

**BENZIE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

448 COURT PLACE – BEULAH, MI 49617 – (231) 882-9671

www.benzieco.net

JOINT MANISTEE-BENZIE COURT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 12, 2015
3:00 P.M.

Benzie County Courthouse & Government Center
County Commissioners Room

MINUTES

Members Present: Vance Bates and Coury Carland, Benzie County Commissioners
Richard Schmidt and Karen Goodman, Manistee County Commissioners

Members Absent: Ken Hilliard and Jeff Dontz, Manistee County Commissioners

Others Present: Tom Kaminski, Manistee County Controller/Administrator; Karl Sparks, Benzie County Administrator; Judge Thompson, 19th Circuit Court; Pat Heins, Circuit Court Administrator; Judge Mead, Benzie County Probate; Connie Krusniak, Director, Family Division; Frank Waltherhouse, Benzie County Commissioner and Dawn Olney, County Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Vance Bates.

Motion by Schmidt, seconded by Carland, to approve the minutes of May 10, 2015 as corrected, by changing Darland to Carland. Ayes: Bates, Carland, Goodman and Schmidt Nays: None Motion carried.

Funding Proposal from the Court for an Evidence Based Cognitive Restructuring Program for Offenders: Judge Thompson would like to utilize Thinking Matters An Evidence-Based Cognitive Restructuring Program through Catholic Human Services; he does not have the funding available to pay for this but this program is needed. The intent was a way to save prison and jail beds. He is not asking for a decision today but start thinking about it; this cost would be about \$12,500 total between the two counties. It is \$250 per group (week), regardless of the number of participants in the group. He would work on an appropriate reimbursement rate to assess to the defendants.

It was discussed that the two counties do a joint letter signed by both County Administrators and use part of the NMRE funds for local Catholic Human Services program.

Motion by Schmidt, seconded by Carland, to authorize a joint letter from the two counties to NMRE for consideration of an evidenced-based program for substance abuse fund. Ayes: Bates, Carland, Goodman and Schmidt Nays: None Motion carried.

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Travel Reimbursement/Travel Policies: Mr. Sparks stated that we didn't know or ever get an updated policy from Manistee that they raised their mileage to 57.5 cents from 56 cents. We also require receipts for all county employees for everything. Evidently that is not the policy of Manistee. Issue is are we going to continue to use Manistee's policy for all court employees. Judge Thompson says they aren't Benzie County employees – they are court employees. Mr. Kaminski says this was an issue many years ago, Judge Batzer would always use the state rate, so the Manistee Board of Commissioners adopted the state rate for mileage and meals – legal counsel said that as long as you have a breakfast, lunch or dinner, they do not require receipts – only for hotel rooms. It doesn't go to the BOC for approval.

Ms. Goodman asks why we don't have a joint court policy for this.

Judge Thompson says the Supreme Court sets the rates.

Mr. Bates says we should establish a policy for all courts.

Judge Mead says we need to keep what we have been doing so we don't have this fight every year.

Judge Thompson stated that there will be discontent with other employees, but they have the benefit of collective bargaining that the court doesn't.

Mr. Bates stated that we need to get a copy of the Manistee County policy and the State rates and come up with a policy for the courts that applies to them.

Other Items from Committee Members, Judges and Staff: Judge Mead asks if anyone thought about doing these joint court meetings by polycom.

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 14, 2015 @ 3:00 p.m. in Benzie

Motion by Schmidt, seconded by Carland, to adjourn at 3:55 p.m. Ayes: All Nays: None
Motion carried.

MANISTEE COUNTY

Kenneth Hilliard, Chair

Jeff Dontz, Commissioner

Karen Goodman, Commissioner

Richard Schmidt, Commissioner

BENZIE COUNTY

K. Vance Bates, Chair

Cory Carland, Commissioner