CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

April 18, 2024

Vice-Chair Barrera called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers on Thursday, April 18, 2024. Commissioner Howie offered the Invocation. Chair Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk and Register of Deeds Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, James Lawrence, Joyce Locke, Jeremiah Jones, Samuel Barrera, Mary Howie, Roseann Marchetti and RJ Lee.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT (agenda items only)

None.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Chair Jones, to approve the April 18, 2024, Cass County Committee of the Whole Agenda. Motion to approve the agenda carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the March 21, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow offered the Finance Report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Materials Management Planning

Administrator Newton and Commissioner Marchetti explained that counties were required to replace existing Solid Waste Management Plans with new Materials Management Plans (MMP). EGLE notified counties that the MMP Planning Process began January 8, 2024, and extended 180 days. Counties were required to determine the authority and implementation before submitting a Notice of Intent (NOI) to EGLE. They stated that Cass County planned to join an interlocal agreement with Berrien and Van Buren Counties where the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission would serve as the planning agency. They also informed board members that a grant would provide funding for much of the planning process.

Administrator Newton asked commissioners to pass a resolution approving the submission of an NOI, the designation of SWMPC as the DPA, and entering a multicounty planning agreement.

Chair Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to place item 1. on the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

2. Silver Creek Township Police Services Contract

Sheriff Behnke informed commissioners the first year of the contract for Police Services between the Cass County Sheriff's Office and Silver Creek Township needed renewing. He explained that services were provided as county officers signed on to work overtime for the township. The Silver Creek Township Board approved the contract at their last meeting.

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to place item 2. on the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

3. Drug Enforcement Millage Renewal

Administrator Newton informed commissioners that legal counsel provided guidance on language for the Drug Enforcement Millage Renewal. He relayed three options for ballot language:

- To request a straight renewal that would reduce the original amount of .500 to .4751 mills as required by Headlee.
- To request a renewal of .4751 mills with a new additional .0249 mills.
- To make a new request for .500 mills.

After discussion, commissioners chose option one to appear on the August 6, 2024, Primary Election ballot.

Commissioner Laylin, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to place item 3. on the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

4. **COA Millage Renewal**

Council on Aging (COA) Director Marty Heirty requested the board approve the renewal language for the COA to appear on the August 6, 2024, Primary Election ballot as approved by the Council on Aging Board of Directors.

Commissioner Howie moved, seconded by Commissioner Locke, to place item 4. on the next regular board meeting agenda.

5. **Policy Updates**

i. Tax Sharing Policy

Commissioner Marchetti stated that the policy committee made updates to the existing Tax Sharing Policy. Administrator Newton explained that the existing policy, in the form of a resolution, was updated to a plain-language version. The policy was reviewed by the Equalization and Treasurer's Offices.

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to move item 5. to the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

ii. Conflict of Interest Policy

Administrator Newton stated that the county auditors suggested the county adopt a formal Conflict of Interest Policy. The policy would be updated annually by elected and appointed officials.

Chair Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Howie to place the Conflict of Interest policy on the next regular board meting agenda. The voice vote was not clear. The Vice-Chair asked the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (5): Commissioners Lee, Barrera, Howie, Locke and Lawrence.

No (3): Commissioners Marchetti, Laylin and Jones.

The motion carried by roll call vote.

6. **Public Defender Office Renovation**

Chair Jones stated that Elite Companies distributed a Request for Proposals for the Public Defender's Office Renovation Project in the Law and Courts Building. Elite Companies was the lone company to reply to the request with a total cost of $44,197. Administrator Newton informed board members that county funds were not required for the project as the MIDC Grant would cover all expenses for the renovation.

Treasurer Anderson verified the timeline of the project as the renovation would require the Cass County CASA Office to relocate from the Law and Courts Building to the County Building.

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to move item 6. to the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

7. L&C Building HVAC/Mechanical System Improvements

Maintenance Director Dave Reiff informed commissioners of HVAC and mechanical improvements necessary for the Law and Courts Building. After explaining the projects, Director Reiff asked commissioners to approve quotes from Trane in the amount of $62,678 and $35,340 for the repairs to the Chiller and the Building Control System at the Law and Courts Building. Administrator Newton stated the funds would be paid from the Public Improvement Fund.

Commissioner Lawrence moved, seconded by Chair Jones, to place item 7. on the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

8. Animal Control Improvements Discussion

Sheriff Behnke and Animal Control Butts provided a brief history of construction of the Animal Control Building as it sits at 323 M-62, Cassopolis. When constructed 20 years ago, the Village of Cassopolis would not approve a fenced in area for dogs. Under new village administration, Sheriff Behnke informed commissioners he believed the Village of Cassopolis was now in support of outside runs and a fenced in area for dogs. He shared plans for a pole barn as well as exercise/social areas for shelter dogs.

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to move the Animal Control Projects to the Capital Projects Committee.

9. FY 24 Budget Amendments

Administrator Newton requested board members approve budget amendments. He went on to explain each amendment which resulted in a final total of $184,497 that would be allocated from Fund Balance.

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to place item 9. on the next regular board meeting agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners Howie, Laylin, Lawrence, Marchetti and Barrera shared comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Approved: _____________
Date

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Vice-Chair Samuel Barrera

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Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register