

APPROVED
PROCEEDINGS OF THE OTTAWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY SESSION – SECOND DAY

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 1:32 p.m. and was called to order by the Chair.

Mr. Holtvluwer pronounced the invocation.

The Clerk led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present at roll call: Messrs. Kuyers, Swartout, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Hehl, Rycenga, Schrotenboer, Disselkoen, Karsten, Holtrop, Holtvluwer. (10)

Absent: Mrs. Kortman. (1)

Public Comment and Communications from County Staff

2009 State of the County Address by County Administration Alan G. Vanderberg:



STATE OF OTTAWA COUNTY 2009

PRESENTED BY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR ALAN G. VANDERBERG TO THE OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 24, 2009

Chair Disselkoen, Vice-Chair Kuyers, and members of the Board, I thank you for the opportunity to present this 5th annual State of the County address. I believe it is important to take time each year to reflect upon a few of the accomplishments of the past year and focus on the some of the initiatives that we will undertake in the months ahead.

Much of 2008 was spent completing objectives identified in the 2007-2008 strategic plan, and as such, I will once again organize the State of the County to correspond to the strategic plan's framework. I continue to be amazed at how many people have viewed the strategic plan on miOttawa.org and printed it out for reference. We strive to make the plan a living, breathing document and daily guide to our actions, and I believe we move closer each year to achieving that goal.

Ottawa County is committed to excellence and the delivery of cost-effective public services. There is no more concise way than our mission statement to tell our residents, employees, and customers what Ottawa County is all about. Every day our employees work hard to find creative ways to deliver outstanding service within limited resources, which is why the first of our four goals, to **MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNTY**, is so critical to what we do. Residents trust Ottawa County government to use tax dollars wisely, and with Michigan's economic climate, prudence and foresight have become even more important to our organization.

In 2008 we maintained our high credit ratings with all three major rating agencies and completed the 5-year general fund annual operating deficit elimination plan in only three years.

The important message regarding County finances is that we are in a good financial position and relative to most other Michigan local governments, in an excellent position. Our focus is to remain financially secure position while meeting increased service demands in these economically turbulent times. Organizations such as the State of Michigan and Macomb County spent reserves down and now must react to the times with significant layoffs and reductions in service. Ottawa County is committed to making tough decisions earlier well before crisis strikes in order to remain financially healthy. In 2008, we faced and made the first economy related budget cuts in County memory. We will engage citizens in the 2010 Budget process and are planning five citizen budget meetings, one to be held in each quadrant of the County and one at the Fillmore Administrative Complex. County staff is working with departments, agencies, courts and local units to develop a comprehensive package of all County stimulus requests.

The battle to restore statutory revenue sharing for counties received welcome news from the State economic battle front with the news that the Governor's proposed 2010 budget includes \$49 million to provide full and partial funding for county's that will exhaust their Revenue Sharing Reserve Fund prior to or during 2010. We will work with others to ensure that the entire amount is included in the final 2010 budget. Ottawa County rejoins the State revenue sharing funding cycle in 2011, making it important to ensure the State lives up to its statutory commitment during the upcoming budget cycle.

Many factors outside of our control will impact the short- and long-term financial outlook for the County. The National and State economic climate and the free-falling housing market impacts County revenues, and to that end, in 2009 we will refine our forecasting tools to ensure the County has the best information possible to help meet future challenges. Current forecasts show that if our spending and revenue continue at existing levels, we could again see an \$4.5 million annual operating deficit at the end of the next five years.

The discretionary services ranking tool developed by Ottawa County in partnership with Dr. Lynn Harvey, Professor Emeritus of Michigan State University is now being replicated in both Allegan and Kent counties. We are eager to see what improvements those counties make on the model to further refine the tool which provides another valuable input to the budget balancing process.

Our second goal is to **MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS, EMPLOYEES, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.** miottawa.org achieved the status as one of the top ten websites in the Annual Digital Counties Survey in 2008. The website also generated over 200 percent more revenue for departments in 2008, which resulted in a 55 percent increase in convenience fee revenue. 2009 will likely see significant growth online with the planned development of applications for delinquent tax payments, jail bed and board payments, a GIS mapstore, and marriage and death record ordering. Beyond the revenue generation, many upgrades to current applications as well as the development of applications to help achieve internal efficiencies were created and implemented. An online job application system went live on January 1st, creating a paperless system to quickly allow departments to review incoming applications. I can personally attest to the efficiencies of the system with the review of hundreds of applications.

The 2008 citizen survey demonstrated how the tough economic times we are experiencing color the opinions of citizens toward government. Economic development, unemployment and taxes were the most identified issues facing Ottawa County. While down from 2006, the approval rating of Ottawa County is still quite high at 70 percent, with residents citing no problems, good services, and wise spending as reasons for the positive rating. The citizen survey also asked residents' opinions of the priority for the four strategic plan goals, serving as a gut check for the Board. All four goals had a priority rating over 85 percent, demonstrating that our internal compass is correct. Also new for 2008 was a question about the perception of personal safety. A remarkable 99 percent of

respondents felt safe in their neighborhood. This attests to the high quality of life and the superb job of county and local law enforcement.

During 2008 Ottawa County began the **GOLD** (Growth Opportunities in Learning and Development) Standard Training Programs. These programs were in direct response to employee surveys regarding the need for solid, meaningful professional development and training opportunities for our employees. The GOLD Standard Training is based upon the theory that employee training and development leads to increased knowledge and skills, which leads to increased employee engagement which results in increased productivity, ultimately resulting in organizational improvement.

Included in these trainings were the GOLD Standard Leaders Program and the GOLD Standard Employee courses. The total number of GOLD Standard Training sessions 2008 included: 82 general employee courses and 712 employees trained; department Specific Classes – 20 classes with 272 employees attending; GOLD Standard Leaders Program – 2 sessions with 40 employees attending.

The third goal established in the strategic plan is to **CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHY PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC, AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**. The Fillmore Administrative Complex addition was completed in 2008. The County Treasurer, Drain Commissioner, MSU Cooperative Extension Office and County Clerk Vital Records and Election Division have moved into their new space. The Prosecutor's Office moved into expanded space. We will host an open house at the Fillmore Administrative Complex once the Register of Deeds has moved in so that residents and other stakeholders can tour the new offices. The Ottawa County Courthouse project is progressing in an excellent fashion about a month ahead of the original schedule and on budget. Both facilities are on track to achieve LEED certification. This project represents the flagship of County facilities and also the end of a 15-year facility development plan. An event including an open house will be held at the new Courthouse this year to commemorate this event.

Water quality remains an important component for maintaining a high quality of life in Ottawa County, and in 2008 we maintained our focus on bringing policy makers and scientists together to discuss the best approaches for maintaining our most valuable natural resource. The Water Quality Forum was a whole day event that attracted over 100 participants, all whom reported satisfaction with the event. The Forum is quickly becoming a regional and even statewide event,

attracting individuals from as far away as Arenac and Genesee Counties. Planning is already underway for the 2009 event, with an announcement coming within the next month. The Planning Commission is continuing to refine the request for proposal for the countywide groundwater inventory, discovering that a project of this magnitude has never been initiated. Ottawa County is also participating in local efforts to develop a plan of action based on water quality research in the Spring Lake area through "Rein in the Runoff" and will continue to provide representation to other local water quality projects as requested. The Planning and Performance Improvement Department will continue to work with local units of government and other stakeholders to complete the countywide groundwater inventory. These smaller local projects will help Ottawa County develop a countywide plan of action for addressing water quality concerns, keeping our waters safe, our tourism economy strong, and our citizens healthy.

The Planning & Grants Department's responsibilities expanded over time to include strategic planning, program evaluations, process and time-studies, and legislative analysis. In order to accurately reflect these expanded responsibilities, the Department was renamed in 2009 and is now known as the *Department of Planning and Performance Improvement*.

The Ottawa County Planning Commission and the Michigan State University Extension Service partnered to provide extensive training sessions on Wind, Solar and Geothermal Energy in order to provide information on how these alternative energy systems apply to homes, farms and businesses. The Planning Commission developed one of the first of its kind nationally Wind Energy Model Ordinance and an Ethanol Distillery Model Ordinance in 2009.

The County Parks Department continued its focus on greenways as it expanded the park system with land purchases along the Grand and Macatawa Rivers. A number of significant park improvement projects were also completed including dune stairs and viewing decks on top of Mt. Pisgah which provide spectacular views of the Holland harbor while preserving the landmark dune feature. The Parks Department also completed improvements to its newest county park, the 595-acre Upper Macatawa Natural Area, which was dedicated in June.

Ottawa County's public-private partnership with iPCS Wireless Inc. has resulted in the construction and placement of new wireless broadband towers and equipment throughout rural areas of Ottawa County. These towers and equipment are providing wireless, mobile, broadband coverage to many residents and businesses throughout the County – many of whom found

themselves in broadband dead-zones are already taking advantage of this new service. The installation of towers and equipment in two additional County locations within the next two months will mark the completion of this innovative partnership.

Ottawa County is partnering with a group of stakeholders and Grand Valley State University (GVSU) to conduct the West Michigan Transit Linkages Study. The concept is to study linkages between several urban areas in West Michigan and to analyze the need, feasibility, overall cost, and funding availability for three potential types of commuter transit services:

- 1) Travel between the existing transit systems in Grand Haven, Grand Rapids, Holland, and Muskegon
- 2) Travel from communities that do not presently have transit service
- 3) Travel to major employers

Participation in regional projects such as the West Michigan Transit Linkages Study, Lower Grand River Watershed Organization, WIRED, and the West Michigan Strategic Alliance's Green Infrastructure Initiative will improve the overall community and competitive environment in Ottawa County, and we will seek other opportunities to contribute on a regional level.

There will be an increased emphasis on overall sustainability in 2009.

The final goal established by the Board of Commissioners is to **Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services**. We have undertaken the review of several departments and functions over the past four years and the results are significant. Reorganization of the equalization department, the parenting plus program, former Administrative Services Department, combination of the Accounting and Finance departments into the Fiscal Services Department, and changing the Soldiers & Sailors Relief Committee to the Veteran's Affairs Committee model have resulted in a cumulative savings of just under \$1.5 million. The County continues to refine the outcome-based performance measurement system implemented three years ago. Evaluations conducted by the Planning and Performance Improvement Department over the past five years have resulted in the verification of cost-effective program services valued at more than \$25 million. In addition, there has been over \$4.3 million in

direct cost savings in those instances where inefficient and ineffective programs were recommended to be eliminated, restructured or privatized.

In 2009, an internal team will evaluate the effectiveness of PA 2 Liquor Tax Revenue Dollars and an external team will evaluate the effectiveness of the Lakeshore Coordinating Council (LCC) and whether this organization still represents a best practice approach of managing substance abuse revenue from a variety of sources. Evaluations of the public utility function and the potential combination of the Clerk and Register of Deeds function will also be completed in 2009. A survey of administrative positions in our comparable counties indicated that our Fiscal Services Department has more full-time equated positions than is the norm. While some of this can certainly be explained by the fact that Ottawa is the only County of Michigan's 83 counties to have its own insurance authority and staff the Community Mental Health accounting function, we believe that accountability and transparency require the full study of this department.

These reports will be in addition to the ongoing evaluations conducted by the Planning Department, which for 2009 include the Juvenile, District Court, and Circuit Court Drug Courts and the initial time-study analysis of the Justice Imaging project.

In 2008, we continued to offer services to our local units of government, including imaging and web improvement services through WebTecs. In 2009, we will continue to evaluate what services the county provides to assess the usability for the local units of government.

We live in troubled times. Many businesses in Ottawa have either significantly reduced their workforces and some have even closed their doors. Unemployment is approaching 10 percent. Even though times are tough, we also have much to be thankful for to accomplish in 2009, and I look forward to working with the Board of Commissioners, employees, and other County stakeholders to continually improve our operations and quality of services to residents.

B/C 09-048 Mr. Hehl moved to approve the agenda of today as presented. The motion passed.

B/C 09-049 Mr. Kuyers moved to approve the following Consent Resolutions:

1. To approve the Minutes of the February 12, 2009, Board of Commissioners Meeting.
2. To authorize the payroll of February 24, 2009, in the amount of \$535.85.
3. To approve the general claims in the amount of \$2,937,799.84 as presented by the summary report for February 1, 2009, through February 13, 2009.
4. To approve the appropriation changes greater than \$50,000 and those approved by the Administrator and Fiscal Services Director for \$50,000 or less which changed the total appropriation from the amended budget for the month of January 2009.

The motion passed as shown by the following vote: Yeas: Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Hehl, Karsten, Swartout, Holtvluwer, Rycenga, Holtrop, Kuyers, Schrotenboer, Disselkoen. (10)

B/C 09-050 Mr. Swartout moved to approve and authorize the Board Chairperson and Clerk to sign the contact with Fidlar Software for \$368,805, the funding to come from the Register of Deeds Automation Fund. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Hehl, Rycenga, Schrotenboer, Kuyers, Holtvluwer, Holtrop, Swartout, Karsten, Mrs. Ruiter, Mr. Disselkoen. (10)

B/C 09-051 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *W. Robert Huff to fill one (1) of three (3) vacancies on the Ottawa County Officers Compensation Commission to serve a two (2) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.

B/C 09-052 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *Robert G. Land to fill one (1) Technology Sector vacancy on the Ottawa County Technology Committee to serve a one (1) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2009. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.

B/C 09-053 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *Donald W. Schiele and *Randal D. Feenstra to fill two (2) Surveyor vacancies on the Ottawa County Remonumentation Committee to serve a two (2) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.

- B/C 09-054 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *Randall S. Schipper to fill one (1) Real Estate Attorney vacancy on the Ottawa County Remonumentation Committee to serve a two (2) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.
- B/C 09-055 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *D. Dale Mohr to fill one (1) Supervisor/Assessor Representative vacancy on the Ottawa County Remonumentation Committee to serve a two (2) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.
- B/C 09-056 Mrs. Ruiter moved to place into nomination and appoint *Lynne M. Doyle to fill one (1) of two (2) Member vacancies on the Lakeshore Coordinating Council Advisory Committee to serve a two (2) year term beginning January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010. (*Recommended by the Human Resources Committee.) The motion passed.

Discussion Items:

1. Administrator's Evaluation – The County Administrator 2008 Performance Evaluation was presented by Donald Disselkoen. He received a 4.65 – far exceed position requirements.
 2. Emergency Update – Gary Rosema, Sheriff, updated the Commissioners on the State of Emergency in Ottawa County. At this time, it is no longer necessary to extend the State of Emergency.
 3. Closed Session: Property Acquisition
- B/C 09-057 Mr. Hehl moved to go into a Closed Session at 2:12 p.m. to discuss property acquisition. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Swartout, Holtvluwer, Holtrop, Karsten, Kuyers, Schrottenboer, Rycenga, Hehl, Mrs. Ruiter, Mr. Disselkoen. (10)
- B/C 09-058 Mr. Swartout moved rise from Closed Session at 2:26 p.m. The motion passed.
4. Closed Session: Labor Negotiation Update
- B/C 09-059 Mr. Kuyers moved to go into a Closed Session at 2:27 p.m. to discuss labor negotiations update. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Mr. Holtvluwer, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Holtrop, Rycenga, Kuyers, Schrottenboer, Karsten, Hehl, Swartout, Disselkoen. (10)

- B/C 09-060 Mr. Holtrop moved to rise from Closed Session at 2:32 p.m. The motion passed.
- B/C 09-061 Mr. Rycenga moved to approve and authorize the Board Chairperson and Clerk to sign the Agreement for Sale and Purchase of Real Estate with Steven and Jennifer Hulst to acquire 17.1 acres to expand the Upper Macatawa Natural Area at a cost of \$85,500 plus closing costs with funding to come from the parks and recreation millage and to authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to sign the documents required for this transaction. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Rycenga, Hehl, Karsten, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Schrottenboer, Swartout, Holtvluwer, Kuyers, Holtrop, Disselkoen. (10)
- B/C 09-062 Mr. Rycenga moved to approve and authorize the Board Chairperson and Clerk to sign the Option to Purchase for the Schuil-Vanden Berg property located on the Grand River in Allendale Township, with option fee of \$10,000 and funding from the county parks millage. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Holtrop, Holtvluwer, Swartout, Schrottenboer, Kuyers, Karsten, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Rycenga, Hehl, Disselkoen. (10)
- B/C 09-063 Mr. Rycenga moved to approve and authorize the Board Chairperson and Clerk to sign the Option to Purchase for the Mohr property located near the Grand River in Allendale Township, with option fee of \$2,000, and funding from the county parks millage. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Karsten, Kuyers, Holtrop, Holtvluwer, Schrottenboer, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Swartout, Rycenga, Hehl, Disselkoen. (10)
- B/C 09-064 Mr. Swartout moved to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the County of Ottawa and the Sheriff of Ottawa County, and the Police Officers Labor Council (312 Eligibles) for the years of 2009-2010. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Kuyers, Karsten, Hehl, Holtrop, Swartout, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Rycenga, Holtvluwer, Schrottenboer, Disselkoen. (10)
- B/C 09-065 Mr. Swartout moved to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Family Court for the County of Ottawa, the County of Ottawa, and Ottawa County Juvenile Court Employees Association for the years of 2009-2010. The motion passed as shown by the following votes: Yeas: Messrs. Schrottenboer, Swartout, Holtvluwer, Mrs. Ruiter, Messrs. Kuyers, Hehl, Holtrop, Karsten, Rycenga, Disselkoen. (10)

Several Commissioners commented on meetings attended and future meetings to be held.

B/C 09-066 Mr. Karsten moved to adjourn at 2:47 p.m. subject to the call of the Chair.
The motion passed.

DANIEL C. KRUEGER, Clerk
Of the Board of Commissioners

DONALD DISSELKOEN, Chairman
Of the Board of Commissioners