

CHAIRPERSON  
RYAN SEBOLT

VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
CHRIS TRUBAC

VICE-CHAIRPERSON PRO-TEM  
RANDY MAIVILLE

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
IRENE CAHILL, CHAIR  
TODD TENNIS  
CHRIS TRUBAC  
THOMAS MORGAN  
ROBERT PEÑA  
SIMAR PAWAR  
KARLA RUEST

**INGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

*P.O. Box 319, Mason, Michigan 48854 Telephone (517) 676-7200 Fax (517) 676-7264*

THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE WILL MEET ON MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M., IN CONFERENCE ROOM A, HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING, 5303 S. CEDAR, LANSING AND VIRTUALLY AT <https://ingham.zoom.us/j/83587032242>.

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Approval of the [August 19, 2024 Minutes](#)
- Additions to the Agenda
- Limited Public Comment

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1. <u>Budget Hearings</u>	
a. Community Agencies.....	4-1
b. Community Mental Health .....	4-2
c. Cooperative Extension .....	4-5
d. Department of Human Services .....	4-21
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g. Health Department .....	4-42
h. Housing Commission.....	4-75
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m. <a href="#">Parks</a> .....	4-88
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o. Transportation Millage.....	4-114
p. Tri-County Aging Consortium.....	4-116
q. <a href="#">Veteran Affairs</a> .....	4-120
r. Health Services Millage	
s. Capital Area Mentoring Partnership (CAMP)	

2. Final Ranking

- Announcements
- Public Comment
- Adjournment

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## HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

August 19, 2024

Draft Minutes

Members Present: Cahill, Morgan (Arrived at 6:16 p.m.), Pawar, Peña, Ruest, Tennis, and Trubac.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Dr. Adenike Shoyinka, Margie Cole, Desiree Cook, Teresa Carter, Ali Rogers, Casey Paskus, Cynthia Wagner, Sarah Kenney, Christine Hendrickson, Jared Cypher, Anika Ried and others.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Cahill at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan. Virtual public participation was offered via Zoom at <https://ingham.zoom.us/j/83587032242>.

### Approval of the July 15, 2024 Minutes

CHAIRPERSON CAHILL STATED, WITHOUT OBJECTION, THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 15, 2024 HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE WERE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Morgan.

### Additions to the Agenda

#### Removed

6. Facilities – Resolution to Authorize a Purchase Order to Laux Construction for the East Lansing High School Space Renovation for a Clinic

#### Additions

5. Health Department
  - j. Resolution to Amend Resolution #24-061 with Nextgen® Healthcare Information Systems, Inc. to Purchase the Revenue Cycle Management Services
  - k. Resolution to Authorize a New Three-Year Cooperative Operational Agreement with the Ingham Community Health Centers Board of Directors
  - l. Resolution to Authorize Budget Adjustments to the 511 Fund for Fiscal Year 2025
  - m. AmeriCorps Presentation

Chairperson Cahill stated the original Agenda Item No. 6 would be removed from the agenda and replaced with the following:

6. Capital Area Transportation Authority – Resolution to Authorize the Eleventh Amendment to the Agreement with the Capital Area Transportation Authority Dated January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2025

#### Substitutes

1. Community Mental Health Authority – Resolution of Intent to Enter into Contract of Lease with Ingham County Building Authority; to Authorize Publication of Notice of Intent; and to Declare Intent to Reimburse

## Limited Public Comment

Desiree Cook, Ingham County Employees Association (ICEA) Professional President, stated they understood the Board of Commissioners had tough decisions to make regarding the Community Health Centers (CHC) and their deficit, and asked that the Board of Commissioners consider all options before laying off individuals. Cook further provided a letter they had written regarding the issue which was included in the minutes as Attachment A.

Teresa Carter, United Auto Workers (UAW) Unit Chair, stated they had also written a letter which was included in the minutes as Attachment B. Carter further stated that just that day, several members had come to them because they were told by their operations manager, who was directed by Kris Drake, CHC Executive Director, to notify members two hours before the Human Services Committee meeting that there was resolution being brought to the Committee and they had no prior knowledge their specific positions were being affected.

Ali Rogers, Health Department Policy Analyst and AmeriCorps Organizational Lead, stated she was present to ask the Commissioners to accept funds for a Public Health AmeriCorps Program. Rogers further stated that Public Health AmeriCorps Programs were fantastic and AmeriCorps had been doing some amazing work with many people within the Health Department, and it was a fantastic program and she wanted to make sure that it continued.

Casey Paskus, AmeriCorps VISTA Program Coordinator, stated they were present to support the Resolution to Accept the FY 2024-2025 Public Health AmeriCorps Grant, as they worked very closely with the program. Paskus further stated the AmeriCorps Public Health Program was built out of a partnership between the Federal AmeriCorps Agency and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), with the purpose of building up the public health workforce after the staffing crisis caused by COVID-19, with a focus on building a diverse workforce and providing learning opportunities.

Paskus stated, though it had only been around for a year, the Ingham County Health Department Public Health AmeriCorps Program had partnered with seven local organizations and internal programs to host 17 members. Paskus further stated that alumni of the program had gone onto secure internships at CDC Headquarters and to become community health workers, which would bring in a new generation of public health workers.

Paskus stated that the Public Health AmeriCorps Program was an asset to the community and it allowed AmeriCorps members with interest in public health to gain skills and experience they needed to continue in their career paths. Paskus further asked the Board of Commissioners to approve the resolution so the program could continue to strengthen the community and the public health workforce.

Sarah Kenney, Pathways to Care Clinical Supervisor, stated they urged the Commissioners to approve and accept funding for the Public Health VISTAs, and that their department had hosted a VISTA Program and worked closely across the Health Department towards housing goals, which included the work of many Public Health VISTAs. Kenney further stated they helped create a housing guide that was near completion and had been able to hire someone from the program who had done stupendous work.

Kenney stated their support and wanted to make sure the Board of Commissioners knew how valuable the VISTA Program was and how the members supported work others did not always have time to do. Kenney further stated the VISTA that worked in their department had done research on secondary trauma which allowed them to present for all public health services.

MOVED BY COMM. RUEST, SUPPORTED BY COMM. TENNIS, TO APPROVE A CONSENT AGENDA CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING ACTION ITEMS:

6. Community Mental Health Authority – Resolution of Intent to Enter into Contract of Lease with Ingham County Building Authority; to Authorize Publication of Notice of Intent; and to Declare Intent to Reimburse
  
2. Environmental Affairs Commission
  - a. Resolution to Accept a Grant to Implement Energy Conservation Measures
  - b. Resolution to Authorize Ingham County to Serve as Host Partner for a MI Healthy Climate Corps Member
  
3. Parks Department
  - a. Resolution to Authorize the Utilization of Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants TF22-0077 and TF21-0118 Funds for Additional Scope Items for Improvements to Hawk Island County Park
  - b. Resolution to Authorize a Contract Amendment for the Red Cedar River Multi-Jurisdictional Clearing Project
  
4. Potter Park Zoo
  - a. Resolution to Accept a Grant from the State of Michigan for the Renovation of the Feline & Primate Building at Potter Park Zoo
  - b. Resolution to Accept the Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements at Potter Park Zoo Grant from Representative Elissa Slotkin’s Community Project Funding Program
  - c. Bond Resolution Capital Improvement Bonds, Series 2024
  
5. Health Department
  - a. Resolution to Accept the Health Resources and Services Administration FY 2024 Quality Improvement Award: Uniform Data System Patient-Level Submission
  - b. Resolution to Accept the FY 2024-2025 AmeriCorps State Grant Funding
  - c. Resolution to Amend Resolution #24-297 to Accept Healthy! Capital Counties Funds
  - d. Resolution to Authorize Amending Resolution #22-399 for an Infectious Disease Physician Services Agreement with MSU Health Care Inc.
  - e. Resolution to Authorize an Agreement with LTS Staffing Services
  - f. Resolution to Authorize Agreements with Aetna Better Health of Michigan, Inc., Hap CareSource, Inc., McLaren Health Plan, Inc., and United Healthcare Community Plan, Inc., for the Maternal Infant Health Program and Medicaid Health Plans
  - g. Resolution to Accept the FY 2024 – 2025 Public Health AmeriCorps Grant
  - h. Resolution to Authorize Additional Special Part-Time Mobile Health Per Diem Medical Positions
  - i. Resolution Honoring Matthew Wojack, Behavioral Health Supervisor
  - j. Resolution to Amend Resolution #24-061 with Nextgen® Healthcare Information Systems, Inc. to Purchase the Revenue Cycle Management Services
  - l. Resolution to Authorize Budget Adjustments to the 511 Fund for Fiscal Year 2025
  
6. Capital Area Transportation Authority – Resolution to Authorize the Eleventh Amendment to the Agreement with the Capital Area Transportation Authority Dated January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2025

Commissioner Pawar disclosed, under Agenda Item No. 3b, and any other necessary items, that she had a contractual obligation with Meridian Township.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Morgan.

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

4. Potter Park Zoo
  - d. Reorganization of the Potter Park Zoo Horticulture Grounds Manager and Zoo Maintenance Deputy Director Positions (Discussion)

Commissioner Morgan arrived at 6:16 p.m.

Cynthia Wagner, Potter Park Zoo Director, stated the reorganization did not change wages or classification, it only changed titles and addressed overlap in duties. Wagner further provided an overview of the reorganization and stated it filled a position that had been vacant but was still included in the 2024 Budget and proposed 2025 Budget.

Chairperson Cahill stated they were happy about the reorganization.

Jared Cypher, Deputy Controller, stated the discussion was step one of the process, so if the Commissioners were satisfied, Wagner would bring back a resolution for approval.

Commissioner Trubac stated they supported the reorganization.

5. Health Department
  - k. Resolution to Authorize a New Three-Year Cooperative Operational Agreement with the Ingham Community Health Centers Board of Directors

MOVED BY COMM. TENNIS, SUPPORTED BY COMM. PEÑA, TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.

Commissioner Pawar asked, going forward, what other information was pertinent and what changes had been made.

Commissioner Tennis stated there had been no new information since the Board Leadership meeting on August 13, 2024, and this resolution was renewing the Cooperative Agreement, not dealing with the budget. Commissioner Tennis further stated the major changes in the Cooperative Agreement were features that clarified the roles of the CHC Board of Directors regarding branding, marketing, and outreach.

Commissioner Tennis stated the CHC Board of Directors had asked for additional regular budget documents, which Commissioner Tennis believed they were already receiving, but it was now written in the Agreement. Commissioner Tennis further stated there were other minor changes, but the Cooperative Agreement did not include expanding the oversight of the Board of Directors or approve of them becoming their own department.

Commissioner Tennis stated they thought it was a fair agreement and it was important because the temporary agreement that was currently in place expired in a few weeks and, with all the decisions

that would be made going forward, it was best to get this done now.

Commissioner Morgan asked if anything in the Cooperative Agreement precluded the ability of the Board of Commissioners to explore ways to hold CHC Board leadership accountable for what could be considered close to malfeasance of duty.

Commissioner Tennis stated no and that some things that came from the CHC Board of Directors would have included that, but they were not included in the Agreement.

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Health Department
  - m. AmeriCorps Presentation

Margie Cole, AmeriCorps Public Health Coordinator, and Dr. Adenike Shoyinka, Ingham County Health Officer, presented the Ingham County Health Department Public Health AmeriCorps program which was included in the minutes as Attachment A.

Commissioner Pawar stated she was very impressed with all that was being accomplished. Commissioner Pawar further asked if the members serving in Ingham County were able to fulfill their required hours or if any ran short while balancing being students.

Cole stated that not all members were students, and they did not have to be in order to be a member, which was unique. Cole further stated that work-life balance, or service-life balance, was maintained by members and they did allow members to work outside their service, for Public Health AmeriCorps Programs specifically.

Cole stated they were nearing the end of their first service year, which ended September 30, 2024, and they did have some members who had to leave services early or opted not to complete those hours.

Commissioner Pawar asked if there would be an exit survey for the members.

Cole stated they would have one-on-one exit surveys with members and that the AmeriCorps Agency did an aggregate exit survey as well. Cole further stated they asked questions about what could be done better, especially with host sites.

7. Human Services Committee – Resolution Opposing the Proposal to Change the Name of Lake Lansing

MOVED BY COMM. TENNIS, SUPPORTED BY COMM. PEÑA, TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.

Commissioner Pawar stated she had spoken to some residents who felt very strongly that the resolution should not be adopted, and so she would be voting no, but that she did agree that it was not a sound decision, financially, to change the name.

Commissioner Tennis stated they did not even know there was a debate about changing the name of Lake Lansing until a week ago, but wanted everyone to understand that it was not an easy thing to change the name of a town, municipality, or even a lake, and it would cost the County a lot of money

to do so. Commissioner Tennis further stated the County did not have an extra half million dollars to spend on this and therefore they would be supporting the resolution, which opposed changing the name of Lake Lansing.

**THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CARRIED.**

**Yeas:** Cahill, Morgan, Peña, Ruest, Tennis, Trubac.      **Nays:** Pawar.      **Absent:** None.

Announcements

Commissioner Tennis stated the last Board Leadership meeting had been to review and hear from the Controller's Office and the Budget Office on the outlook for the 2025 Budget. Commissioner Tennis further stated that most things were fairly good, but the bad news was the CHC debt for the current year was going to hurt.

Commissioner Tennis stated the Board Leadership meeting had been a public meeting and the recommendation from the Controller was to not pay the 2024 CHC debt, which was in the range of four to 4.5 million dollars. Commissioner Tennis further stated if the County did not pay it, they would ask the CHC Board to make up that shortfall with about a month left in the fiscal year.

Commissioner Tennis stated the Board of Commissioners generally agreed that it would not be feasible to do so, they would not want to subject patients to that outcome, and would not want to make pain for the staff worse. Commissioner Tennis further stated they believed the general consensus of the Board of Commissioners was, as much as it hurt the bottom line, to plan on taking the hit.

Commissioner Tennis stated that it would not be pleasant and it would potentially impact other parts of County operations in 2025, and while the actions taken by the CHC Board of Directors the previous week would not do much to affect the 2024 deficit, it would in 2025, though not all of it. Commissioner Tennis further stated they were hoping that they could find solutions to this that would bring in more patients and revenue, while also working to get the CHC to run efficiently and meet their budget.

Commissioner Tennis stated there may be some more pain in the future and they may have to look at further cuts, though they hoped they would not. Commissioner Tennis further stated the County Budget allocated a certain amount of money to support the CHC each year, which was currently around five million dollars, and the expectation was that the CHC would find themselves short by about that much, as they had for the past few years.

Commissioner Tennis stated that this year, they found themselves about nine to ten million dollars short, meaning the County had to dip into its Fund Balance to balance the budget. Commissioner Tennis further stated they agreed with those that had spoken during public comment that they needed to look at changes in leadership for the CHC Board of Directors, and it was obvious that some of the CHC Board Members were focused far too much on the Cooperative Agreement and efforts to take more power, and less on their own budget.

Commissioner Tennis stated they had taken some heat as the liaison Commissioner to the CHC Board of Directors from the Finance Committee Chairperson as to why they did not sound the alarms louder. Commissioner Tennis further stated they thought they were sounding the alarm loudly, and though they did not know exactly how it would work out, they were committed to making the CHC stay open and vibrant, without jeopardizing County's bottom line.

Commissioner Tennis stated they were hoping staff could bear with them and they could make it work together.

Jared Cypher, Deputy Controller, stated it looked like the 2025 Controller's Recommended Budget had the 511 Fund going into a deficit reduction plan. Cypher further provided an overview of what that would look like going forward.

Commissioner Morgan stated that they needed to demand changes in leadership and the CHC Board of Directors Executive Committee needed to go. Commissioner Morgan further stated he wanted to support it but did not want those the CHC served to suffer due to mismanagement, so they would not let up on it because the people deserved good leadership and care, not a mismanaged organization.

Commissioner Morgan stated that Anika Ried, Recording Secretary, had celebrated her birthday last Wednesday and wished her a happy birthday.

Chairperson Cahill stated they agreed with Commissioner Morgan that they were dedicated to seeing the issue through and also that they had brought fruit for anyone to have.

### Public Comment

Christine Hendrickson, Ingham County Health Department Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, stated they were present to support the AmeriCorps Public Health Program and that they had been incredibly fortunate to work with a phenomenal AmeriCorps member. Hendrickson further stated their program focused on revitalizing programs that were dormant due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, so it was great to see a fresh perspective on those programs and their member had done an incredible job.

Hendrickson stated they had a close pod enrollment program where they performed outreach to long term care facilities, colleges and universities, or any other group, if there was a public health emergency, that made it possible for their close pod partners to pick up necessary medications and forms to bring to nursing homes, for example, for distribution. Hendrickson further stated that they focused on places where it would be harder for individuals or their care providers to come to the Health Department for those things.

Hendrickson stated that large businesses and care facilities were who they worked with and their member had done a great job enrolling 25 close pod partners, and they had also worked on the MI Volunteer Registry, a statewide registry in Michigan that helped communities find volunteers. Hendrickson further stated their member had asked potential volunteers what interested them and what deal breakers they had, as well as asking their 347 current volunteers how their current experience could be improved.

Cook stated they started their petition with the three groups within the CHC and though the chair of the Michigan Nurses Association (MNA) was not able to be present that evening, they had also had started a petition for their members which had 15 signatures, so all three unions within the Health Department had started petitions. Cook further thanked Commissioners Tennis and Morgan for their comments as they did not want to presume to tell the Board of Commissioners what to do regarding the CHC Board of Directors Executive Committee.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.



**Z-List Items not funded in the Controller’s 2025 recommended budget request for Parks:**

**Order of Priority:**

**CIP Projects:**

Lake Lansing South Pedestrian entrance upgrades and park sign replacement      \$150,000

**Justification for Parks #1 CIP request:**

This project would redevelop the walk in entrance to Lake Lansing Park South. It would include new plating areas, new stone façade, concrete work and new sign (see below). The pedestrian entrance on the corner of Marsh Road and Lake Lansing Road is the main focal point of the park. This entrance is beautifully cared for by volunteers from the Haslett Beautification Association. The current onsite structures include two masonry walls, which have been in place since Ingham County took over the park decades ago, and decaying timbers. This project would remove those items and replace them with more eye pleasing stone veneered walls to match the proposed new sign (see Scheme A).

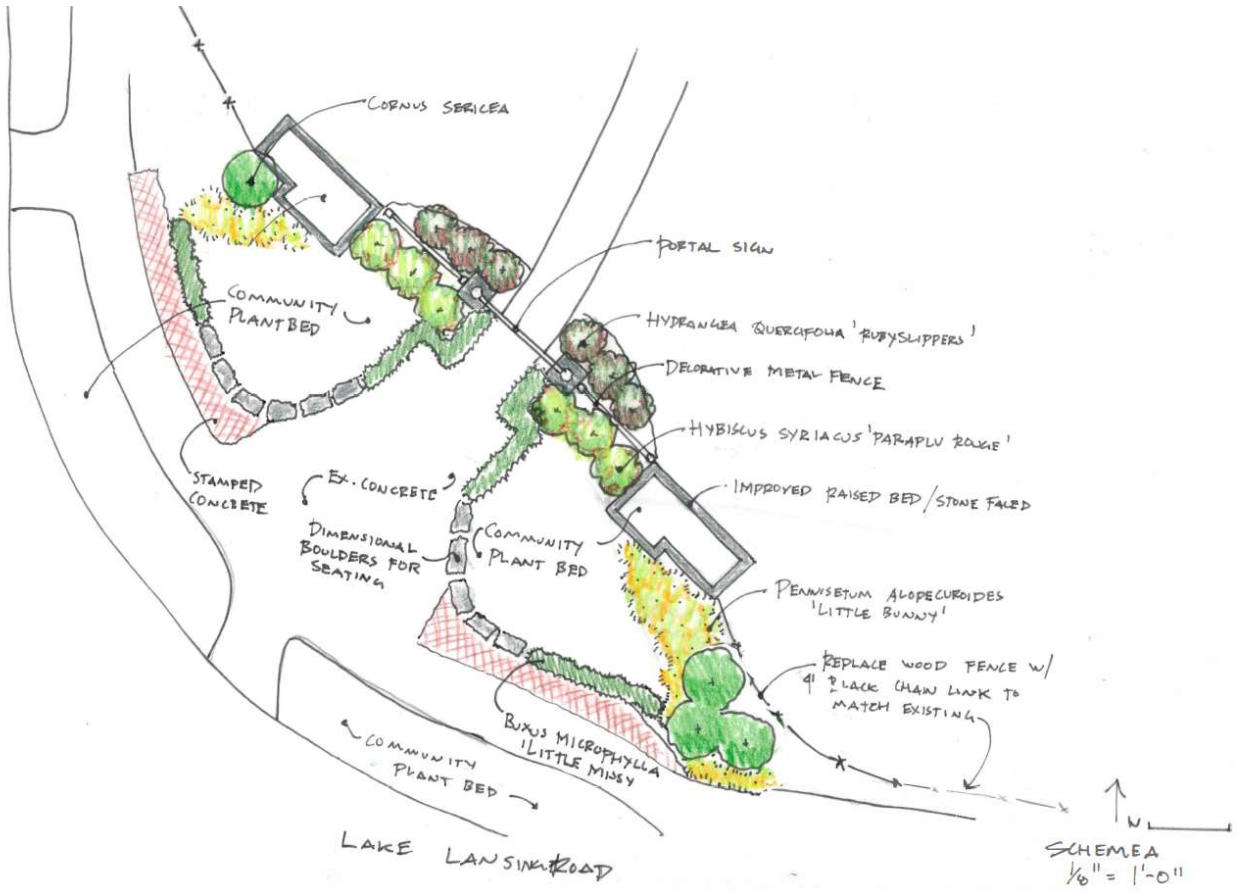
Proposed New Entrance Sign



Historical Entrance Sign



MARSH ROAD



**2025 CAPITAL BUDGET - DEPARTMENT REQUEST**

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT REQUEST</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>EQUIP. REVOLV. FUND</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF OTHER</u>
<b><u>FURNITURE &amp; EQUIPMENT</u></b>						
<b><u>PARKS</u></b>						
Lk Lans S. Pedestrian entrance upgrades & Marsh Rd fence/park sign r	200,000		0			
Disc Golf Course Improvements and Reforestation- Burchfield	60,000		0			
Lk Lans S. walkway and bank stabilization/sand for beaches	100,000		0			
Wood Chipper	90,000		0			
Dump Truck	100,000		0			
Stewardship (mngmt of invasive species) Implementation- Lk Lansing	15,000		0			
Roof Replacement- Burchfield	100,000		0			
Mechanic work truck	75,000		0			
Lake Lansing South Playground replacement (Phase 2)	275,000		0			
Lake Lansing South Maintenance siding and shelters	30,000		0			
Park Amenity improvements	100,000		0			
Hawk Island Snow Park preventative Maint	30,000		0			
Skid steer	150,000		0			
Burchfield ADA sidewalk additions	50,000		0			
Entrance Road Repaving at Burchfield Park	250,000		0			
Commercial power washer- Hawk Island	8,000		0			
<b>PARKS PROJECTS TOTAL</b>	<b>1,633,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b><u>SCHEDULED EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT (IT)</u></b>						
Parks- 2 Computers	5,000	5,000		5,000		

**TO:** Human Services Committee

**FROM:** Amy Poca, Director Department of Veteran Affairs

**DATE:** Human Services Budget Meeting August 26, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Requesting General Funds for Veterans Benefits Counselor positions

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**BACKGROUND**

In 2022, Ingham County Department of Veterans Affairs received the County Veteran Service Fund grant from the State of Michigan under the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA). This approval by Ingham County Board of Commissioners allowed for the grant money to pilot a grant-funded Veterans Benefits Counselor position for two years, and allow for future grants to be used to expand services in the veteran’s community. The two-year pilot was an essential requirement due to the 24-month training period for a Veterans Benefits Counselor position within the department.

The 2025 budget marks the end of the two-year period intended for the pilot position. These last two years have provided a suitable timeframe for the employee to be trained, to collect data, and to determine if the position is needed within the department. The results are the following:

- Filed 549 claims and appeals
- Conducted 1,228 personal interviews
- Secured \$1,090,090.34 in VA Retro Active Claim Awards

The determination by Ingham County Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Affairs Committee (established under MCL- Act 214 of 1899, appointed by the Ingham County Board of Commissioners as advisory board with full operation control) is that there is a seriously significant need to make the Veterans Benefits Counselor a permanent position within the department.

Therefore, The Ingham County Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Affairs Committee, asks that Ingham County uses General Funds to make the Veterans Benefits Counselor a permanent position within the department. This action will show that Ingham County are good stewards of taxpayers’ grant funds in allowing the funds to be used to expand services within the veteran’s community.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The Veterans Benefits Counselor position will continue to be funded with the County Veterans Service Fund Grant, and the department would not be able to pilot the Survivors Support Group, the Law Student internship, an emergency assistance program, and marketing.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Veterans Benefits Counselor position is a MC 9 position, Salary and Fringe range from \$132,360.95 to \$153,689.78.

To help with cost saving in July 2024, the department converted a Benefits Support Specialist position (UAW I \$95,560.90 to \$108,992.24) into an Administrative Support Clerk (UAW F \$84,737.44 to \$96,040.91).

The Veterans Affairs Department has a total of eight position. Converting the position was the only possible way to help Ingham County with cost savings, and not jeopardize services to the veterans community.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

The department plans for the MVAA County Veterans Service Fund Grant (CVSFG) is to expand veterans services in Ingham County with three pilot programs.

1. For 13 years, the department has constitutently seen one group in the veterans community, that has been left behind to handle the federal bureaucracy and grieve the loss of a loved one. Currently, there are no available support services for a surviving spouse of a veteran in Ingham County. The veterans in Ingham County have a decreased life expectancy due to age, and toxic exposures. To help close the gap in services available to survivor in Ingham County, the Veterans Affairs Department would like to pilot a Survivor Support Group. The pilot would contract a license mental health professional to provide bereavement counseling, while the department's Veteran Benefits Counselors provide the guidance with federal, state and county benefits.
2. On August 10, 2022, the Sergeant First Class Health Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 or the Honoring our PACT ACT of 2022 became law. This law is the most significant expansion of benefits and services for toxic exposed veterans. In addition, this law allows for any veteran who has been exposed by toxins no matter the duty station or type of duty to file VA disability claims. In the past two years, the department has been trying to connected as many veterans to benefits under this law. This experience has led to the department needing assistance with law and medical research for claims. The proposed pilot program will be a 13-week internship for any veterans or spouse who is a law student interested in veterans' laws, that wants on-the-job training doing research and developing arguments to the Board of Veterans Appeals. This program will also help make connections to our two law schools in Ingham County, Cooley Law School, and Michigan State University College of Law.

3. Currently the department has an emergency assistance program under MCL- Act 214 or 1899, that requires one day of active duty service during war time. In addition, the State of Michigan has the Veterans Trust Fund that require 180 days active duty service during war time. In Ingham County the majority of the veteran's population have served in the National Guard or Reserve units. In addition, our county is the home to the Michigan Army National Guard Headquarters. Therefore, there is a significant number of veterans in our county without an opportunity to apply for emergency assistance for unforeseen situations. The department is requesting to pilot an emergency assistance program for Peacetime, National Guard, and Reservist veterans, and their survivors.

The last part of the CVSFG would be used for marketing all three programs.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the information presented, I respectfully recommend approving the use of General Funds to make the Veterans Benefits Counselor position permanent within the Veterans Affairs Department.