Members Present: Koenig, Celentino, Crenshaw, Polsdofer, Schafer, Slaughter, and Trubac.

Members Absent: None.


The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Koenig 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 September 12, 2019 Minutes

MOVED BY COMM. CRENSHAW, SUPPORTED BY COMM. SLAUGHTER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2019 LAW & COURTS COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Additions to the Agenda

1. Sheriff’s Office
   b. Resolution to Enter into an Agreement with the MSU Department of Psychiatry

Limited Public Comment

Commissioner Morgan stated that the County already allowed hens so it made sense to allow ducks. He further summarized the benefits of owning ducks, as well as the resolution language.

Commissioner Morgan stated that Ann Arbor City Council voted unanimously to allow a limited number of ducks. He further stated that progressive communities allowed ducks.

Councilwoman Jody Washington, 1st Ward Lansing City Council, stated that she was in favor of amending the ordinance to allow ducks, as her Ward was home to many urban farmers. She further stated that the Board would be doing the East Side of Lansing a great service by passing the resolution.
Councilwoman Washington stated that she was also present to speak on behalf of Joan Nelson, Executive Director of the Allen Community Center, who also supported the resolution as a good step forward for the community.

Commissioner Celentino asked if the City of Lansing had anything on the books regarding ducks.

Councilwoman Washington stated that the City deferred to the County on that.

Bob Pena, Eastside Resident and Urban Agronomist, spoke in favor of the duck resolution and asked the Board of Commissioner to consider it.

Phillip and Kara Kurzeja, Lansing Residents, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, pointing out the benefits of duck eggs.

MC Rothorn, Lansing Resident, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, pointing out the human component in the equation.

Don Comer, Community Member, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, specifically the importance of connecting kids with nature and reducing the barriers to self-sufficiency in the community.

Abigail Harper, MSU Extension, spoke in favor of the duck resolution and stated that she was excited to play a role in the education process to support community health.

John Krohn, Lansing Resident, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, thanking Commissioner Morgan and Councilwoman Washington and stressing the importance of food security and sovereignty. He further stated that he and his wife gathered many signatures and ran into very little opposition.

Egypt Krohn, Lansing Resident, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, speaking to the importance of urban agriculture and the contribution the resolution would have to neighborhood momentum. She provided 144 signatures to the Committee.

Phil Damico, Eastside Resident, spoke in favor of the duck resolution, and asked the Commissioners to consider what they would say if it was their families who could have something that was a health and financial benefit to them, and could also feed them.

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

2. Circuit Court
   a. Resolution to Accept the FY 2020 Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program Grant, Continue the Grant Funded Three-Quarter Time SSSPP Case Management Coordinator Position and Enter into Subcontracts
b. Resolution to Accept the FY 2020 Michigan Mental Health Court Program Grant, Continue the Grant Funded Three-Quarter Time Mental Health Court-Court Services Coordinator Position and the Full-Time Mental Health Court-Case Coordination Specialist Position, and Enter into Subcontracts

3. **Probate Court** – Resolution to Authorize Conversion of the Part-Time Deputy Probate Register III Position to Full-Time

4. **Community Corrections** – Resolution to Authorize Notice to Sentinel Offender Services, LLC that Justice Millage Funds Have Been Allocated and are Available to Continue Electronic Monitoring Services for Indigent Users through September 30, 2019

5. **55th District Court** – Resolution to Authorize the Reorganization of the 55th District Court

7. **Controller’s Office** – Resolution Authorizing Adjustments to the 2019 Ingham County Budget

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

1. **Sheriff’s Office**
   a. Resolution to Authorize the Renewal of a Contract with the Michigan Department of Corrections to Rent Up to 50 Beds to the Michigan Department of Corrections

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

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that since he joined the Board of Commissioners, he opposed having this in the budget. He further stated that the way the program operated, the revenue was not guaranteed.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked how many beds were rented daily.

Jason Ferguson, Chief Deputy, stated that the jail averaged 35 MDOC inmates daily throughout the year.

Discussion.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that the possibility of MDOC pulling out was troubling to him. He asked what would happen if they pulled out.

Mr. Ferguson stated that he was not the one to speak to that.
Teri Morton, Deputy Controller, stated that the Controller’s Office was aware of the possibility that the contract could go away and if that were the case, the revenue would be eliminated. She further stated that it did not harm the County to take the money at this point.

Ms. Morton stated that they did not plan to continue the contract in the new jail.

Commissioner Celentino stated that he also remembered a past discussion in Committee about the MDOC pulling out of the contract before and leaving a hole in the Sheriff’s budget.

Discussion.

Ms. Morton stated that this was not sudden, that it was as renewal.

Chairperson Koenig stated that she remembered the Sheriff being upset about the rug being pulled out on this before. She further stated that in that budget year the money was being depended on and it has since been come to see as money that was not relied on as heavily due to the unreliability.

Discussion.

Commissioner Schafer asked why the $35 amount per bed had not increased over the past ten years.

Mr. Ferguson stated that he did not know if that had been revisited.

Commissioner Schafer stated that with inflation you would think it would increase dramatically in the course of a decade.

Commissioner Trubac left the room at approximately 6:36 p.m.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that he believed the MDOC budget had been reduced so the potential was there for them to pull this contract. He further stated that the Committee needed to be careful because in the past this contract had been pulled resulting in a huge hole in the budget.

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that he understands that it might not be in the new jail, but there was nothing written in stone that it would not be and that he wanted his concerns preserved on the record.

Commissioner Trubac returned at approximately 6:38 p.m.

THE MOTION FAILED. Yeas: Koenig, Schafer Crenshaw, Polsdorfer, Slaughter, Trubac Absent: None

Chairperson Koenig stated that she voted in favor of the resolution because if the Sheriff thought he needed it she was trying to give it to him.
Commissioner Schafer requested that item come back before the Committee with additional information.

Chairperson Koenig stated that the item would be before the Finance Committee next Wednesday.

Ms. Morton asked what additional information would be helpful. She further stated that without this contract they would need to come up with $447,000 for next year’s budget.

Commissioner Polsdorfer stated that he would like to see more information for the Finance Committee. He further stated that he was concerned that the contract amount had not been adjusted for inflation.

Commissioner Schafer stated that he also wanted to know about any implications due to the State budget.

1. Sheriff’s Office
   b. Resolution to Enter into an Agreement with the MSU Department of Psychiatry

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

Commissioner Crenshaw stated that it was troubling that the County paid out money that was not approved by the Board of Commissioners and signed by the Chairperson. He asked who authorized the payments for this to happen.

Ms. Morton stated that Jared Cypher, Deputy Controller, was looking into what went wrong and what needed to get fixed within the process.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked who signed the vouchers.

Mr. Ferguson stated that the people who could help answer that could not be present tonight and that he was not sure how the process was established.

Ms. Morton stated that Anne Scott would be at the Human Services and Finance Committee meetings to discuss this item.

Commissioner Slaughter asked if MSU ever reached out to ask about the contract.

Mr. Ferguson stated that both parties were still operating as if the contract was in place, but that it was still unclear how it was facilitated in the first place.

Commissioner Schafer asked why Community Mental Health (CMH) no longer offered psychiatric assessments and treatment plans in the jail.
Chairperson Koenig stated that it was her understanding that CMH was not able to keep a professional in place. She further stated that it is difficult to find and keep a Psychiatrist on staff.

Commissioner Schafer asked if the Psychiatrist worked eight hours per week.

Ms. Morton stated that that number was per week.

Commissioner Schafer stated that he noticed the rate was $149 per hour and that he wanted to make sure the County was not being too generous with millage funds and spending more than necessary.

MOVED BY COMM. CRENSHAW, SUPPORTED BY COMM. SCHAFER, TO TABLE THE RESOLUTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Law & Courts Committee – Resolution to Adopt an Ordinance Amending the Ingham County Animal Control Ordinance to Permit Keeping Ducks in Non-Agricultural Areas (Discussion)

Dr. James Sikarskie, DVM, MS, DACZM, MSU Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarian, retired, gave a presentation addressing the implications to the animals and people of Ingham County should the proposed ordinance amendment be adopted.

Chairperson Celentino stated that he felt that if a person wanted to raise ducks and was passionate and excited that they would educate themselves to best care for the ducks. He further stated that he did not think responsible owners were being given enough credit.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that he agreed that in an ideal world everyone who was interested in raising ducks would properly educate themselves on how to properly care for ducks.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked staff to provide the Committee members with the questions/materials the two speakers were given in order to prepare for the meeting.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that if ducks were fed and housed correctly, keeping them in an urban environment was possible for the people who would educate themselves and put forth the effort.

Commissioner Slaughter asked what the ideal situation was for backyard ducks.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that ideally one thing would be a pond in the backyard.

Commissioner Crenshaw left the room at 7:02 p.m.
Commissioner Schafer stated that he grew up on a farm and saw firsthand the benefits of raising animals. He further stated that he was strongly in favor of educating people and letting them have the choice.

Commissioner Crenshaw returned at 7:04 p.m.

Chairperson Koenig asked if it would be beneficial to add a requirement for a fresh water source.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that it would be.

Chairperson Koenig stated that it was important to identify things that animal control could enforce.

Chairperson Koenig asked about the ideal substrata for ducks.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that grass was ideal.

Chairperson Koenig asked how old baby ducks were when they could swim.

Dr. Sikarskie stated that baby ducks could swim at about five to six weeks old.

Discussion.

Chairperson Koenig thanked Dr. Sikarskie.

Matthew Lyson, Michigan Duck Rescue and Sanctuary, gave a presentation addressing the implications to the animals and people of Ingham County should the proposed ordinance amendment be adopted.

Commissioner Schafer asked where the Michigan Duck Rescue and Sanctuary was located.

Mr. Lyson stated that they were in Salem Township. He further stated that they would be moving to a new facility next year.

Mr. Lyson said that a big part of the problem was people buying ducks on impulse and without enough information.

Commissioner Schafer asked if the Sanctuary euthanized ducks.

Mr. Lyson stated that they did not unless it was a last resort and that they had successfully rehabbed many severely injured ducks.

Chairperson Koenig asked what should be included in a duck ordinance, regarding winter care. She asked if ducks needed a heated coop.

Mr. Lyson stated that they needed a wind break.
Chairperson Koenig thanked Mr. Lyson.

Announcements

None.

Public Comment

Mr. Kurzeja thanked Dr. Sikarskie and Mr. Lyson for coming. He further stated that they could all agree that people who want to have ducks need to do it right.

Discussion.

Mr. Lyson stated that he would invited anyone to check out the Sanctuary. He further stated that the people who came to speak in favor of the duck resolution would probably do a great job, but that it was the other 90% who would not.

Mr. Kurzeja stated that those people were already buying and neglecting ducks.

Discussion.

Chairperson Koenig asked if the Sanctuary had a website.

Mr. Lyson stated that the website was www.michiganduckrescueandsanctuary.com, but that the Facebook page was much more up to date.

Ms. Krohn stated her understanding was that there were option for urban duck owners to have their ducks slaughtered in facilities that were not residences. She further stated that it was not her intent to say that duck and chickens were the same, merely that the same sorts of considerations must be made even though they play out in different ways.

Ms. Krohn stated that her experience growing up on a rural farm was foundational to who she was as a person and that she did not think it was right to deny those experiences to our urban youth. She further stated that there were many ways to accomplish allowing ducks in urban areas in a safe and sensible way.

Jodi LeBombard, Animal Control Director, stated that she was neutral on the resolution. She further stated that her main concern if it passed was to have a plan in place and adequate staff and housing.

Chairperson Koenig asked if there were chickens in the shelter.

Ms. LeBombard stated that there were.
Ms. Harper stated that there were representatives from organizations that provided agriculture education in Lansing present at the meeting who could be a resource. She further stated that she agreed that uneducated, ignorant people did make poor decisions about animal welfare, but that those were not the kind of people in the room tonight.

Ms. Harper stated that the MSU Extension, Land Bank, Garden Project, Allen Neighborhood Center, Northwest Initiative all had resources to develop comprehensive educational programs to help people make good decisions.

Chairperson Koenig asked Ms. Harper and the other advocates to put a fact sheet together to educate people who want to raise ducks.

Councilwoman Washington stated that she was still one hundred percent behind the duck ordinance. She further stated that very few people would want to do this other than the serious urban farmers and she encouraged the Committee to pass a duck resolution with the appropriate language to ensure the safety of the ducks.

Mr. Lyson asked if it was possible to single these groups out who have the knowledge for some type of licensure or membership group that required mandatory education or something to that effect to weed out people who might act impulsively getting ducks.

Chairperson Koenig stated that the County policy would be overarching and then the municipalities could be more specific.

Mr. Krohn stated that no one was more concerned about duck welfare than the people who showed up to speak in favor of the resolution.

Adjournment

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

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BARB BYRUM, CLERK OF THE BOARD