

MONTCALM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2009

1:00 PM

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Carr at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Larry Pike from the Congregational Church in Stanton offered invocation.

Members present at roll call: Commissioners Blanding, Lindeman, Retzloff, Johansen, Paepke, Baker, Carr, Caris and Crouse. Members absent: None.

Others present: Chris Hyzer, Kristen Millard, Mike & Jeanne Urbanski, Sandy Carlton, Fran Schuleit, Linda Stafford, Sue Schuberg, Stefhanie Stoll, Dawn Armock, David Stanke, Susan McGuire, Cheryl McGuire, Barbara Graves, Carol Lurn, Brenda Sova, Thomas Sova, Starr L. Corl, Margaret Corl, Anita Orin, Diane Horner, Nancy Malinowski, Merrill Johnson, Judy Cloer, Irene Blanding, Donna Paepke, Jim Woudenberg, Chris Heyboer, Larry Pettit, Linda Reynolds, Ben Reynolds, Jacquelin Jones, Bobbi Jones, Casey Icing, Carol Manos, Christy Townsend, Barb Olson, Linda Balch, Larry Adderley, Matt Montague, Laura Kelley, Marcia Harris, Pat Benett, Phil Harris, Maria Lott, Doug Rutledge, G.R. Pete Frye, Beth Contreras, Carol Darby, Jen Self, Wendy Swift, Barbara Hart, Deloris Shermanski, Terry Bode, Beth Wellman, Rhonda Waldorf, Judy Skiff, Donna Huhn, Nancy Young, Sue Hinz, Donna White, Julie Klaczkiwicz, Pam Allen, Michael Mondry, Diane Williams, Moya Zaremba, Laura Hodges, Susan Farrell, Sierra Cole, Rose Cole, Ben Speiser, Pamela Bartolo, Kim Worthy, Melissa Montague, Susan Day, Jill Kitchen, Bonnie Randall, Gail Hansen, Tereasa Michalak, Renee LaFave, Lisa Gallinger, Steve Allen, Sharon Barber, Tyson Christensen, Melissa Henchen, Yvonne Dreuth, Beverly Combs, Bill Rasmussen, Linda Batenberg, Glen Powell, Marilyn Cooper, Janice Nordstrom, Brenda Greenhoe, Jeanne Dietsch, Amelia Bush, David Bush, Louise Swiatek, Pam Olsen, Michel Atkinson, Jan Helder, Pat Hinrichs, Nikki Belyou, Carol Siegenfuss and Ryan Jeltema.

Moved by Commissioner Paepke, supported by Commissioner Johansen to approve the January 12, 2009, regular meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Johansen, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to approve the agenda with the addition of #3 under New Business entitled *Appointment to CEDS Committee to replace Commissioner Lindeman*. Motion carried.

Public comments were offered. Cheryl McCloud, Newaygo, addressed the board regarding the county's contract with R & R Research.

Donna Paepke, Pierson, addressed the board regarding the numerous calls that have made to her home. She stated that none of the calls received were from Montcalm County residents.

Mike Urbanski, Pine Township, addressed the board regarding the type of euthanization being used at the Animal Shelter and the county's contract with R & R Research.

Pam Olsen, Ada, addressed the board regarding the type of euthanasia being used at the Animal Shelter and stated that information received from an Animal Shelter employee was incorrect.

Beth Contreras, East Lansing, addressed the board regarding the contract with R & R Research.

Dr. Wendy Swift, Kent County Humane Society, addressed the board regarding individuals wanting to surrender animals in Kent County as opposed to Montcalm County. She also addressed the method of euthanization that should be used.

At 1:15 p.m. G.R. Pete Frye was present to discuss Canine Rescue Procedures. He lost a dog in April 2008, and visited the Animal Shelter daily trying to recover his pet. He commended the Animal Shelter staff for their assistance to him. Mr. Frye stated that he is willing to volunteer to train two dogs per year from the shelter. He believes that the county would have much more luck finding volunteers if animals were not euthanized in a barrel and were not sold to research.

At 1:18 p.m. Sandra Carlton, Citizens for Animal Welfare, was present to ask the board to not renew the contract with R & R Research. She made note that there is a big difference between pets going to research and animals raised for research. She stated that she is strongly opposed to pound release practices.

Commissioner Crouse asked if it would be helpful to give people who are surrendering an animal to the Animal Shelter the choice on whether to have the animal donated to medical research or euthanized. Ms. Carlton stated that if the pet owner wants their animal to go to research then they should take the animal directly to R & R Research themselves.

Chairman Carr stated that it is his understanding that unless an animal was bred and raised by the owner surrendering it, the Class B dealer cannot accept the animal.

Commissioner Johansen addressed Ms. Carlton regarding her criticism of the board for action not being taken on her suggestion of a committee being formed. He explained that the board has a plan and has not said they were against forming a committee but that a decision on whether to keep or terminate the contract with R & R must be made first.

Ms. Carlton stated that typically Humane Society's charge \$8,000 to \$10,000 to come in and do a shelter assessment but she has one that will come and do it for free. During the assessment they not only point out the problems but also give solutions to those problems.

Chairman Carr addressed Ms. Carlton's failure to coming to the board with a plan that would be an alternative to the contract with R & R Research. Ms. Carlton stated that she does not have an alternate plan. She stated that her presentation was directed more toward discontinuing pound release. Ms. Carlton had in her possession a copy of a detailed proposal she presented to the board in 1996. She stated that she did not come back with a specific proposal this time because the last one she presented she did not believe was even looked at by many of the board members.

At 1:53 p.m. Jeanne Urbanski & Susan McGuire, Concerned Citizens Coalition, were present to ask the board not to renew the contract with R & R Research. Ms. Urbanski pointed out that the Concerned Citizen Coalition is not against medical research when genetically raised animals are used, they are against companion animals being used for research. She stated that much work needs to be done to help pet owners spay and neuter their pets.

Susan McGuire addressed the board regarding the county entering into a contract with a Class B dealer who sells companion animals for a profit. She stated that the county is losing revenue because of the contract with R & R Research. She stated that if the contract with R & R was discontinued, adoptions would increase and people will be willing to donate their time and money to the Animal Shelter.

Ms. McGuire stated that 75% of the members in their group condone animal research if the animals used are Class A animals, raised and engineered for medical research. Chairman Carr asked how her group can justify raising animals specifically for research. He asked what the distinction was between animals that are abandoned and destined to be euthanized and those that are raised for research. Ms. McGuire stated that animals at the shelter are companion animals, Class A animals are not.

Chairman Carr also inquired as to why there would be an increase in volunteerism when under the current contract the county does not guarantee R & R Research a specific number of animals. The only animals that go to R & R are those that have not been adopted and are scheduled for euthanization.

Ms. McGuire stated that rescue groups are not given preference over R & R once an animal is available to be removed from the shelter. She gave a specific example of three labs being taken by R & R when rescues were waiting for them. She also stated that R & R is taking animals from the Animal Shelter prior to those animals being available for adoption.

At 2:00 p.m. Randall Carpenter, DVM, was present to discuss Animal Control. Dr. Carpenter stated that he has been involved in animal care in Montcalm County for over 30 years. He stated his displeasure over the conditions at the Animal Shelter and asked the board to consider forming a committee to study the practices of Montcalm County Animal Control. He stated that the form of euthanization currently used at the Shelter needs to be stopped. Dr. Carpenter also stated that he discourages his customers from adopting animals from the Montcalm County Animal Shelter because the animals are not given the proper medical care.

Commissioner Paepke asked Dr. Carpenter if he had used animals for training during the course of his education and Dr. Carpenter stated that he had.

Commissioner Johansen asked Dr. Carpenter if he was solicited by The Daily News to write the editorial that was published on January 24, 2009. Dr. Carpenter stated that he was asked to write the editorial and happily complied.

Commissioner Johansen asked Dr. Carpenter what he would have the board do differently regarding the method of euthanization currently in use at the shelter since the county is still waiting for approval from the DEA to use injections. Dr. Carpenter stated that may be able to assist the board getting the application through the DEA and stated that he will do what he can to get that application process approved.

Dr. Carpenter was asked to differentiate between companion animals and those raised for research. He stated that he does not believe that an animal that was ever a pet should be used for research.

Chairman Carr stated that he feels two animals are being effected when Class A animals are raised for research. Surrendered animals are euthanized and then Class A animals are raised for research and eventually euthanized also. Two animals die instead of one.

At 2:56 p.m. Jim Woudenberg was present to request the renewal of the county's contract with R & R Research. He read from a prepared statement that was distributed to all board members. During his statement Mr. Woudenberg stated that there is no difference between Class A & Class B animals. He stated that R & R Research is the last resort for animals. He stated that all of the animals in his facility are handled properly and treated well.

Commissioner Crouse asked Mr. Woudenberg if it is possible to see where the animals taken from the Animal Shelter went. Mr. Woudenberg stated that every animal can be traced, however he is not willing to release that information because then his clients will be harassed. He suggested doing a random sampling every so often to prove to the board that animals are going where he says they are going.

Mr. Woudenberg stated that under the current contract he has never purchased an animal from Montcalm County. A barter system is in place with the county. Mr. Woudenberg removes euthanized animals and in return he obtains animals that are suitable for research. Money has never exchanged hands.

Dr. Howard Rush, University of Michigan, was in attendance with Mr. Woudenberg. Dr. Rush stated that Class A animals have regular and frequent contact with humans. So much so that he cannot tell the difference between a Class A & Class B animal.

Dr. Rush stated that medical research on animals is highly regulated. He stated that 98% of the animals used in research are mice, rats and fish. Dogs make a very small part of the animals used for research, but the use of dogs in certain cases is a necessity. The types of research conducted on dogs are: mouth tissue substitutes, heart attack, ultrasound for treating cancer cells and bone healing. The application to

use a dog for research is an extensive process takes up to 8 weeks and is very detailed. The animals are not tortured but instead are treated very humanely and given pain medication just as a human would be. If the procedure performed is not survivable, the dogs are euthanized prior to being brought out of anesthesia.

Dr. Rush stated that random source animals are much more cost effective than genetically raised dogs. Some researchers prefer random source animals because of their mixed genetic background. Dr. Rush stated he is supportive of R & R Research and feels they run a very clean facility. The animals they receive are well cared for and healthy.

Dr. Rush feels it is wrong to raise two animals for one purpose and have both animals die. The use of large animals is a necessity and dogs are the best model available in most cases.

Moved by Commissioner Paepke, supported by Lindeman to take a break at 3:34 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:52 p.m.

Public comment resumed. Melissa Hennen, New York, addressed the board and stated that she has raised \$2,800 in the past few weeks to rescue animals. She stated that all animals at the Animal Shelter are not being put on Petfinder.com. She stressed that animals are being released to R & R Research prior to being available for rescue groups. She also stated that information is not being given out over the telephone regarding the animals in the Shelter which makes it very difficult for rescue groups.

Barbara Olsen, Allegan County, addressed the board and stated that unspeakable things are being done to unwilling animals in the name of research. She does not feel that animals are needed for medical research any longer.

DJ Freedman, Lyons, stated that the suggested formation of a task force to find a solution that is middle-of-the-road is not an feasible. This group does not want a middle-of-the-road option. They do not want any animals that have been pets to ever go to research.

Margaret Coral, Sheridan, stated that she is very dissatisfied with the Animal Shelter.

Susan Farrell, Greenville, stated that it is difficult for constituents to address the Board of Commissioners because they are intimidated coming before the board. She stated that there have been problems at the Shelter for years.

Rhonda Waldorf, Sheridan, addressed the board and thanked Commissioner Crouse for his questions because it shows that he cares. She stated that rescue groups are passionate. She stated that the board members need to listen to Montcalm County residents and hear that they don't want animals sold to research. She doesn't think the rescue groups should have to jump through hoops in order to rescue animals. She believes they should be given animals, just as R & R Research is.

Gisela Peek, Greenville, addressed the board regarding letters to the editor not being published in The Daily News. She stated that letter now have to go through the papers legal counsel. She feels her freedom of speech is being violated.

Mike Boreman, Langston, addressed the board regarding pharmaceutical testing on animals. He stressed the importance to fix the problems at the Animal Shelter so Montcalm County doesn't keep making headlines.

Nancy Malinowski, Crystal, asked that the board consider Dr. Carpenters suggestions.

Holly Cook, Trufant, asked the board to listen to their constituents and take their wishes into account.

Eileen Burr, Pine Township, addressed an issue she had with the Animal Shelter.

Dinae Horner, Sheridan, addressed the method of euthanization used at the Animal Shelter.

Tim Belyou, Fenwick, stated that he is not against R & R Research, but he feels they should not be allowed to take possession of animals that have been pets. Mr. Belyou compared Class A animals to hogs and stated that he feels Class A animals are like livestock. They are raised for a specific purpose.

Michael Smith, Montcalm County, spoke in favor of animals going to R & R Research to be used for medical research. He stated that the owners of animals need to be more responsible.

Julie Klaczkiwicz, Greenville, informed the board that her dog was found at R & R Research. She stated the dog did not obtain medical treatment while at R & R and has permanent disabilities because of it. She stated that animals are not needed for medical research any longer.

Diane Williams, Montcalm County, stated that she works for the Kent County Humane Society and she confirmed that many people do take their animals to Kent County instead of Montcalm County.

Pam Allen, Sheridan, stated that she against the county having a contract with R & R Research.

Nikki Belyou, Greenville, addressed the board regarding the way people that work at the Animal Shelter treat people from a rescue group.

Carol Darby, Lake Odessa, addressed the board regarding the Animal Shelter not cooperating with rescue groups.

Carol Manos, Grand Rapids, accused the board members of making a profit off of the contract with R & R Research.

Holly Sauve addressed the board and read from information obtained from the USDA regarding violations R & R Research was sited with in 2005 & 2007.

Helen Schneider, Charlotte, addressed the board regarding the contract with a Class B dealer.

Moved by Commissioner Blanding, supported by Commissioner Retzloff to form a blue ribbon committee consisting of 5 to 7 members. Members to serve on the committee are: Dr. Carpenter; Fran Schuliet; at least one commissioner; and 2 to 4 members of the community that are on either side of the R & R Research issue. The members are to be appointed by Chairman Carr. The committee will report to the full board quarterly on their progress and their work will be completed within 6 months. The contract with R & R Research will remain in effect until a recommendation comes from the committee. Moved by Commissioner Retzloff, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to amend the motion changing the size of the committee from 5 – 7 members up to 7 – 9 members. Amendment carried. Roll call vote on original motion as amended: Ayes: Commissioners Paepke, Baker, Crouse, Carr, Retzloff, Blanding, Lindeman and Johansen. Nays: Commissioner Caris. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Retzloff, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to approve consent agenda items 1 through 6 and move stated action:

Controller	Letter of Recognition of Pamela Boody Homeland Security	Place on file
Controller	DNR Executed Agreement TF07-015, Krampe Park Fishing Pier	Place on file
Ron Baker	Collective Bargaining Minutes, January 9, 2009	Place on file
Patti Lentz	MDA Annual Shelter Activity Report	Place on file
Controller	MI Strategic Fund Approval of Renaissance Zone	Place on file
Controller	FOP Extension Agreement	Place on file

Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Lindeman, supported by Commissioner Johansen to ask the Controller to send a letter to Congressman Dave Camp thanking him for his letter allowing input on infrastructure in Montcalm County. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Paepke, supported by Commissioner Blanding to approve the Solid Waste Committee bid specifications for the Recycling Contract as prepared by the County Controller. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Paepke, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to place the January 15, 2009, Solid Waste Management Planning Committee minutes on file. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to allow Equalization to purchase the HP DesignJet 500 from Florida Micro with cost not to exceed to \$1,627.08 and obtain the \$400 rebate from Hewlett Packard. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Paepke to allow the Sheriff to fill the vacant Lieutenant position created by the retirement of Lt. Patino by hiring a Deputy Sheriff position. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Paepke to allow the County Clerk to hire a temporary part-time employee for 24 - 32 hours per week at a rate of \$12 - \$15 per hour, depending on experience. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Baker to allow the payment of \$250 for tuition reimbursement for Dave Feldpausch. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Paepke to approve warrant number 012609 in the amount of \$395,156.89. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Caris, supported by Commissioner Paepke to place the January 26, 2009, Finance and Personnel Committee minutes on file. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Lindeman, supported by Commissioner Caris to appoint Commissioner Johansen to the CEDS committee to replace Commissioner Lindeman. Motion carried.

Public comments were offered. Cheryl McCloud, Newaygo, addressed the board regarding the blue ribbon committee that will be formed. She stated that Newaygo County did the same thing a few years ago and it was very successful. She cautioned against putting people on the committee that are in favor of Class B animals being used for medical research.

Sandy Carlton, Greenville, addressed the board regarding the use of the barrel at the animal shelter. She stated that she told the board 30 years ago that the barrel was inhumane and now she can say she was right. Ms. Carlton also stated that the board's action today was nothing but a cop-out and smoke screen.

Commissioner Baker addressed the board and stated that change needs to come from the pet owners in Montcalm County.

Mike Urbanski stated that the county has over \$8,000 in the spade and neuter fund that needs to be used for education.

Moved by Commissioner Retzloff, supported by Commissioner Lindeman to adjourn at 5:13 p.m. Motion carried.

Kristen Millard, County Clerk

Patrick Q. Carr, Chairman