



Manistee County Board of Commissioners

Manistee County Courthouse • 415 Third Street • Manistee, Michigan 49660

CHAIRPERSON
Ken Hilliard
VICE-CHAIRPERSON
Jeff Dontz

Mark Bergstrom
Karen Goodman
Alan Marshall
Richard Schmidt
Brook Shafer

CLERK

Jill Nowak
(231) 723-3331

CONTROLLER/ADMINISTRATOR

Thomas Kaminski
(231) 398-3500

JOINT MANISTEE-BENZIE COURT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 11, 2015
3:00 p.m.

Manistee County Courthouse & Government Center
Board of Commissioners Meeting Room

MINUTES

Members Present: Jeff Dontz, Chairman, Manistee County Commissioner; Karen Goodman, Manistee County Commissioner; Richard Schmidt, Manistee County Commissioner; Coury Carland, Benzie County Commissioner; Frank Walterhouse, Benzie County Commissioner.

Members Absent: Vance Bates (Mr. Walterhouse substituting for Mr. Bates)

Others Present: Tom Kaminski, Manistee County Administrator/Controller; Karl Sparks, Benzie County Administrator; John Mead, Chief Judge; David Thompson, Circuit Court Judge; Pat Heins, Court Administrator; Connie Krusniak, Director of Family Services; Cameron Clark, Youth Services Coordinator; Deidre Robison, Probate Register; Lisa Sagala, Personnel Officer/Administrative Assistant; Probation Officer; and Jill M. Nowak, Manistee County Clerk.

The meeting was called to Order at 3:01 p.m.

MAY 12, 2015 JOINT MANISTEE-BENZIE COURT

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Motion by Schmidt, seconded by Walterhouse to approve the Joint Manistee-Benzie Court Committee Minutes of Tuesday, May 12, 2015.

Motion Carried

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**DISCUSSION REGARDING FY 2015/16 BUDGET INCLUDING
WAGE AND FRINGE BENEFIT ISSUES**

Mr. Kaminski, Manistee County Controller/Administrator, reviewed the status of the FY 2015/16 budget process in Manistee County. He stated that all non-union, Courts, Elected Officials are budgeted a 0% wage increase across the Board except for scheduled step increases. Mr. Kaminski has included most technology requests of the Courts and has accounted for the reimbursement from Benzie County at 40%. FOC Computers are being budgeted from the FOC Fund with monies being transferred from the General Fund to the IT Budget. Mr. Kaminski noted he did cut a few expenses in the operational budget but he had done that in all departments. The County Board has budgeted a 1% wage increase in its wage contingency fund. However, the General Fund Budget has not yet been completed. In regards to fringe benefits, the Personnel Committee has recommended opting out of P.A. 52 and to continue the employee contribution at 9% which will hopefully be adopted. The County has received a slight decrease in health insurance rates and are also changing Dental carriers for the same coverage which allows for a savings to the County. The short term disability costs may have a slight increase. It is hoped that the County Board passes a tentative budget in August 2015 and a final budget in September 2015.

Mr. Sparks, Benzie County Administrator, stated that Benzie County is just beginning their budget process. A meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2015. Mr. Sparks reported that the jail millage had passed but the budget will be hard to balance this year as there is less revenue. Mr. Kaminski concurred in that Manistee County does not have a balanced budget but the County Board if they pass they tentative proposed budget, will be using \$140,000 in fund balance. Hopefully, as in the past, there will be no need to use that at the end of the year. Concern regarding the Child Care Fund was expressed in that there needs to be a sufficient balance in the fund as child placement costs can arise at any time and deplete the fund. Mr. Kaminski also mentioned the new Wage Classification System which includes the shrinking the step scale from 27 years to 15 years. This system is hoped to be partially implemented next year and the following years. It has to be implemented in phases as it is quite expensive conversion. Mr. Walterhouse and Mr. Sparks indicated there will be major shortfalls in the Benzie County budget, numerous union contracts are expiring and reduced revenue and increased expenses. They are also concerned about the revenue from housing Wexford county prisoners that will not be available in the near future as Wexford County will be building their own jail.

PROBATE REGISTER JOB DESCRIPTION REVIEW

Mr. Kaminski said this is not a Joint Court issue and it will be addressed by the Personnel committee.

BENZIE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT PERSONNEL

Chief Judge Mead indicated that he has not filled the Part-time Clerk position as there may be a retirement of a senior employee and there may be some changes in the position because there is the possibility of contract court reporting. Mr. Sparks requested the appropriate changes be included in the upcoming budget.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER ISSUE REGARDING JURY BOARD SELECTION PROCESS

The Jury Board selection process states the Circuit Judge recommends an applicant to the County Board for appointment to the Jury Board. The Board can either appoint this person or not. Some members of the County Board wanted clarification on the statute and the appointment process. Judge Thompson stated he read the statute and went above what was required as an ad was placed in the newspaper. Three (3) applications were received and Judge Thompson recommended to the County Board a person who had over 40 years of service to the Courts and was very well qualified. Judge Thompson indicated that the applications used were approved applications by the County Board. If another type of application or more information is needed on the application then that is up to the County Board to amend the Application. The interpretation of the statute verbiage and what can be inquired of a person needs to be determined. Judge Thompson indicated that this topic really isn't a Joint Court topic and if there was ever any questions, his door is always open.

OTHER ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS, JUDGES AND STAFF

There are no union contracts up for negotiations until next year in Manistee County but there are five (5) union contracts expiring in Benzie County this year.

Judge Thompson reiterated the importance of having a healthy balance in the Child Care Fund as it can be depleted quickly. Mr. Kaminski assured the Courts that the County is slowly trying to annually increase the amount of the fund.

Mr. Clark, Youth Services Coordinator, stated he has been here for a few months and asked that the Child Care Funding process be reviewed by the County Boards. Mr. Clark also reported that his analysis of the Juvenile system is backwards in that monies are geared to institutional and placement costs, where if money was spent on prevention, diversion and other programs, in the long run it would cost less. Mr. Clark reported on a Summer school program this summer that has been very successful for six (6) juveniles who were kept busy with the program. Mr. Clark and Connie Krusniak, Director of Family Services, explained that Juvenile Court is different than adult court. It's not about punishment but rather rehabilitation. Ms. Krusniak also reiterated that

she and the entire Juvenile Court are very sensitive to costs and always try and search for the best fit for the child with the least costs. Ms. Goodman recommended an intervention program with Centra Wellness and it was noted that this cooperative effort is in the works. There has always been a good relationship with Centra Wellness in the past and all are optimistic about future programs that may be available.

Mr. Carland stated that use of band width seems to be a problem in Benzie County when using the Polycom system. Mr. Sparks is looking into increasing the band width.

Mr. Walterhouse reported that Mr. Sparks is not seeking renewal of his County Administrator contract which ends December 1, 2015 and the hiring process is underway for his replacement in Benzie County. Members of the Committee and other present thanked Mr. Sparks for his service and that they had enjoyed working with him.

Discussion concerning the joint letter that was to be written in regards to NMRE for consideration of an evidenced-based program for substance abuse fund will be reviewed by Mr. Sparks to see if that was taken care of.

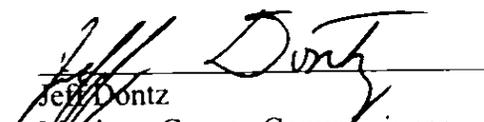
THE NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Joint Manistee/Benzie Court Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in Benzie County.

The meeting was adjourned at the Call of the Chair at 4:00 p.m.

MANISTEE COUNTY


Karen Goodman
Manistee County Commissioner


Jeff Dantz
Manistee County Commissioner


Richard Schmidt
Manistee County Commissioner

BENZIE COUNTY

Frank Walterhouse
Benzie County Commissioner

Cory Carland
Benzie County Commissioner