

Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners
Resumption of Regular Monthly Meeting 10-12-2011
October 31, 2011
(UNAPPROVED)

Meeting called to order at 1:00 PM, Circuit Court Room, Kalkaska County Governmental Center.
Roll call of Commissioners: All present-Michael Cox, Debra Kimball, Antonio Martini, Stuart McKinnon, David Ritter, Carroll Sexton and Craig Wood.

Pledge of Allegiance by all. Invocation by Commissioner Wood.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Wood to approve agenda. Supported by McKinnon. 7 yeas. 0 nays. **Carried.**

Public Input:

Sheriff Dave Israel-addressed Board regarding concerns of report from Axe & Ecklund; advised that the counties chosen for comparisons were not adequate; addressed concern with the closing of the MSP post, minimal staff of the Village Police and previous cuts to Sheriff, that Sheriff Department is struggling to maintain 24 hour law enforcement; addressed concern with inaccurate report of non-mandated services and funding, advising that 95% is paid by grants; expressed concern of inability to serve and protect community and risk that any millage request would fail; Sheriff requested that the BOC funds to allow for independent study.

Prosecutor Brian Donnelly-expressed concern with Axe and Ecklund report, advised it was inadequately handled as individual was not qualified; reported that financial comparison information was not factual, that "all departments had made a deal" for restoration of funds, concern that money spent unnecessarily by current BOC to provide a "fabricated" report.

Jim Stanton-advised Board of concern with cuts to Sheriff Department; expectation of police protection, fire protection and decent roads; advised if any proposed millage would not be approved given economy and taxes currently paid by citizens.

John Boucher-advised concern with needed road patrol if more cuts to be made from Sheriff Department, concern with traffic on M-72 and any millage proposal for more road patrol would not succeed.

Stuart Rodgers-reserved time.

Ruthann O'Brien-advised Board of concern for safety on roads if any more cuts to road patrol; reported that BOC were making cuts for personal gain, suggested that BOC donate their salaries; and advised BOC to stop cutting Sheriff and Prosecutor budgets.

Robert Dryden-reserved time.

Walter Sbresny-addressed BOC with concern of excessive prosecution.

Robert Dryden-commended Board for current efforts and felt there are sufficient police per population.

Stuart Rodgers-reported of his support for law enforcement but with financial issues felt the County cannot afford more patrol.

Appointments:

John Axe- "Report to the County of Kalkaska", dated 10-25-2011, from Axe and Ecklund, PC. (Copy filed with Clerk). Axe addressed Prosecutor's concern with inadequacy of report, Prosecutors deficiency in case load with comparable counties lead to concerns with Prosecutor's budget. Axe advised non mandated services were noted, including millage options, due to budget and financial constraints; that the Kaliseum has been costing County considerable expense for several years due to lack of millage/funds designated to maintain it. Axe advised there were no recommendations doing away with non-mandated services, or to obtain millage, report was to advise BOC where options are if necessary. Axe addressed revenue sharing and speculation that it will not be available in the future, suggesting counties need to prepare. Axe addressed unfunded liabilities including retiree health care and pensions, advised what is being paid out of the general fund needs to be monitored. Discussion regarding preliminary budget, projected shortage with neutral revenue loss and tax revolving fund. Kimball reported concern with false perception of unbalanced budget, concern that any proposed millage would fail and report has failed to provide any information not already known to Board. Sexton advised Board should consider Controller's initial budget. McKinnon advised report was requested as a tool to assist Board and Department Heads to prepare for 2012 budget. Wood advised that budget does contain reserve funds needed to meet any deficit, he is confident county will have a balanced budget and agreed Board should be concerned about renewal of future operational millage. Discussion regarding recommendations for implementation, Axe advised report was not intended for that purpose.

Public Input regarding Axe report:

County Treasurer Gehrcke-inquired of Axe as to county requirements for Kaliseum bond if money was not available to maintain it. Axe advised Bond payment required whether facility closed or open, that facility is not required to be open if no funds to maintain and cannot be sold with outstanding bond.

Robert Dryden-requested as to how evaluation was performed.

Jim Stanton-inquired as to relationship between road patrol and revenue to general fund.

Walter Sbresny-addressed concern for future if deficit continues.

Stuart Rodgers-advised County should not be dependent on revenue from traffic tickets.

Ruthann O'Brien-advised Board of concern that qualified people will leave Kalkaska area due to Board's financial cuts, tax payers are currently paying for services and cannot be burdened further.

Frank Wright-advised Board report is flawed as there are multiple fund balances that provide \$700-\$800 thousand dollars to provide necessary fund balance. Discussion regarding audit.

Don Marsh-questioned distance of roads patrolled in comparison counties noted in report.

Jerry Cannon-acknowledged financial concerns, inquired if Axe or Board had any information about phase and transition of various budget changes especially with road patrol, if this occurred, and what would happen with the money currently be used for this funding: advised of necessity for further discussion before decisions are made cutting more law enforcement. Discussion.

Ruthann O'Brien-requested Board to follow Controller's recommendations given his report of sufficient funds.

Chair called for a break at 2:45 PM.

Chair called meeting back into session at 2:55 PM

Unfinished Business:

Motion by Wood to approve Iceman Challenge event to cross County property 11-5-2011. Supported by McKinnon. 7 yeas. 0 nays. **Carried.**

Chair called for matter of addressing winter tax bills being sent out. Sexton advised proposal from Great Lakes Assessing, LLC to complete necessary Equalization work. Wood advised another party interested and would be provided soon. Discussion regarding tax bills due 12-1-2011 and Equalization studies due. Wood inquired as to staff functions in Director's absence.

Motion by Sexton to allow Chair to sign proposal with Sharon Zakrajsek, Great Lakes Assessing, LLC for Equalization Director services for six months for \$30,000.00, to complete required state reports thru April 2012. Supported by Kimball. Discussion regarding salary and computer system. Roll call vote: Sexton, yes; Kimball, yes; Martini, yes; McKinnon, no; Ritter, yes; Wood, no; Cox, yes. 5 yeas. 2 nays. **Carried.** Sexton reported on interviews and wages for Controller position, advised 3 people offered Controller's starting salary of \$45,000, each to setup work time with Frank for his evaluation, followed by recommendation to Board, 3 applicants to be at next Board meeting. Discussion regarding applicants for vacancies, Board to get copies of applications. Sexton reported need of more help at recycling, concern Animal Control receives majority of millage. Discussion regarding recycling budget.

Public Input:

Karen VanHorn-advised Board she had not received copy of the Axe report and requested Board to maintain communication with all Department Heads, keeping them informed.

Sexton advised that Veterans Office may pay a veteran from our area to help with paper work in this County. Discussion.

Motion to adjourn by Sexton to call of the Chair at 3:23 PM. Supported by McKinnon. 7 yeas. 0 nays. **Carried.**

Respectfully submitted:

Deborah Hill, Kalkaska County Clerk and
Clerk of Board of Commissioners

Michael Cox, Chairman of
Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners

These minutes are not official until they are approved at the next regular Board of Commissioners meeting.

