

The special meeting of the Oceana County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairperson Walker at 7:00 p.m. at the Oceana County Services Building.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Chairperson Walker.

Roll was called by the Clerk. Present: Ms. Meyette, Mr. Erickson, Mr. Morse, Mr. Christians, Mr. Beggs, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Walker.

Dr. Sobie, Oceana County Administrator; Ms. Anderson, Oceana County Clerk; Mr. Craig Mast, Oceana County Sheriff; Mr. Ryan Schiller, Oceana County Undersheriff; Mr. Todd Butler, Granger Construction; Ms. Sharon Hallack, Elbridge Township resident; Mr. Arko den Engelse, Shelby Township resident; Mr. Michael Cook, Golden Township resident; Ms. Erin MacGregor, Benona Township resident; Mr. Richard Rafaelli, Shelby Township resident; Ms. Marilyn Morse, Benona Township resident; Mr. Joshua Draper, Ferry Township resident; Mr. Jack Wittman, City of Hart resident; Mr. Garry McKeen, Benona Township resident; Ms. Gail Merten, Elbridge Township resident; Mr. Micah Johnson, Elbridge Township resident; Ms. Allison Scarbrough, Oceana County Press; and Mr. John Cavanagh, Oceana's Herald-Journal correspondent, were also present.

Chairperson Walker asked if any commissioners wished to declare a conflict of interest on the agenda items. No conflicts were declared.

Chairman Walker asked if there were any additions to the agenda.

Moved by Mr. Morse and supported by Mr. Christians to approve the agenda as presented.

Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Walker began discussion regarding the feasibility of constructing a new jail and Sheriff's Department facilities supported by a new additional millage. He then requested Sheriff Mast to proceed with his presentation.

Sheriff Mast stated that the Sheriff's office is a constitutional office and that there must be a jail located in the County Seat. He explained that an energy assessment was performed by Honeywell to determine the efficiency of the facility. The results found were that the facility would need a multitude of upgrades and improvements to continue to be operational. Sheriff Mast continued with the insufficiency of the design of the jail as well as the decline in the structural integrity.

Undersheriff Schiller then detailed the desired design of the proposed facility and construction timeline and costs. Undersheriff Schiller currently, Oceana County does not have the ability to properly detain dangerous juvenile offenders and stated that there is a definite need for this and noted that a new jail facility would provide this benefit. Also, he stated that with a larger facility, there is a possibility to house inmates from other counties for a contracted amount which could help to offset the cost of operation.

Public comment

Several citizens shared their viewpoints for and against the proposed facility as well as some possible options to consider.

RESOLUTION NO 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A BALLOT PROPOSAL FOR A NEW ADDITIONAL MILLAGE TO CONSTRUCT, EQUIP, FURNISH, FINANCE, AND OPERATE A NEW COUNTY JAIL AND SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT OFFICES

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Mr. Erickson and seconded by Mr. Morse:

WHEREAS, the County of Oceana (the “County”) operates and maintains the County Sheriff’s Department and Jail Facility (collectively, the “Existing Facility”); and

WHEREAS, the County has identified, through the County’s Sheriff’s Office and Jail Master Plan, that it is necessary to replace the Existing Facility and construct a new County Jail and Sheriff’s Department offices to provide enhanced security and safety measures and systems; additional needed capacity; improved and updated HVAC and mechanical systems; improved space for inmate processing; accommodations for offices and space for information technology systems; and costs for design, engineering, financing, equipping, furnishing and operating the new County Jail and Sheriff’s Department offices (collectively, the “Project”); and

WHEREAS, the Property Tax Limitation Act, which is Act 62 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1933, as amended (“Act 62”), authorizes the County to submit a ballot proposal to the County electors for authorization to increase the County’s total tax rate limitation as provided in Section 6 of Article IX of the State Constitution of 1963 in order to levy taxes for a specified purpose for a specified number of years; and

WHEREAS, Section 358a of the Michigan Election Law, which is Act 116 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1954, as amended (“the Michigan Election Law”), authorizes the County to call a special election on a regular election date to be held in the County for the purpose of submitting one or more ballot propositions to the electors of the County; and

WHEREAS, the wording of the ballot proposal to be submitted to the electors is attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

The wording of the ballot proposal to be submitted to the County electors for a 2.25 mill new additional millage for the purpose of constructing, equipping, furnishing, financing, and operating a new County Jail and Sheriff’s Department offices for a period of 20 years, 2022 through 2041 inclusive, shall be in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A and in such form is hereby approved and certified to the County Clerk as required by the Michigan Election Law.

The ballot proposal shall be submitted to the electors of the County at the August 2, 2022 election.

The County Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to provide all notices of the election as may be required by law, including the Michigan Election Law.

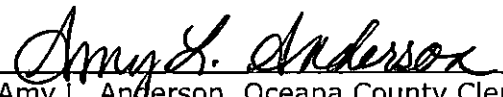
All resolutions and parts of resolutions in conflict herewith, shall be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Comments were made by several of the commissioners in favor of proceeding with placing this issue on the August primary to allow for a vote of the people to decide.

Roll call vote: Mr. Erickson - yes; Mr. Morse - yes; Mr. Hardy - yes; Ms. Meyette - yes; Mr. Christians - yes; Mr. Beggs - yes; and Mr. Walker - yes.

Motion carried.

Chairperson Walker asked if there was any further business to come before the Board. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.


Amy L. Anderson, Oceana County Clerk

12/28/2022
Date


Mr. Walker, Chairperson