

LAW & COURTS COMMITTEE
February 15, 2018
Minutes

Members Present: Crenshaw, Banas, Hope, Celentino, Anthony, and Maiville

Members Absent: Schafer

Others Present: Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth, Andy Bouck, Teri Morton, Liz Noel, and others

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Crenshaw at 6:00 p.m. in Personnel Conference Room D & E of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Approval of the February 1, 2018 Minutes

MOVED BY COMM. ANTHONY, SUPPORTED BY COMM. MAIVILLE, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2018 LAW AND COURTS COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

Additions to the Agenda

5. Update on the Indigent Defense Commission

Limited Public Comment

None.

MOVED BY COMM. MAIVILLE, SUPPORTED BY COMM. BANAS, TO APPROVE A CONSENT AGENDA CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

1. Homeland Security and Emergency Management – Resolution to Authorize Purchase of Outdoor Warning Siren from West Shore Services
2. Sheriff's Office
 - a. Resolution to Authorize Purchase of Replacement Batteries and Microphones for Sheriff Portable Radios
 - b. Resolution to Authorize a Contract with PJ's Towing Service for Ingham County Sheriff's Office Vehicles and Seized Property or Evidence

- c. Resolution to Authorize an Amendment to a Current Contract with the Michigan Department of Human Services for Transport Services of Specific Juveniles by Sheriff's Deputies
3. Controller's Office – Resolution Authorizing Continuation Funding for Jail-Based Break Out Programming from Wellness, InX

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

4. Law & Courts Committee – Draft Language for Justice Complex Millage Question (*Discussion*)

Chairperson Crenshaw introduced the draft language and distributed a copy of the language to the Committee. He stated Commissioner Grebner had been charged with reviewing and crafting draft language.

Discussion.

Commissioner Hope stated she thought the list of adjectives on the fourth line of the draft language, where it read “be more sanitary, humane, and efficient to staff,” should also include “safer” or “more secure.” She further stated she thought that the language regarding the programming was too specific, as it might be the case that opioid abuse was not as big of a problem later down the line of the millage.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated his edits had been based off of the Controller's draft language from before the Board Leadership meeting, but then at the Board Leadership meeting, there had been a discussion about making the language more broad and vague.

Commissioner Celentino suggested using the term “substance abuse” in the ballot question language.

Commissioner Hope stated she thought the language should be vaguer. She further stated she thought that having the full name of Community Mental Health Advisory of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties might be confusing for people, so she suggested that the language refer to the agency as “Community Mental Health.”

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony stated she thought that the language stating “be more sanitary, humane, and efficient to staff,” should also include people in the jail, because the biggest consumer of the jail was the public, and those were voters' family members in the jail and working with the courts. She further stated that one phrase she and other Commissioners had been using when

referring to the Justice Complex was “public safety,” which she did not see in the draft language and she thought there should be a line somewhere in the ballot language that used the phrase.

Commissioner Anthony stated that the term “public safety” in millages seemed to resonate with voters, and voters would have a deeper understanding of what they were voting on.

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony suggested that the Committee ask Commissioner Grebner to add a line about public safety to the ballot language.

Commissioner Banas if the language regarding the battling of “substance use disorders, including opioid and other narcotic addictions,” was removed, she wanted to make sure it was replaced with something that made it clear to people what the County wanted to do.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he thought the Committee could give their suggestions to Commissioner Grebner, so he knew which direction they were thinking of going in.

Discussion.

Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth stated he thought the ballot language should eliminate the phrasing about “substance use,” and just say “addictions,” because people would understand that and people with addictions who supported the millage would still vote for the millage if that language was used.

Commissioner Banas stated when ballot language confused voters, they tended to lose support for the issue. She further stated she thought that the post-release success programming was a social-services-type term and she was not sure what they were going for there, but she thought the language could be more specific so the public would understand.

Discussion.

Commissioner Hope stated she thought the Committee should wait to see what Commissioner Grebner came up with, as he might come up with something more vague and inclusive of all of the programs.

Teri Morton, Deputy Controller, stated she knew the draft ballot language had mentioned treatment addiction disorders, but some of the testimony that the Committee had heard at their previous meetings was about treating mental health in general. She further stated the mention of Community Mental Health might imply that more mental health issues would be covered.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought the ballot language needed to be specific that these programs involved mental health services. She further stated she thought a point about “jail reentry” would be easier for people to understand.

Commissioner Banas suggested that more verbs and direct structure should be used in the ballot language, so it was not just passive language and it was easier for people to understand because most people did not read at upper reading levels anymore.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he noticed that the draft ballot language was all in one paragraph and he had tried to break it up, but it was too busy and he was not sure how many voters would read the whole question.

Commissioner Anthony asked if it was necessary to break out the Sheriff's Administrative Office and the jail separately in the ballot language.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he thought the Committee could take out the word "Administrative," because the building would have detective's office and training rooms as well as administrative offices.

Commissioner Banas asked Sheriff Wriggelsworth if he had suggested language for programming.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he thought the phrase "reduce recidivism" could be used in the ballot language instead of "post-release success" programs.

Discussion.

Commissioner Hope suggested language that would be vaguer, but mention that the County would expand programming to help people to return to the community, including mental health services and substance abuse treatment. She stated the Pretrial Services programming had also been looked into by the Committee, and while it might be a separate issue that the Committee did not want to discuss right now, bail was a pertinent issue in the social justice community.

Commissioner Hope stated that the use of Pretrial Services could reduce the number of people that needed a cash bail.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth suggested that the effect of Pretrial Services should be kept out of the ballot language and messaging, as the County might lose support for the millage from some current supporters of a new jail.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated the ballot language might not mention Pretrial Services reducing bail, but the Commissioners could use that talking point in discussions and when they were educating the public.

Discussion.

Ms. Morton stated Pretrial Services could also fall under "reducing recidivism."

Commissioner Banas stated she thought it was important that the ballot language be specific in terms of battling addictions and addressing mental health.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he thought there was a consensus that the language mentioning “addictions” should be included, but not the specific type of programming that would be included.

Commissioner Anthony stated she thought the Committee should ask Commissioner Grebner if there should be another word in the ballot language title before “programming,” to indicate the holistic approach to programming.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated Ms. Morton would draw up the points the Committee had discussed at the meeting, and then send them to him and copy the Committee to see if there were any objections before he and Ms. Morton set up a meeting with Commissioner Grebner.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he did not think the March 15, 2018 Committee meeting would be too soon to have draft language, because they would have make adjustments as things came up. He further stated he wanted to make sure the ballot language was concrete when it was presented to the Board of Commissioners and the voters.

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony asked in the event that the August ballot question did not pass, if there was a consensus to put a ballot question on the November ballot.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated the plan was if the August ballot question did not pass, then the Board of Commissioners would hold a special meeting on August 13, 2018 to determine the ballot language.

Commissioner Anthony asked if there would be a Committee meeting before the August 13, 2018 Board of Commissioners meeting to discuss ballot language.

Ms. Morton stated there would only be a full Board of Commissioners meeting, because of the timing between the August Election and the deadline for putting ballot questions on the November ballot.

Discussion.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth asked if the Committee had discussed the use of public funds to market the ballot question. He further stated he understood that the Board of Commissioners could educate the public on the ballot question, but they could not say whether the public should vote for or against.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he thought there needed to be a request for proposal if there was going to be any marketing of the ballot question.

Discussion.

Ms. Morton asked Sheriff Wriggelsworth how much a County-wide mailing would be.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he did not remember how much it would be, but he estimated it would cost about \$15,000.

Commissioner Anthony asked if the Committee was comfortable spending money on marketing the ballot question.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated otherwise, the ballot question would be marketed by word of mouth and holding information sessions.

Commissioner Anthony stated she recalled there was usually a "Friends of" committee that could raise money to promote the ballot question.

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony asked if there was a precedent for spending County money on marketing a ballot question.

Ms. Morton stated she did not think there was a precedent, but she believed legal counsel had given Sheriff Wriggelsworth approval.

Discussion.

Commissioner Hope asked where the County money would come from if the ballot question was marketed.

Ms. Morton stated the money would come from the contingency account.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought the County needed to educate the public about the ballot question. She further stated whenever a school millage came up in her area, there was an organization that sent out publications regarding it, which was needed, because the public was not expected to be needing it.

Commissioner Banas stated there was not enough media around as there had been previously to educate the public. She further stated she thought the County would be doing a public service to educate them on the issue.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought there were certain interest groups, like attorney associations and advocacy groups that the County could go to, to help with the cost of outreach.

She further stated the County could also put together a committee of community leaders and influencers to recognize that this was an important development for the County and have them involved in outreach and help pay for these materials.

Commissioner Celentino stated as far as he could recall, most ballot questions had had “Friends of” committees, and he did not remember doing something from the County’s money. He further stated this was a decision the Board of Commissioners should have a discussion about, and he did not feel comfortable making a decision about taking money out of contingency in Committee.

Commissioner Celentino stated there needed to be a consensus from Commissioners, as the law was that educational awareness could be done by the County, but he wanted to make sure people not on this Committee knew this could come about by possibly discussing it at the next Board Leadership meeting.

Commissioner Maiville stated this was a primary election, so it was not going to be a big turnout. He further stated there were resources that could tell them who would be likely to turn out.

Commissioner Hope stated she thought there should be a joint caucus meeting, or have a Democratic Caucus discussion and invite the Republican Caucus because that would be quicker than waiting until a Board Leadership meeting. She further stated that a “Friends of” committee would be out of the Board of Commissioners’ purview, and it would be up to a citizen or the Sheriff to recruit people to be involved.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated the joint caucus meeting would likely happen March 13, 2018.

Commissioner Anthony stated she hoped the Commissioners learned from last year’s best practices about how to educate the public. She further stated the County had put together the State of the County, written an op-ed, educated municipal officials, put out a community newsletter, and went on local radio stations in order to educate the public about that ballot question.

Commissioner Anthony stated she hoped staff and leadership were looking at the marketing in a comprehensive way in order to be adequately advocating for the ballot question. She further stated that the Board of Commissioners were the biggest advocates for the ballot question aside from the Sheriff’s Office.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated the Board of Commissioners had put on “Coffee with Commissioners” for the ballot question in November 2017. He asked Sheriff Wriggelsworth if he thought people would come to a “Coffee with Commissioners” at the Sheriff’s Office.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he did not know if people would show up for a “Coffee with Commissioners” event, but his staff was doing a lot of outreach for the jail, going to township meetings, and holding events and tours at the jail. He further stated he thought that the marketing

of ballot question might be able to be done by word of mouth without a "Friends of" group raising money.

Commissioner Anthony stated she hoped Commissioners would be thinking about this marketing in a comprehensive way.

Commissioner Maiville stated that media stakeholders were important, and the Lansing State Journal was one of the larger ones in the area that they should reach out to and explain why this was happening, rather than having them be negative about it.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated he knew that the Chamber of Commerce and people at Michigan State University (MSU) had previously taken a tour of the jail.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he was meeting with the Chamber of Commerce next week, and they seemed to be on board. He further stated he was not sure about who the people at MSU were.

Discussion.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought inviting the media in and offering an opportunity to hear the pitch and the needs of the County and to answer questions with all of them, would be helpful. She further stated once the County had its messaging and talking points and rationale laid out, then they could present it to the media.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought something similar could happen with community leaders, who could talk to many other people in course of their days, to help sell the ballot question in a primary election that would not have a large turnout. She further stated that she thought people would feel impressed if they were sent a letter calling them a community leader, and it would end up developing supporters.

Commissioner Maiville stated the trip to the Muskegon jail was excellent to see what a new jail could look like. He asked if there was another facility closer by, so people could see what the County wanted to do with the jail.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated his office was putting together a presentation comparing the County jail to the Livingston County jail, because that was an amazing facility that would be comparable to what a new County jail would look like.

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony asked who was going to come up with a plan to market the ballot question, so it did not fall through the cracks.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated it would be a joint effort between himself, staff, and Sheriff Wriggelsworth.

Commissioner Celentino stated the planning should also include the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners.

Discussion.

Commissioner Anthony stated she thought the outreach plan could happen simultaneously with the language being drafted.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated they would try to have the plan completed by the middle of March.

Discussion.

Commissioner Banas stated there were public relations firms that were very generous in the area, and suggested Sheriff Wriggelsworth could get coffee with them, and figure out how to best reach out to the community.

Discussion.

Commissioner Hope stated it might help to have dollar figures associated with a marketing campaign when presenting the plan to the caucus.

Commissioner Maiville stated Commissioners probably knew people who would have an idea of who would vote in this election and how much it would cost for outreach.

Discussion.

5. Update on the Indigent Defense Commission

Ms. Morton stated that the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC) had accepted the County's plan, but had rejected the County's cost analysis, as they had some questions about it. She further stated a lot of counties were in the same situation, but MIDC had been impressed with how forward-thinking the County's plan was.

Ms. Morton stated the main thing from the plan was that MIDC did not agree to pay for an addition of a meeting space at District Court, because there was no place to put it within the current building. She further stated she would submit an amended cost analysis by the deadline on Tuesday.

Ms. Morton stated Sheriff Wriggelsworth had received an email about a rumor that the State was going to make the County pay for half of the costs. She further stated if that was the case, then she did not think the County would be required to implement the plan if the State was not paying for it.

Announcements

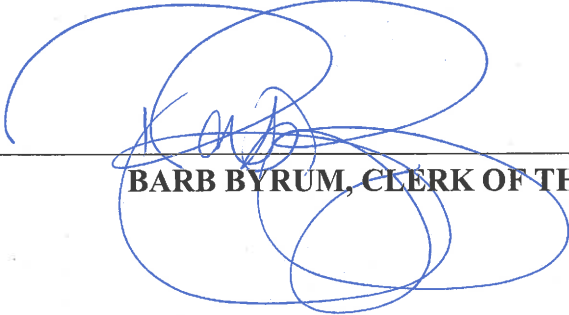
None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.



BARB BYRUM, CLERK OF THE BOARD