

ALLEGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

INDEX

AUGUST 27, 2009 PLANNING SESSION

JOURNAL 58

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT MATTER</u>
501	1	AUGUST 27, 2009 PLANNING SESSION - INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL
501	2	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NO COMMENTS
501	3	MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2009 SESSION - APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED
502	4	AGENDA - ADOPTED AS PRESENTED
502-503	5	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING
504	6	BREAK - 10:10 A.M.
504	7	PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION, CONTINUED
504-505	8	2010 BUDGET DISCUSSION
505	9	RECESS UNTIL AFTER CONCLUSION OF BOARD MEETING

August 27, 2009 Planning Session

**AUGUST 27, 2009 SESSION - INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL**

1/ The Board of Commissioners of the County of Allegan, State of Michigan, met in the Commissioners' Room of the County Services Building in the Township of Allegan on August 27, 2009, at 9:30 A.M. in accordance with the motion for adjournment of August 6, 2009, and rules of this Board; Chairman Jones presiding.

The invocation was offered by District 3 Commissioner VanEck.

The County Clerk led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Upon roll call the following members answered as Commissioners for the respective Districts:

DIST #1	TERRY BURNS [ARR: 8:45 AM]	DIST #7	DON BLACK
DIST #2	STEVE McNEAL	DIST #8	TOM JESSUP
DIST #3	PAUL VANECK	DIST #9	FRITZ SPREITZER
DIST #4	MARK DeYOUNG	DIST #10	JON CAMPBELL
DIST #5	DEAN KAPENGA	DIST #11	LARRY JONES
DIST #6	MAX THIELE		

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NO COMMENTS**

2/ Chairman Jones opened the meeting to public participation and as there were no comments, he closed the meeting to public participation.

**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2009 SESSION - APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED**

3/ Moved by Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner Thiele to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2009 Session as distributed. Motion carried.

**AGENDA - ADOPTED AS PRESENTED**

4/ Chairman Jones asked if there were any additions or changes to the agenda; none were offered.

Moved by Commissioner VanEck, seconded by Commissioner Thiele to approve the meeting agenda as requested. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION****ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING**

5/ Administrator Rob Sarro stated that the new Michigan Planning Act required and caused us to reevaluate the planning process. The Planning Commission was looking at their bylaws to effect some changes that would improve their functions. There are 23 out of the 24 townships who have their own local planning commission. He also explained that the laws concerning planning commissions at the county level state that IF a county has a planning commission, it SHALL do various things, but this is different from the laws requiring a county to have a planning commission.

There was discussion regarding the purpose of the planning commission: To work in conjunction with the Allegan County Parks Commission, cities and municipalities to coordinate county-wide planning and assist in helping to obtain any federal funds that may be available.

Rob asked the Board to determine what their goal regarding the planning commission is. Kevin Ricco explained the recommendations from McKenna. Developing a department of community development or economic development commission would allow for some economies of scale combining staff from various departments. Restructuring internal resources would serve us well and permit closer cooperation in these disciplines.

McKenna indicated that the planning commission and an economic development should remain separate entities.

Valdis Kalnins presented an overview of the Michigan Planning Enabling act and related it to the activities of the planning commission. He reported that we are in the process of updating the Master Plan for the county. The Master Plan is to be reviewed at least every 5 years and upon completion of this update, there are plans to address different areas each year so that the plan remains current. The Planning Commission is to review projects prior to building and shall address the capital improvements plan and make recommendation.

The processes don't exist or the formal structure doesn't exist to coordinate the planning commission work with other areas. We need to formalize what the resources are and how to integrate the functions, develop goals and stay goals focused.

The following Planning Commission members addressed the topic:

1. Kelly Tobolic questioned whose responsibility is it to bring county projects to the Planning Commission?
2. Dawn Buist addressed the advisory nature of the commission and stated that the more buy-in you have from the members the better the process works.
3. Ken Pardee stated the transportation building worked closely with the Planning Commission and the process worked well. The project for moving the Probate Judge back to the County Building was more last minute, and they read about the ground-breaking for the animal shelter building in the newspaper.
4. Marvin Voss related how well the process worked when the local units and planning commission work together.
5. Tom Vogler stated that the planning commission affords the local municipalities a means to coordinate with other units. However the structure needs work.
6. Kathy Pardee related some of her experiences from the 20 years she spent in Watson Township government. The local units need more information and help than they are getting from the County. Whether that is through the planning commission or not, the Board needs to know that more is needed at the local level.

There was discussion on how to integrate past form and function as we move forward. Statute mandates that the changes be done by 2011.

**BREAK - 10:10 A.M.**

6/ Upon reconvening at 10:25 A.M., the following Commissioners were present: Commissioner Burns, McNeal, VanEck, DeYoung, Kapenga, Thiele, Black, Jessup, Spreitzer, Campbell and Jones. Absent - none.

**PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION, CONTINUED**

7/ Before the Planning Commission bylaws are reviewed and updated, we need to revisit our goals for the planning commission. Rob stated that the Board needs to establish the goals for what the Board wants the Planning Commission to accomplish and then establish the bylaws that will help achieve those goals. He suggested that a Board committee address this.

**2010 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

8/ Rob explained that the overall budget requests by the departments are very close to last year. Unfortunately the revenues have significantly decreased mainly because of the decrease in property taxes.

Blaine McLeod presented a less than rosy picture of what the county property taxes will bring in next year. The county will see a reduction in taxable value in the residential class that is 2.5% to 3% less than last year because of the inflation rate multiplier and how Proposal A works. The consumer price index is a negative number and means that we will experience a loss in the amount of revenues that property taxes will generate. We won't know until October whether the tax commission will use a negative number or a one; the difference means approximately \$80,000.00 for the county if a negative number is not used.

Rob explained that he met with department heads yesterday to try to come up with a means of closing the gap between the

revenues and the projected expenditures for 2010. The listing he presented will be distributed to Commissioners.

**RECESS UNTIL AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOARD MEETING**

9/ Moved by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner McNeal to recess until after the 1:00 p.m. Board meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

  
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Clerk Register

