

**WEXFORD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Meeting \* Wednesday, December 03, 2014

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Housler.

Roll call: Present – Robert Colvin, Leslie Housler, Robert Hilty, Gideon Mitchell, Alan Devereaux, Gary Taylor, John Fuscone, and Bill Goodwill; Absent – Mark Howie

Pledge of Allegiance.

**Additions/Deletions to the Agenda** - None

**Approval of the Agenda**

**MOTION by Comm Taylor, seconded by Comm Fuscone to approve the agenda, as presented.**

**All in favor.**

**Employee Recognition** - None

**Presentations and Reports** - None

**Public Comments**

Jolene Coel, Mesick, would like the Board to save MSUE and 4-H in Wexford County. She submitted petition signed by residents of Mesick. She would like to see this program continue for many, many years. These programs touch every one of your lives.

Wade Sherburn, Mesick, appeared before the Board to lobby for the extension. As a Christmas tree farmer their services are invaluable. Jill O'Donnell, from MSUE, is recognize throughout the State for the services she performs.

Jerry Deer, Cadillac, believes MSUE is a valuable service that we must keep in Cadillac.

David McCurdy, Cadillac Attorney, believes that the discontinuance of MSUE will have a tremendous effect on the dairy farmers, Christmas tree farmers and the education programs they provide.

Mary Bellows, Cadillac resident and retiree of MSUE, outlined some of the services MSUE provides outside of 4-H and Christmas trees. She believes MSUE makes a difference in the community in many ways.

Mark Lagerway, Cadillac, explained how Baker College and MSUE work together in a partnership. MSUE provides services to the community in many ways.

Maggie Staub, Cadillac, has been involved with MSUE through taking classes in babysitting and child development. She also, at the request of her mother, took canning classes. These skills will stay with her a lifetime.

Karen Staub, Cadillac, is the Prevention Coordinator for Child Development which deals with child abuse and neglect. The classes MSUE offers these parents is vital to helping out the community.

Elizabeth Walker, 2130 W. 14 Road, Mesick, as a 4-H leader she believes MSUE should stay in place. MSUE helps our children to learn problem solving, how to support each other and set goals. It also give youth an opportunity to be involved with something after school rather than sports.

William Walker, 2130 W. 14 Road, Mesick, passed around a petition today during school and got 36 signatures to keep MSUE for students involved with 4-H or who would like to be involved.

Paris Philo, 1856 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Marion, explained the training MSUE provides for child care services. Tracey Trautner, MSUE employee, works closely with instructors in the area for 4-H services.

Mike Solomon, Cadillac, touched on the meeting he and Mike Mix had with the City of Cadillac about taking over the DPW services in the County. He understands that the Board of Commissioners has a tough job to do in trying to balance the budget. He too believes MSUE provides a great service to the community and 4-H is part of that value. He felt if MSUE could save one child it would pay the entire expense for one year.

Tiyi Schippers, 427 Crippen Street, Cadillac, supports the services provided by MSUE and, if eliminated, it will look bad for all of us.

Mike Solomon, Cadillac, touched on a cost savings the county may realize with Cedar Creek and the RAP monies. He also talked about the DPW and the building they operate from.

Steve Cunningham, 7211 S. 15 Road, Harrietta, saved his thoughts on Zoning for another time. He supports MSUE and 4-H as they are a knowledge base in the area. If the board is looking at MSUE through a marketing value only, dollars are received back into the County by Christmas trees, but not directly into the County's budget.

Joyce Taylor, 1569 S. 33 Road, Selma, as a member of MSUE, studies farms in the Wexford County area. At the last census there were 317 farms in 2010. These farms

receive direct support from MSUE. She feels the County should support MSUE as the County receives a lot back for a small price.

Rod Bellows, 309 E. Lake Mitchell, believes the county receives a lot for the investment of \$56,000. He pointed out the dollars MSUE brings back into the County. He suggested taking money from Fund Balance to save MSUE.

Gordon Roush, Clam Lake Township, felt that as a small Christmas tree grower, the help and guidance he receives from Jill O'Donnell is his best resource to help out with common problems.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of the November 19, 2014, Regular Meeting Minutes  
**MOTION by Comm Taylor, seconded by Comm Goodwill to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented.**

**All in favor.**

### **Agenda Items**

1. Offer to Purchase Two Surplus County Vehicles  
**MOTION by Comm Taylor, seconded by Comm Goodwill to approve the offer received in the amount of \$700 for a 1977 Ford Dump Truck and a 1994 Chevrolet Truck, as presented.**

**Roll call: Motion approved unanimously.**

2. Discuss Date Change for HR/PS Committee's December Meeting  
**MOTION by Comm Colvin, seconded by Comm Hilty to change the date of the HR/Public Safety Committee's meeting from December 23<sup>rd</sup> to December 9, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. as presented.**

**All in favor.**

3. Discussion of the 2015 Recommended Budget  
**MOTION by Comm Hilty, seconded by Comm Goodwill to approve the funding of MSUE in the amount of \$56,000 and provide them with 9 months notice if the county is not renewing their contract.**

Margaret Bethel, Interim Director for MSU, appeared before the Board to discuss the elimination of MSUE. First she provided the Board with her background and her relationship with MSUE over the past 31 years. She is present tonight to preserve the partnership with Wexford County. A millage was discussed in earlier years which carries along with it pluses and minuses. In 2016, she would like to get together with the Board

and work to help bridge a budget. She understands that MSUE's true budget is more than the \$56,000 requested if you figure in office space, heat, lights, etc. Ms. Bethel went on to explain the formula used to come up with the \$56,000 budget figure. She also explained the process of combining two or three counties to receive the same service.

Ms. Bethel explained that if the Board decided to not fund MSUE what the County could see. The 4-H would no longer be hosted in the County. Soil testing and plant review can be taken to another county; however, MSUE staff members would not come into the County to perform services.

**Roll call: Motion failed four to four with Commissioners Mitchell, Devereaux, Taylor and Fuscone voting against the motion.**

Adm. Hinton's proposed budget included the recommendations by the Finance Committee including:

- Use \$12,660 from General Fund to reduce Community Corrections Administrative fees from \$22,660 to \$10,000
- Incorporate three unpaid days affecting certain employees during Christmas and New Year's, December 28-29, and 30, 2015
- Take the remaining balance from reserves

If layoffs were put in place, Adm. Hinton felt there may be a possible savings of \$30,000. The County would also have to work with six unions and effects bargaining. A commissioner pointed out that the annual budget is seldom spent in full and there may be dollars left at the end of 2014. Adm. Hinton felt it would be close to even. However, the County does realize some cost savings in payroll when employees leave the county, it may take a couple of months to replace them or when employees are on sick leave. Other costs that are uncontrolled are out county inmate housing and prisoners' medical along with Child Care.

**MOTION by Comm Goodwill, seconded by Comm Colvin to accept the budget as presented at the last Board of Commissioners meeting and fund MSUE and take the deficit from Fund Balance and provide \$12,660 to Community Corrections.**

Adm. Hinton pointed out that the MSUE Agreement is due to expire December 2016.

Comm Goodwill withdrew his motion and Comm Colvin withdrew his second and a new motion was made.

**MOTION by Comm Goodwill, seconded by Comm Colvin to accept the budget as presented at the last Board of Commissioners meeting with the addition to include MSUE, adjusting Community Corrections Administrative fee from \$22,000 to \$10,000 and pay for the deficit from fund balance and the Board of Commissioners and MSUE looking at alternatives in financing in the coming year.**

**Roll call: Motion approved unanimously.**

4. Budget Amendment(s)

**MOTION by Comm Mitchell, seconded by Comm Devereaux to approve the budget amendment for Fund 290, dated 12/3/2014, as presented.**

12/3/2014

**Wexford County Board of Commissioners  
 Amendments to the 2014 Budget**

<b>Adj #</b>	<b>Acct</b>	<b>Acct Description</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expense</b>
20141201	290.000.404.00	Revenues	\$(1,200,000)	(a)
	290.000.664.00	Interest Earned - Deposits	\$(100)	
	290.000.695.00	Transfer In/General	\$(5,000)	
	290.000.800.00	Services & Charges		\$(1,205,100)
	Change in sub recipient from County to the State of Michigan eliminates need for budget items.			

**Roll call: Motion approved unanimously.**

5. Committee of the Whole – Jail Project – Nothing to report

**Administrator’s Report**

Comm Devereaux left at 6:25p.m.

Adm. Hinton, the architects, City Manager, and City Employees met to discuss the infrastructure of the jail. Architects to meet at the jail to work on other details. The process is moving along. There is a question as to when Rural Development will allow us to solicit bids, March or June.

A hearing has been scheduled in Benzie County for the pending County lawsuit. Either the Administrator or someone from the Sheriff’s Department will be present.

Finance Committee packets will be mailed out on Monday rather than this Friday. Adm. Hinton will be off December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

Adm. Hinton reminded the Board that there would be a Christmas potluck scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup>. Also County employees have purchased gifts for the Salvation Army Angel program. Originally twenty tags were filled and seven more were dropped off. This project has been well received by the County employees.

**Correspondence**

1. City of Cadillac’s 2015-2020 Community Recreation Plan

**Public Comments**

Michael Solomon thanked the Board for their action tonight and the Finance Committee for all their hard work.

Jolene Coel thanked the Board for their consideration tonight. Her daughter was in 4-H and it was a great benefit.

Joyce Oatley, Cadillac, was glad the County decided to keep MSUE in place. She disagrees that a millage should be brought before the people. She believes it is the responsibility of the Board of Commissioners to continue MSUE for the next 100 years. They are too important to put it up to the whim of voters.

Scott Barlett, 523 E. Division, Cadillac, understands it is hard to put a budget together. He reminded the Board that the Christmas tree business was big in this area and they are very dependent on Jill O'Donnell of MSUE.

Jerry Deer, Cadillac, suggested that the Board look at putting together a Citizens Advisory Panel consisting of volunteers from the area. He believes the volunteers will work hard and look at the total picture. This panel will work with the Board to get funding for these programs. He is very willing to help out on the panel.

Margaret Bethel, Grand Rapids, thanked the Board for putting MSUE back into the budget. She stressed that they are very willing to come back to the budget table and work with the Board of Commissioners next year.

Gunther Schwartz, Tustin, touched on his use of MSUE over the years; however, he was before the Board to focus on the jail project. With the budget problems the County is now facing, he questioned how there would be funding for the new jail project. He supports a new jail, but not in the area by the Seventh Adventist School.

Tabatha Tessler, Cadillac, thanked the Board for keeping MSUE in place.

### **Liaison Reports**

Comm Colvin announced that the Department of Social Services Project Christmas is scheduled for December 13, 2014. This will service many families throughout the community.

### **Board Comment**

Comm Mitchell suggested that flowers should be sent by the Board to Comm Howie for the recent death of his mother.

Comm Fuscone felt it was really tough to keep MSUE in place.

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**Chairman's Comments**

Comm Housler had mixed feelings on the budget. He is not in favor of using fund balance to balance the budget as he is very protective of it. He does not want to make a habit of it. He thanked the Finance Committee and the Administrator for all the time they put into working on the budget.

**Adjourn**

**MOTION by Comm Taylor, seconded by Comm Goodwill to adjourn  
at 6:45 p.m.**

**All in favor.**

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Leslie D. Housler, Chairperson

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Elaine L. Richardson, County Clerk