HEALTH SERVICES MILLAGE SUBCOMMITTEE
October 21, 2019
Draft Minutes

Members Present: Tennis, Sebolt, Morgan, Stivers, and Trubac

Members Absent: Slaughter and Naeyaert

Others Present: Jared Cypher, David Stoker, Courtney Gabbara, Lori Noyer, Marion Owen, Joe Reeves, and Ryan Buck

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tennis at 6:01 p.m. in Personnel Conference Room “D & E” of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Approval of the October 7, 2019 Minutes

CHAIRPERSON TENNIS STATED THAT, WITHOUT OBJECTION, THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 7, 2019 HEALTH SERVICES MILLAGE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING WERE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Limited Public Comment

None.

1. Health Services Millage (Draft)

Chairperson Tennis stated that David Stoker and Courtney Gabbara, County Attorneys, were present at the meeting to assist the subcommittee. He circulated draft language for a resolution authorizing a health services millage.

Chairperson Tennis stated that the current rate was 0.52 mills while the proposed millage language would be 0.6 mills. He further stated that they currently capped Community Mental Health (“CMH”), however they did have the option to uncap it.

Commissioner Stivers stated that she understood the prior discussion was that the millage would be at 0.65 mills and a senior millage would be 0.35 mills.

Mr. Stoker stated that if they changed the millage level or purpose, they could not designate it a renewal. He further stated that while unlikely, they may have to work through Headlee rollback.

Chairperson Tennis asked whether they could still call it a renewal if they kept the amount at 0.52 mills.
Mr. Stoker answered no because the purpose had changed.

Mr. Stoker stated that they had drafted and shared language with Jared Cypher, Deputy Controller, for a senior millage. He provided a briefing on Michigan law as it related to contracting with governmental entities for the usage of millage funds.

Chairperson Tennis stated that a question had arisen about special millages and whether there was a cap on the number of mills.

Mr. Stoker stated that the Michigan Constitution set the limit at 50 mills.

There was a discussion about what mills were collected currently.

Chairperson Tennis stated that it appeared that there were no objections to setting the millage to 0.65 mills and having a senior millage set at 0.35 mills.

There was a discussion about what mills were collected currently.

**Chairperson Tennis asked that clarification be provided regarding the constitutional millage cap.**

Commissioner Stivers stated that the subcommittee should continue this discussion, tonight, in addition to getting the requested clarification as the discussion sounded as the cap would not apply.

Commissioner Morgan stated that there were many parts to this discussion and he wanted to take the millage cap issue off the table by having clarification provided to the subcommittee.

Chairperson Tennis stated that the length of the proposed millage would be five years.

Commissioner Stivers asked that the subcommittee settle the question about whether to explicitly include or not the agencies that would receive funding under this millage.

Mr. Stoker stated that the County could explicitly state the agencies, however they could not subsequently fund another agency.

Commissioner Morgan stated that the focus should be flexibility and therefore, they should not explicitly state the agencies.

Mr. Stoker stated that they could state the agencies in the resolution’s WHEREAS clauses, but otherwise not include them in the millage language.

There was a discussion regarding where to add agency and purpose language into the resolution and what that language could be.
There was a discussion regarding whether 0.65 mills would be sufficient based on the requests of the agencies.

Lori Noyer, Ingham Health Plan ("IHP") Executive Director, asked for clarification whether “less than 250% of federal poverty guidelines” excluded those at exactly 250%. She stated that the federal guidelines included the 250%.

Chairperson Tennis answered yes. **He stated that the millage language should be changed to be “at or less than 250%”**.

Commissioner Stivers provided an overview of different millage rates as they related to funding IHP, CMH, and Tri-County Office on Aging ("TCOA").

Chairperson Tennis stated that without objection, they would set the millage rate at 0.7 mills.

Ms. Noyer asked that “cancer” be removed because treatment was not something they provided.

Mr. Cypher stated that including “cancer” does not require IHP to offer that service, just that millage funds may be used for cancer treatment.

Commissioner Morgan asked that “for low-income residents” be struck.

Chairperson Tennis stated that when this matter had been discussed before, it was important to highlight that this millage was for people who could not afford health insurance and health care. He further stated he had no issue with taking it out.

Commissioner Morgan stated that he was focused on brevity and that some may not support the millage because they would not identify as low-income and feel that the millage was not for them.

Commissioner Trubac stated that the opposite may be true in that someone may not support it because it did not specify that it assisted low-income individuals.

Chairperson Tennis stated that it would be attacked as wasteful spending, as unnecessary, among a host of other reasons. He further stated that it had ameliorated some of the opposition in that we could discuss this as for those who missed out on the Affordable Care Act.

Commissioner Sebolt stated that we understood the concept of 250% of poverty meant, but that most people perhaps did not. He further stated that it would be important to clarify that 250% of poverty was low income.

Chairperson Tennis stated that keeping the language in assisted in arguing in support of the millage.

Commissioner Stivers asked that “reauthorizing funding for” be stricken as it had been identified that this was not a renewal.
Mr. Stoker stated that they could not call it a continuation or a renewal. He further stated that they would be reauthorizing a program, so they okay either way. He further stated that he did not believe it was a legal issue.

Chairperson Tennis stated that it was important to keep the language to show the voters that it was not a new millage.

Commissioner Morgan stated that the reauthorizing language should remain in this case.

There was a discussion regarding where mental health services language could be added to the millage language and what that language could be.

Chairperson Tennis asked that CMH be consulted if they desired the language be revised.

Mr. Stoker stated that they could move the “low-income residents” language to “for low-income Ingham County residents…” He further stated that he was concerned that voters stopped reading after the first few lines of millages that were long in length.

Chairperson Tennis stated that there was no objection to this change.

There was a discussion regarding where mental health services language could be added to the millage language and what that language could be.

There was a discussion regarding adding a comma to the following language: “and whose household income is at or less than 250% of federal poverty guidelines,”

Chairperson Tennis stated that there was no objection to include the comma.

Commissioner Morgan stated that in general he objected to the Oxford comma, but did not object to the instant inclusion.

Morgan/Trubac to recommend the millage language as stated in this meeting to the Human Services Committee.

COMM. MORGAN MOVED, SUPPORTED BY COMM. TRUBAC, TO RECOMMEND THE MILLAGE LANGUAGE AS STATED IN THIS MEETING.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioners Naeyaert and Slaughter.

2. Senior Millage – Discussion

Chairperson Tennis introduced the topic.

Mr. Cypher provided suggested millage language. He also provided millage language that the County Attorney supplied that had been previously utilized in other counties.
Marion Owen, TCOA Executive Director, stated that they were formed under the Urban Cooperation Act as a local council on aging.

Chairperson Tennis asked what that meant with respect to the millage.

Mr. Stoker stated that it did not affect millage eligibility. He further stated that the County could still contract TCOA for the services.

Chairperson Tennis asked whether the subcommittee wanted to explicitly reference TCOA in the millage language.

Commissioner Sebolt stated that not explicitly including TCOA provided the County more flexibility.

Chairperson Tennis stated that he did not want to explicitly include TCOA because some could argue that the millage monies would be used for non-Ingham County residents. He further stated that he preferred to include the services and program as distinct from TCOA explicitly.

Commissioner Morgan offered that the language begin as: “For the purposes of eliminating wait lists and expanding critical services such as meals on wheels and in-home care for elder residents aged 60 and older residing in Ingham County, shall…”

There was a discussion about what term to use to describe the population the millage was intended to serve.

Chairperson Tennis disclosed that he represented the Elder Law and Disability Rights Section of the State Bar of Michigan, the Elder Justice Initiative, Elder Law of Michigan, among a few others.

There was discussion regarding whether voters would understand what wait lists meant with respect to elder adults.

Ms. Owen stated that they currently did not have wait lists with respect to meals on wheels, but rather they underserved older adults because they did not have the capacity. She further stated that in home care did have wait lists.

Commissioner Morgan restated his language: “For the purposes of eliminating wait lists and expanding critical services such as meals on wheels and in-home care for elder residents aged 60 and older residing in Ingham County, shall…”

Commissioner Stivers offered that the language begin as “For the purposes of expanding critical services and eliminating home service wait lists for Ingham County’s growing population of persons more than 60 years old.…”

There was a discussion regarding Commissioner Morgan and Stiver’s proposals.
There was a discussion regarding the two sets of proposed language.

Chairperson Tennis asked what other services TCOA offered.

Ms. Owen stated that they offered personal care, respite services, home care, among others.

Chairperson Tennis asked what other services were offered.

Ms. Owen stated that crisis services, legal services, and healthy aging.

Chairperson Tennis offered the following language: “For the purposes of eliminating wait lists and expanding critical services such as in-home care, meals-on-wheels, and crisis services to the growing population of persons aged 60 and older residing in Ingham County….”

Commissioner Sebolt stated that authorizing funding language may be needed.

Chairperson Tennis offered the following language in response to Commissioner Sebolt’s statement: “For the purposes of authorizing funding to eliminate wait lists and expand critical services such as in-home care, meals on wheels, and crisis services to support the growing population of persons aged 60 and older residing in Ingham County….”

There was a discussion about the length of millages.

Chairperson Tennis stated that without objection, the length of both millages would be four years.

Chairperson Tennis stated that without objection, this matter would be considered by the full Human Services Committee and that staff would provide a resolution for the committee to consider.

Commissioner Morgan left the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Mr. Stoker stated that he believed that in order for millage language to be added to the March 2020 ballot, it had to be approved by the commissioners by their December 10, 2019 meeting.

There was discussion regarding the agendas of the next two Human Services Committee.

Announcements

None.

Public Comment

None.
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.