HEALTH SERVICES MILLAGE SUBCOMMITTEE
September 30, 2019
Minutes

Members Present: Tennis, Sebolt, Naeyaert, Slaughter, Stivers, and Trubac

Members Absent: Morgan

Others Present: Jared Cypher, Jan Bidwell, Lori Noyer, Ryan Buck, and others

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tennis at 5:30 p.m. in Personnel Conference Room “D & E” of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Approval of the September 16, 2019 Minutes

CHAIRPERSON TENNIS STATED THAT, WITHOUT OBJECTION, THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2019 HEALTH SERVICES MILLAGE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING WERE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Limited Public Comment

Jan Bidwell stated that she was an embedded social worker with the Lansing Police Department (“LPD”). She further stated that she believed that LPD was the only integrated department with regards to law enforcement and mental health. Ms. Bidwell stated that there was a need for funding, estimating the need to be approximately $400 million.

Commissioner Stivers asked if $400 million in funding was an exact number.

Ms. Bidwell stated that it was off-the-cuff. She offered examples of the need for mental health treatment.

Commissioner Stivers asked where was the need was the greatest.

Ms. Bidwell stated that Community Mental Health would be able to answer that question.

There was a discussion about the amount of funding needed in Ingham County.

Commissioner Slaughter stated that CMH had provided recommendations.
1. Health Services Millage – Discussion

Chairperson Tennis asked that everyone provide their perspective, so that a framework could be developed.

Commissioner Sebolt stated that the millage needed to be reworked to expand services and the commissioners should not be afraid of seeking a larger millage rate. He further stated that his concern was the he did not want new money to be treated as replacement money when it should be for expanded services.

Commissioner Naeyaert stated that she agreed with Commissioner Sebolt. She further stated that something should be added for seniors and community mental health. Commissioner Naeyaert stated that those leaving the jail did not make up a large portion of the electorate although they were an important part of the community. She further stated that seniors made up a larger portion of the electorate and needed to be prioritized. Commissioner Naeyaert stated that there were seniors who had no access to mental health treatment and thus were as vulnerable as some that are being released from the jail.

Commissioner Stivers stated that the overall goal of the original millage was that everyone in the county had access to care. She further stated that it was based on residency, not citizenship. Commissioner Stivers stated that she was concerned with long, complicated millage language in that it may be challenging to justify or explain to the electorate.

Commissioner Stivers stated that their first goal should be to fully fund the Ingham Health Plan (“IHP”). She further stated that their second goal should be to fully fund CMH, however restricting that funding to the county. Commissioner Stivers stated that their third goal should be to fully fund jail medical. She further stated that she was open to assisting Tri-County Office on Aging (“TCOA”).

Commissioner Slaughter stated that there was a shortcoming in assisting young people with mental health and that would be one of his top focuses. He further stated that it may make sense to put forth separate millages.

Chairperson Tennis stated that some of the concepts were already incorporated in the existing millage language.

Commissioner Stivers stated that there would be concerns with what residency in the county was when discussing undocumented individuals or when someone was incarcerated at the jail, but not necessarily a resident of the county.

Commissioner Sebolt stated that he did not want existing monies to otherwise become unavailable because millage monies would become available.

Chairperson Tennis stated that the discussion was also about expanding scope of services. He further stated that he would prefer that the organizations the millage would fund be explicit in the
millage. Chairperson Tennis stated that another way of doing it would be to have separate millages.

Commissioners Stivers stated that it was an excellent idea to have separate millages.

Commissioner Naeyaert stated that if a separate millage were to be placed on the ballot, she would prefer it be placed on the ballot along with the health services millage. She further stated that it may be easier to advocate for a single millage.

There was a discussion regarding the 200% of poverty line as a ceiling.

Chairperson Tennis asked what IHP’s eligibility criteria was.

Lori Noyer, IHP Executive Director, stated that they followed $28,000 limit. She provided a historical overview of that limit.

Chairperson Tennis stated that they may want to consider a 250% of poverty line.

Discussion.

Jared Cypher, Deputy Controller, stated that the Committee may want to consider household income instead of individual income in the millage language.

Commissioner Stivers stated that the other question was whether they would expand to include dental through IHP.

Ms. Noyer stated that they already included dental through the millage.

There was a discussion regarding what the millage rate should be.

Commissioner Naeyaert stated that she could not support this unless TCOA was included.

Chairperson Tennis sought clarification that Commissioner Naeyaert would support the language if there was a standalone senior-related millage.

Commissioner Naeyaert answered yes.

Commissioner Sebolt stated that he was of two minds with the idea of separate millages. He further stated that he could see IHP being picked apart as a standalone, however at the same time, when they dressed up the jail millage, they made it an easier sell. Commissioner Sebolt stated that he was interested in what the Chamber would be saying.

Chairperson Tennis stated that they knew what the Chamber was going to say, specifically they were going to say no to everything.
Commissioner Stivers stated that the millage would likely pass given the programs it would support.

Chairperson Naeyaert stated that TCOA also offered services that CMH offered. She further stated that the millage language should include TCOA.

Chairperson Tennis stated that the millage language should specify the entities that would be eligible to receive funding. He further stated that other counties such as Saginaw County have millage language that we could adopt in Ingham County.

Commissioner Naeyaert stated that the millage language should be simplified.

Commissioner Stivers stated that the millage language should be clarified and simplified.

There was a discussion about what language other counties had utilized.

Commissioner Slaughter asked what rates would be utilized if there was one millage with expanded services or if the matter was separated into two millages.

Commissioner Stivers stated that for the next meeting, they should be provided numbers for what potential entities would want in funding from the millage.

Chairperson Tennis requested a few proposals be drafted for consideration by the subcommittee at their next meeting based on the discussion at tonight’s meeting.

Chairperson Tennis disclosed that in his day job, he represented the Alzheimer’s Association and Elder Law and Disability Right Section of the State Bar of Michigan. He further disclosed that his firm represented the Elder Justice Initiative and Elder Law of Michigan.

Commissioner Naeyaert disclosed that her boss was the Vice Chair of Michigan House of Representatives Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors.

There was a discussion regarding when the millage language had to be approved by the commissioners in order to place it on a 2020 ballot.

Announcements

None.

Public Comment

Ms. Noyer stated that the deadline to place a millage on the March 2020 Presidential Primary ballot was December 3, 2019.
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

BARB BYRUM, CLERK OF THE BOARD