LAW & COURTS COMMITTEE
April 18, 2019
Minutes

Members Present: Celentino, Crenshaw, Koenig (arrived at 6:01 p.m.), Polsdoyer, Schafer, Slaughter, and Trubac

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Treasurer Eric Schertzing, Jodi LeBombard, Andrew Bouck, Deb Fett, Michelle Wright, Teri Morton, and others

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Slaughter 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 March 28, 2019 Minutes

MOVED BY COMM. CRENSHAW, SUPPORTED BY COMM. CELENTINO, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 28, 2019 LAW & COURTS COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Chairperson Koenig.

Chairperson Koenig arrived at 6:01 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda

4. 9-1-1 Center – Resolution Honoring Lance Langdon for his Years of Service to the County of Ingham and the East Lansing Police Department

Limited Public Comment

Jodi LeBombard, Animal Control Director, stated that in mid-February they had done dog licensing education outreach to the public that promoted purchasing dog licenses. She further stated that they had wanted to provide updated statistics with that push over the last few months.

Treasurer Eric Schertzing stated that by having gone out with Animal Control, dog licensing numbers had gone up over 50% in February. He further stated that when looked at in the big picture, there are probably 60,000-65,000 dogs in Ingham County, if you had gone back 20 years the County had about 17,000 dog licenses.

Treasurer Schertzing stated dog license numbers went down the last couple of years due to turmoil to about 20,000 and that it took about 20 years to get a 30% increase in dog license numbers. He further stated that with the effort that was given in February and March, the dog license numbers had increased more than 50%.
Treasurer Schertzing stated that each month, that translated to about $8,000 in revenue that did not have to be there. He further stated that they planned on finding ways to try and sustain the increase.

Ms. LeBombard stated that in March, Animal Control sold about 1,452 licenses, which represented a 58% increase from last year. She further stated that Animal Control offered low cost vaccination clinics once a month, which generally averaged 50 pets over the last few years.

Ms. LeBombard stated that in March, Animal Control vaccinated 164 dogs and 157 in April. She further stated that the numbers that had been seen were triple the norm and she was very impressed with the public that had come out to become compliant with the licensing.

Chairperson Koenig asked what they had done to get to the 50% increase.

Ms. LeBombard stated that they had done a lot of education and press releases to get the word out. She further stated that the Treasurer and herself went out with Animal Control officers into the community and had done education door to door.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that last night, he had gone to the Democratic Party Meeting and while at the event, he told those there to get their own pets licensed. He further stated that he had told those at the event to get their dogs licensed so when officers were out doing enforcement action they would not be one of the unlicensed that had to pay twice the fee.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that he had not thought the elected officials would want their friends or constituents to have to pay twice the licensing fee because they had not voluntarily licensed. He further stated that everyone played a role in regards to the promotion of dog licensing.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that the reason for dog licensing was that rabies was a horrible disease if someone were to have gotten bite if the dog had not had the rabies vaccination. He further stated that the proof of the rabies vaccination was the foundation of dog licensing, where the licensing was the guarantee that the rabies vaccination occurred.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that he had heard about a gentlemen that had gotten bit by a dog but had been unable to find the dog and had to go through the protocols.

Ms. LeBombard stated that part of the protocol would have been painful vaccines and shots that are quite costly.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that part of the outreach had included radio, T.V. cameras, and articles in the newspapers. He further stated that part of the Treasurer’s Office’s reorganization had allowed for more time for reminder notices to be sent out.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that it had been great to understand what it is like in the field and to help understand how to make the whole process better.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that he had made sure to share the posts from the Animal Control Shelter. He further stated that he and Commissioner Trubac are hosting an event in June and the
Treasurer’s Office and/or Animal Control could come and share information about licensing during.

Chairperson Koenig asked if there were reminders sent out to residents to relicense and whether they specified if a one or three year would have been needed or on rotation in terms of renewals.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that residents are notified if their dogs need the rabies vaccination. He further stated that the number of people that have gotten a three year license has gone up.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that the one year license used to be about 10,000 sold a year but were now down to about 4,000 to 5,000 a year. He further stated that the three year licenses sold a year used to be about 3,000 to 4,000 and were now around 6,000, since multiyear licenses were easier to sell.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that about ten vets sold dog licenses. He further stated that his office had talked about online having been a shortcoming but something they planned to tackle to help promote licensing.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that he had a series of things they had planned to come out about every month to help promote licenses. He further stated that under statute, the Prosecuting Attorney was supposed to be responsible to send out the letters.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that the Prosecuting Attorney had stated that they had been willing to lend them stationary and envelopes. He further stated that the letters from the Prosecuting Attorney should impact residents more than the Treasurer’s Office stationary letters.

Chairperson Koenig stated that she was happy to hear the outcome was positive and of the increased numbers.

Treasurer Schertzing stated that there would be hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue if they stuck with the dog licensing outreach. He further stated that it should give the office more staff time to make sure they are doing their part in the Treasurer’s Office.

Ms. LeBombard stated that the efforts of outreach helped in terms of licensing compliance. She further stated that if officers had helped a hurt dog or dealt with dog bites and had been able to view the dog’s license they were able to pull up the dog’s vaccination record and owner’s contact information to find the dog’s owner.

Commissioner Schafer asked if Animal Control encouraged owners to have their animals chipped while they were got their animals licensed.

Ms. LeBombard stated that Animal Control does encourage owners to chip their animals at the Shelter as a separate issue.

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

1. Sheriff’s Office
   a. Resolution to Continue Support Service Agreement with Carousel Industries for the
2. **Friend of the Court/Prosecuting Attorney/Innovation & Technology Department** – Resolution to Authorize a Contract with Rehmann Consulting to Assist the Friend of the Court, Prosecuting Attorney, and Innovation & Technology Departments in Implementing the Independent Security Audit Requirement as Set Forth in Michigan Office of Child Support IV-D Memorandum 2017-011

3. **Controller’s Office**
   a. Resolution Authorizing Adjustments to the 2019 Ingham County Budget

4. **9-1-1 Center** – Resolution Honoring Lance Langdon for his Years of Service to the County of Ingham and the East Lansing Police Department

**THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Controller’s Office**
   b. Resolution to Accept the 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan

**MOVED BY COMM. CRENSHAW, SUPPORTED BY COMM. SLAUGHTER, TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.**

Commissioner Crenshaw stated the plan had been talked about in the Board leadership meeting in February. He further stated that the actual plan had to be have the actual committees look at the plan and make updates before it got adopted.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that the committee had not had a chance to go through the plan to see how the work commissioners had done with the Justice Millage passing and other components had impacted things the Committee had done.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that he would vote no on the resolution as the plan going forward until it had been gone through as a committee and they had worked out some of the issues.

Commissioner Celentino stated that all of the committees should go over the Strategic Plan and before it is approved.

Chairperson Koenig stated that the Committee had the time to go through it but asked if everyone would be prepared to discuss the plan at this time.

Commissioner Celentino stated that he had not been prepared to discuss the plan at this time.
Chairperson Koenig stated that the agenda had not been full because she had hoped Judge Boyd would have been able to come and talk to the Committee. She further stated that Judge Boyd had not been able to do so and that had left a gap of extra time for the meeting.

Teri Morton, Deputy Controller, stated that the strategic plan had been placed on each Committee’s agenda.

Commissioner Celentino stated that he had seen the plan stated on the County Service’s agenda but had thought it was only for the plan to be adopted as seen and not to have gone through.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that his request was that each committee go through it to see what specific areas had been done, what needed to be added, and what each committee could take off.

Commissioner Crenshaw also stated that there were areas that did not affect Law & Courts that talked about communication. He asked what had been done to promote areas of service through local media.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked whether we had considered ways to brand and unify the County message since the strategic plan. He further stated that he had not thought the Committee had ever done so.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that he thought the Committee should sit down and see if items were still relevant or if they needed to do or say something different in order to get the goals accomplished that the Board had back in 2017 when the plan was adopted to meet the needs that the Board had.

Commissioner Celentino stated that he would have liked to see the word “Discussion” next to the strategic plan on the agenda.

Commissioner Celentino stated that if he would have known that the strategic plan was for discussion he would not have put it on the agenda for County Services since it would be a huge agenda.

Chairperson Koenig stated that she had thought that what Commissioner Crenshaw brought up was that historically, strategic plans would be created, but not followed up on.

Discussion.

Ms. Morton, stated that Commissioners would want to look through the action plan, things that have been done in relation to the different areas with key implementation tasks so staff would know what to do. She further stated that things that had been done are shaded out and some had statuses listed.

Ms. Morton asked what the Controller’s Office should bring to Committee.
Commissioner Crenshaw stated that a discussion item should come from the Controller’s Office. He further stated that what had been done should be struck out and what needed to be added should be added.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that although it would not specifically have been with Law & Courts, commissioners had not had anything to promote themselves in the media from the Controller’s Office or the Board Office. He further stated that he thought that it should be discussed where commissioners wanted to go in terms of that.

Chairperson Koenig stated that she had really wanted to discuss the promotion of commissioners in the media.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that it would have been helpful to specifically see the portions to do with Law & Courts Committee separately.

Chairperson Koenig stated that there would also be more generic subjects in the plan with multiple committees.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that his understanding was that they would look at this to do with their committee.

MOVED BY COMM. CRENSHAW, SUPPORTED BY COMM. SLAUGHTER, TO TABLE THE RESOLUTION TO THE NEXT MEETING.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Controller’s Office**
   
c. Resolution Updating Various Fees for County Services *(Discussion)*

Ms. Morton stated that due to the resolution having been such a detailed document, the Controller’s Office added it to the agenda as a discussion item for the first round. She further stated that the fees were standard cost based on inflation rate detailed in memo and that the Controller’s Office had been in agreement on all of those.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that under Animal Control, it looked as though there had been a concern with fees raised regarding adoptions in regards to literature reprinting.

Chairperson Koenig asked if there would have been too much of a loss.

Ms. Morton stated that there was not too much of a loss. She further stated that where services go up by only one dollar it did not make sense to just increase the fees by only one dollar but to wait until the County reaches the next five dollar mark.

Ms. Morton stated that for example, Friend of Court felt that their fee was higher than everywhere else and did not collect their fee on bench warrants well beforehand. She further stated that for Friend of Court to have had raised their fee, it would not have been productive.
Ms. Morton stated that the County did set the day rate for jail housing, not the Board like previously thought, and that it had gone down from $56 to $8. She further stated that the Sheriff had been hopeful more money could be raised that way.

Commissioner Schafer asked where the revenue raised for funds would be going since they were often the subject of questioning by residents.

Ms. Morton stated that unless there was a fee created for a new service provided, fees go to general fund operations.

Commissioner Schafer asked if, for example with District Court, when the courts said no increase, if that delayed the inevitable later inflation fee.

Ms. Morton stated that the Controller’s Office looked at fees compared to inflation rates every year due to that reason. She further stated that the Controller’s Office could only recommend price increases.

Commissioner Schafer stated that if deemed reasonable, there should be fee increases.

Commissioner Celentino stated that Commissioner Schafer had made a good point as to whether the County should wait until fees had a substantial increase or would it be more advantageous to have the fees increased in lesser increments. He asked that the Committee consider what would be better for their constituents.

Commissioner Schafer stated that the discussion was similar to the recent discussion concerning the Supreme Court Justice pay.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked about Attachment B recommending a sliding scale and if it had been stated what that sliding scale would be.

There was discussion regarding the residential placement and attachments.

Commissioner Polsdorfer stated that he would be in favor of the fees to be set up to follow COLA tracking system. He further stated that if the cost of services were looked at and if fee alterations were made annually or decided not to have changed, then the County could decide what was palpable.

Commissioner Polsdorfer stated that the fees should be tracked with inflation if making a decision on discrepancy. He further stated that he liked to avoid not being able to cover services.

Commissioner Slaughter asked how the fees that should have been increased due to inflation, but were not in terms of the budget.

Ms. Morton stated that the resolution would be completed before the budget was worked on so the Controller’s Office knew how much they had to work with. She further stated that if the fees
were what they currently recommended in the draft resolution, they would account for an additional $300,000.

Chairperson Koenig asked what the current determining factor for inflation was.

Ms. Morton stated that the inflationary rate set by the State for the CPI of 2.4% was used. She further stated that each year, the cost of inflation with fees is calculated to where even if the Board did not increase the fees by an increment the budget still started back at that year’s cost of the service not at the current fee including inflation.

Ms. Morton stated that when original fee was created, the Controller’s Office had applied the State inflationary factor each year.

Discussion

Chairperson Koenig stated that the County was left in a position where if they went up by inflation, people might say every year it goes up or if they suddenly raised prices, people might say they just raised the price by $20. She further stated that she had thought the inflationary way was the way to go since it would be gradual, reasoned, and understandable.

Commissioner Celentino stated that it would be Catch 22 either way.

Ms. Morton asked if the Committee wanted to have further discussion where departments did not want to increase.

Commissioner Celentino asked Ms. Morton if she recommended they have further discussion.

Ms. Morton stated that the Controller’s Office stated that the chart of fees was purely mathematical calculation and that the department would then use it.

Discussion.

Commissioner Celentino stated that the Controller’s Office staff had done a good job in the past overall with only one or two sections that the staff needed to go back to.

Commissioner Koenig stated that in terms of Animal Control she had been worried if fees were raised up too high, owners would not come back for their animals and more expense would be incurred to take care of them. She further stated that she did not know what the sweet spot was and refer to the experts.

Discussion.

Announcements

Commissioner Schafer stated that Livingston County built a relatively new Animal Control Shelter but turned it over to Humane Society. He further stated that part of the reason for doing
so was that the shelter received more volunteers and more money from the public for a Humane Shelter than they had with Animal Control.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that Governor Whitmer signed Executive Order 2019-10: Michigan Join Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration. He further stated that he will be keeping his eye on the executive order in regards to the focus on pretrial and bail reform to reduce the amount of days individuals stay in jail.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

BARB BYRUM, CLERK OF THE BOARD