



Justice and Public Safety Committee

Wednesday January 27, 2010 – 9:00 a.m.
Room 100 – Otsego County Building
225 West Main Gaylord, MI 49735

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Members Present – Present: Doug Johnson, Paul Liss, Mike Hyde, John Burt, Erma Backenstose, Sheriff McBride, Brian Webber, Rachel Frisch, Vicki Courterier, Judge Morse, Angel Oppermann, Kyle Legel

OLD BUSINESS

A. Animal Control Facility

Mr. Hyde informed the Committee that the Animal Control Facility Subcommittee has recommended the location of the DNR property for the new animal shelter. The total estimated cost for the project is \$1.4 million. \$500,000 is currently available in the Animal Control Building Fund (fund 413), and the remaining \$900,000 would be financed through bonds. The bonds will be paid off over a 15-year period using millage monies.

Mr. Liss asked what would happen if the millage failed (the millage expires in 2013). Mr. Burt explained that the animal control millage historically has passed by a large margin; however, if it did fail, the county would be responsible for paying off the bonds. The Alpine Center bonds will be paid off in 2012, so that would help if we did face such a situation.

The Budget and Finance Committee has approved the preliminary figures. Mr. Burt has ordered a phase one environmental study on the property. He will need to present the updated project to the Planning Commission prior to beginning the project.

Motion by Sheriff McBride to recommend to the full board approving the plans for the new animal shelter. Second by Mr. Liss. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Animal Control Staff

Ms. Oppermann informed the Committee that she has spent significant time reevaluating her staffing needs. In light of the potential bond payments, and also due to the downturn in the economy and tax revenues, she would like to cut costs and increase staff efficiency by moving forward with the following staff changes:

- Hiring a part-time irregular assistant animal control officer (ACO). This person would assist with the on-call, holiday, and vacation hours that are currently handled almost entirely by the full-time ACO. The full-time ACO had over 120 hours of overtime in 2009, and hiring a part-time person to help with those hours would reduce most of the overtime costs (over \$2,600 in 2009). The cost of the part-time position is estimated at \$15,000 and has been approved by the Budget and Finance Committee.

- Eliminate the kennel attendant position. Ms. Oppermann has determined that the duties of the kennel attendant can be split among the remaining staff and also potential volunteers and work camp participants, when available. This would save the animal control fund approximately \$36,800 annually. This would be effective as of the end of March, 2010.

Motion by Mr. Liss to recommend to the full board approving the hiring of a part-time irregular assistant animal control officer, and eliminating the kennel attendant position effective at the end of March, 2010. Second by Mr. Hyde. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Hazardous Spill Notification Ordinance

Mr. Burt explained to the Committee that there is no provision in the law that requires a company or organization to notify a property owner of a hazardous spill on their property. The proposed ordinance requires that the county must be notified in the event of a hazardous spill within 24 hours, and then the county will inform 911 Director Mike Thompson, who will inform the property owner. This ordinance is required to be passed through the Health Department. It has been reviewed by our attorney, by Jerry Chase of our regional Health Department, and by a few owners of local oil and gas companies.

Motion by Mr. Liss to recommend to the full board approving the Hazardous Spill Notification Ordinance. Second by Mr. Hyde. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Department/Agency Updates

Sheriff McBride

Sheriff McBride informed the Committee that the prescription drug collection program is going well. They will be working with doctor groups who reuse the prescriptions in impoverished areas of the world, such as South America.

Angel Oppermann, Animal Control

Ms. Oppermann informed the Committee that at the end of February a man who is doing his master's thesis on adoptions in animal shelters is going to come in to evaluate the animals in our shelter. He will analyze the impact of having training versus no training and will also do DNA testing to find out the breeding of the dogs. He will evaluate the information to see what impact it has on adoptions. The program will last 6-9 months and will be no cost to the county.

Kyle Legel, Prosecuting Attorney

Mr. Legel informed the Committee that he had recently attended a SANE meeting and was told by the SANE participants that they were unhappy with the \$1,000 contribution from Otsego County for the 2010 budget year. SANE communicated that they were considering pulling out of Otsego County, as they feel our contribution is too low. Mr. Legel reported that SANE was responsible for 14% of Otsego County's total felony warrants in 2009, and it would be detrimental to our county to lose that level of service. SANE has formed a subcommittee to review the matter in more detail. Mr. Legel recommends that we consider raising the SANE allocation to at least \$5,000 to match the contribution from the City of Gaylord.

Sheriff McBride noted that SANE does a good job for our community; however, he does not agree that more funds should be allocated to that agency, in light of the economy in our area and the budget difficulties we are facing. He also noted that the state police received grant dollars to help defray some of the costs of these programs.

Mr. Burt suggested that a Commissioner representative be appointed to the SANE committee at the next board meeting.

Judge Morse

Judge Morse recommended that we invite Officer Cherwinski from the work camp to attend the presentation on the 24-hour facility.

Vicki Courterier

Ms. Courterier reported that the head of security from the supreme court administrator's office (SCAO) visited the Alpine Center and the downtown county building to evaluate our secured versus non-secured areas. He will provide us with recommendations.

Brian Webber, Jail Administrator

Mr. Webber reported that the ventilation project is done; however, there are some issues to address regarding the old ventilation system.

The next meeting date is set for April 28, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 10:15 AM.