Whittington voting no)

Chairman Whittington then commented on his vote on hiring a person to “oversee” the Child Care program, noting concerns with funding and how the person would be paid. Commissioner Rhode replied that the savings realized by Clare County more than pays for the position and it is felt the same would be true for Gladwin County. Commissioner Rhode then moved that the clerk’s office be allowed to establish mileage and contractual lines within the Child Care 282 fund in anticipation of hiring for this position. Motion supported by Commissioner Posey. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Commissioner Carl reported:

- That on Oct. 14 he attended the Bourret Township meeting
- On the Gladwin Township meeting of October 15.
- On October 17th he attended the Personnel committee meeting
- On the Central Mi. District Health Board meeting of October 22.
- On discussions with Mike Brubaker regarding recent 911 legislation and that notice from MAC indicates that concerns have been resolved.

Commissioner Reid reported:

- On recommendations from Citizens Insurance regarding risk management and matters to be addressed.
- That he sees progress is being made with the courts regarding budgeting issues.
- That a response from IKO regarding warranty on the Health Dept. roof is expected soon.
- On discussions with Bob Doby regarding Emergency Management grants – noting that questions regarding Emergency Management laptops will be addressed by the Data Committee, Mr. Doby and Mr. Frei.
- On committee discussions had regarding a possible “energy study” to determine where savings could be realized. Commissioner Reid noted that he will check into an estimated cost of such a study and would report further.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

Board recessed until 1 p.m.—the time scheduled for the “committee of the whole” 2009 budget workshop.

RECESS

Recalled to order at 1 p.m. by Chairman Whittington

Copies of the 2009 budget prepared by the budget committee were passed out for board review.

Commissioner Rhode reviewed the budget in its current state – noting increases and decreases that were being recommended to bring the budget into balance. It was also noted that no wage increases were being considered for Elected Officials and non-union employees for 2009.

Upon completion of the budget review, Commissioner Rhode moved to bring the budget in its current form to the required public hearing.

Commissioner Carl noted that he felt the budget should include a “hiring freeze” – no new hiring.

Commissioner Posey also commented that the Board should impose a “hiring freeze”

Commissioner Reid interjected that instead of a “hiring freeze” all hiring should be first addressed through the personnel committee.

Commissioner Carl then moved that **all new hiring come before the Personnel committee for consideration**, motion supported by Commissioner Posey.

Question was then raised as to the timing of Commissioner Carl's motion –as there is already a motion by Commissioner Rhode on the floor. As there was no support to Commissioner Rhodes' motion, Commissioner Carl's motion is timely and could be voted on.

Ayes carried, motion passed –all new hiring will be first addressed with the Personnel committee.

Equalization Director Denise Hall questioned the proposed cutting of staffing in her department – noting that this action is not rational nor is it in line with information she presented to the committee. (proposed budget reduces a full-time position-35 hr. per week to part-time 30 hrs per week)

Sheriff Shea commented briefly on the proposed cut of the detective position in his department and discussed the number of deputies compared to 1978. Sheriff Shea also addressed his concerns regarding the resignation of the financial coordinator and the negative impact that this will have on the budgeting process and other county functions.

Bev Przystas, MSU Extension Director, addressed the proposed cutting of her secretarial position from a full-time position to part-time. (proposal reduces 35 hr per week position to 25 hr. per week)

Discussion on various budget issues. Board members were advised that if they have issues with the proposed budget they should present them for consideration at the next budget committee meeting scheduled for November 7th.

Commissioner Hoag then moved to adjourn, supported by Commissioner Posey. Ayes carried, meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m. until November 10, 2008, unless otherwise ordered.

Laura Flach
Clerk

Terry Whittington
Chairman