

The Ogemaw County Board of Commissioners met on this date in the Conference Room of the West Branch Community Airport Terminal. The airport is located at 1519 Airport Road, West Branch, Michigan.

Chairman Reetz called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Present: Scott, Reetz, Vaughn, and David who arrived at 6:30 p.m. Absent with notice – Neubecker. Also in attendance were Frank Goodroe, West Branch City Manager and John Amrhein, MSU Extension Services Local Government Specialist.

Mr. Reetz explained the purpose of the meeting was to acquire information related to county administration and the county administrator position.

Mr. Goodroe explained the packets of information that had been distributed to the commissioners. Mr. Amrhein also explained the information he had provided.

Chairman Reetz stated he understands it is time to move in a new administrative direction. Vice-Chairman Scott stated the county has a \$10-million-dollar budget and board members have limited managerial experience.

Mr. Amrhein commented commissioners with managerial experience can be a dangerous thing. He stated the commissioners job is guidance and budget with management by results. The temptation is to get into details...leave the day-to-day management to the elected officials and appointed department heads. He stated it is up to the commissioners to decide what they would like the administrator position to look like.

Having a line-level employee and elected officials in a committee is recommended. He encouraged the board to look for someone who can have the communication skills to make it work for elected officials and the department heads. The administrator should be forward thinking with regional collaboration.

Mr. Goodroe stated the administrator should be able to coordinate on civil matters and stay up to date on legislation. Mr. Amrhein stated the board should determine how the day-to-day county operations should proceed with regard to the administrator oversight.

Various comments were made by the commissioners, i.e. difficulty in knowing what department activity is meeting only three times per month, a “culture” change is needed, Committee of the Whole meeting is only time to discuss department needs/requests, etc. Mr. Amrhein explained ways to build relationships and how to get out of the way and let the department heads work. Mr. Goodroe asked board members how often do they thank the elected officials for a job well done? Fred Hinkley stated the county lacks the central communications for officials and commissioners and the ability to delegate.

Vice-Chairman Scott briefly discussed the proposed 2019-2020 County General Fund budget and the possibility the board will have to borrow to settle with the local units of government.

Commissioner David asked what the expected length of service for an administrator would be. She stated we have individuals who have been in their positions a very long time. Mr. Amrhein stated a normal time frame is 3-5 years so as not to bind future commissioners. Some statutes state 2 years.

Mr. Goodroe stated the administrator would not need to come in and drastically change the way the accounting/financial systems are set up; rather, this person could enhance the systems/processes.

Chairman Reetz asked how to go about advertising for an administrator. Mr. Amrhein stated the board can advertise on its own or bring in a national recruiting firm. Commissioner David asked what the hiring timeline would be. She was told it is normally 3-6 months. Mr. Goodroe stated the board could utilize Michigan Municipal League to assist them with the process. He suggested input from elected officials and department heads would be helpful. Input from acting controllers/administrators would prove useful. Mr. Amrhein reminded the board the interviews had to be held in a public meeting.

Mr. Amrhein stated the next step is to draft a job description. The more groups of people you can include the more ownership the board will have for the position, i.e. elected officials, department heads and employees. A salary will need to be determined. If the salary is too low, you will not get the quality you are looking for in this position. He stated \$80,000 - \$100,000 sounded a little too high.

Vice-chairman Scott stated the commissioners can look into the wage scale. He added Mr. Goodroe and Mr. Hinkley have been a great resource for the search committee and would like to expand the committee.

Mr. Amrhein stated an administrator can expand on what is learned at the annual “new commissioner” training sponsored by MSU Extension Services. He stated he can return for additional training session with the commissioners.

**Motion by David, second by Reetz, the meeting be adjourned. Voice vote. Ayes – all. Motion carried.**  
**[8-4-#1]**

Chairman Reetz adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Minutes by Evan Bedtelyon, Deputy County Clerk  
Minutes transcribed by Gary R. Klacking, Ogemaw County Clerk  
Attest: Gary R. Klacking, Ogemaw County Clerk