

REGULAR SESSION

THURSDAY

APRIL 4, 2019

The Board of Huron County Commissioners met this date in Regular Session. Roll being called found the following members present: Terry Boose, Joe Hintz, Bruce Wilde.

IN THE MATTER OF TRAVEL

Terry Boose moved to approve the following travel request this day. Joe Hintz seconded the motion. The roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Aye – Terry Boose
Aye – Joe Hintz
Aye – Bruce Wilde

Lara Hozalski, JFS, to Dublin, Ohio for State Employment Relations Board (SERB) Training on May 2 – May 3, 2019.

Commissioner Hintz report

Mr. Hintz had a meeting with the City of Norwalk. They missed the deadline for the Recycling Grant. Mr. Welch indicated that the Commissioners have the authority to extend this deadline. He said there were ten grants available. They had only received two applications, one of which probably wasn't eligible. Mr. Welch thought that if the deadline were extended, it should go out to all the subdivisions and townships to give them the same opportunity. Mr. Boose asked if a higher priority would be given to the timely applications. Mr. Welch said the Policy Committee makes the decisions on awarding the grants. This takes Mr. Welch and the Commissioners out of the decision.

Mr. Boose thought, if they were going to extend the deadline, it should be extended conditionally. He thought it should be up to the Policy Board to accept or reject the late applications. Mr. Welch thought that it had to be all or none – they could not accept some and reject others. Mr. Boose just didn't want those that were filing late (Norwalk) to think they were on the same platform as those that had filed on time. Mr. Welch clarified Mr. Boose wanted the application date to be used as a scoring criteria for the grant. Mr. Boose thought if necessary.

Mr. Welch had discussed the new Rumpke rates with the Norwalk Board and they are fine with them. Mr. Welch specifically explained it was a month to month rate and there were no guarantees – the rate is going to fluctuate. Mr. Welch said that he and Mr. Homan were going to visit the Rumpke facility next week.

Mr. Welch also discussed how Norwalk is handling their recyclables. Mr. Boose suggested he be very careful about how much he gets involved in their process. Mr. Boose doesn't want anything being blamed on us. Mr. Welch reminded him it was Norwalk's program, not ours, and they are fully responsible for their program. Norwalk Council will be the ones to vote to end or change the program. Mr. Welch said that he does have a backup plan if Norwalk ends their program and he has to fill that void, it won't cost him that much. Mr. Boose voiced his concern about Rumpke's \$35 price. He believes they will probably offer that to everybody, and there is no guarantee they will be able to keep it that low. Mr. Hintz and Mr. Welch both indicated they were aware of this. Mr. Boose wanted to make sure Norwalk knew this. Mr. Welch said they had been very clear that it is a month by month rate – he is expecting a new rate every month. Mr. Boose wanted to be certain that, after Norwalk recently expressed their dissatisfaction with the pricing, they are now aware it is out of our control. Mr. Welch indicated they understood.

At 9:20 a.m. Public Comment – none

Commissioner Boose report

FTMC sent a letter asking for support for their Community Health Center. The Board agreed that they wished to express their support and asked Ms. Ziembra to provide a letter of support.

At 9:21 a.m. the Board recessed

9:37 a.m. *Board resumed at the Courthouse*

Probate Court Records – Ms. Bishop from Probate Court began the tour. Mr. Wilde indicated the group was in the old jail. Ms. Bishop pointed out that all eight of the cells are full of old Probate records – Estates and Guardianships. All of the boxes had been scanned; the books had not.

Ms. Bishop pointed out stacks of books that had come from Shady Lane that were teetering on the benches. She said they had fallen over a few times. When Mr. Boose inquired as to why the top shelves were not being used, she indicated it had to do with the Fire Code.

Ms. Bishop also mentioned that any empty space were due to the fact that Family Search was scanning some of the information for their genealogy website. If Family Search did not have the records the building would be at capacity.

Mr. Wilde asked if there was a plan for the remaining items to be scanned. Ms. Bishop indicated she would like to have them all scanned so they would be available. Mr. Boose clarified that there was currently no plan and no money set aside for scanning. Ms. Bishop agreed not for these particular records – she wanted to make sure the files were in place first and then work back to the docket.

Ms. Hazel indicated that they also do not have the equipment to scan the bound books. However, they had started scanning the rolling files in another part of the basement. Mr. Boose asked if it cost more to scan the books. Ms. Hazel would have to find out for sure, but she thought that they paid per image regardless of how it was done. She indicated they had built a positive relationship with the company.

There was discussion regarding the storage of hard copies after they had been scanned. Mr. Stephens noted that, from a long term perspective, it would be cheaper for us to store them rather than paying for storage. Mr. Boose agreed and pointed out that also makes the documents more accessible. Ms. Bishop indicated that there are advantages to having them stored at Stein's. She mentioned they have higher standards and a higher quality of storage than our facilities could provide. She also noted that they take care of the insurance on those records. Mr. Boose said as long as we have existing space insurance costs are negligible.

Mr. Boose inquired about the security at Stein's. Ms. Bishop indicated the whole facility is secure, they have security cameras and they do BCI checks on all employees. She felt Stein's facility was more secure than storing these items in a locked basement. Mr. Boose did not agree. Mr. Stephens was concerned that there were multiple County entities utilizing the same area. He felt the fact that they were not segregated was a problem – they should be secured in individual sections. Mr. Boose pointed out that was not going to be done at Strategic Solution's either. Mr. Boose and Ms. Tkach felt the security was fine, since nobody can just walk in to the basement and access the records.

Mr. Stephens stated that any office that has files in an area, statutorily that office must maintain a key to that space. He stressed that an individual office that maintains files in any given space must have access 24/7 to that space. Mr. Wilde asked if this would be true at Steins as well. Mr. Stephens was referring to the basement. Mr. Boose said he keeps hearing so much about Stein's, yet everything they are being told they need is not available at Steins. Ms. Bishop questioned the quality of storage and if the County facilities were comparable to Stein's. Mr. Boose wasn't sure Stein's was really better than the basement. Mr. Stephens was absolutely sure Stein's was better.

Ms. Bishop clarified that the major concerns were accessibility, temperature, humidity, security. Mr. Mushett was concerned that custodians or other workers could have access. Mr. Boose pointed out that no one could get in without going through Ms. Tkach. Mr. Stephens again indicated this was a statutory issue and did not think it was being handled properly. He thought each individual office should have their own storage space and their own key. Mr. Boose disagreed, as it was cost prohibitive and a County is not required to do something that they cannot afford. Mr. Stephens continued to stress that the statute was the statute, but then conceded that it was to be done to the best of our ability. After continued discussion Mr. Wilde noted that both were good points.

Ms. Tkach suggested they move upstairs to the view the Clerk of Court's records before leaving the building. Ms. Bishop pointed out there was stuff on the stairs, so there might be some safety issues.

When they got upstairs, Ms. Hazel pointed out older records – these had been in the basement of this building when she first started. These have not been scanned yet, but regardless the original must be permanently retained. She said she was focusing on scanning the records that can be destroyed. These records were a combination of the Court Reporter's and the Clerk's records. The Court Reporter's records do not need to be retained. Ms. Hazel said the journals could be scanned and moved. Mr. Stephens noted that some of them were actually on the floor.

Mr. Hintz asked if the dehumidifiers were working. Ms. Hazel said they were not. She was going to purchase new ones. Ms. Bishop indicated that the dehumidifiers downstairs fill up sometimes, the hose clogs and they quit working. There is not constant dehumidification. Mr. Hintz said that the basement at the Antique Mall had been tested and it does not require dehumidification.

Ms. Ziemba asked about the boxes. Ms. Hazel said they were from the landfill. Mr. Boose asked that, other than the landfill records, if she was responsible for all the rest. Ms. Hazel said yes, with the exception of the Court Reporter records. She thought some of the boxed records could be destroyed also. Ms. Tkach noted also that the landfill now has a valid RC2 schedule, so a landfill employee could go through the records to see what could be destroyed.

Mr. Boose said one of the big issues we have to figure out is who has time to go through the records and get rid of the ones we don't need.

Ms. Hazel said the journals were another project they would like to scan and move. Ms. Hazel indicated three rooms containing journals. Ms. Hazel pointed out they are records that are not used, but they are required to be kept. Ms. Tkach said some of them are over 50 years old, which make them historical records and almost impossible to dispose of.

Ms. Tkach moved them to the Probate offices, where Ms. Bishop pointed out boxes stacked throughout the office. She explained these are boxes that had to be brought back from the jail to make room for the boxes that came back from Strategic Solutions. She also explained that retrieving files from the boxes could be a challenge. Mr. Boose asked why they took them upstairs instead of putting them in the basement. Ms. Bishop explained they weren't secure. She showed them a file and explained it was sitting on the box because there is no place to put it, the shelves are so full in the basement they can't even get it on a shelf. They are in dire need - they can't take an old file and put it downstairs on the rolling shelves because they are too full.

Ms. Bishop explained the next project in line for scanning were the ones that just came over from the jail. Once those are done she want to move on the files similar to those at the jail – the papers were folded. She said the longer they are like that, the worse they get. She showed an example of what they look like over time when they are stored in that fashion - you have to be careful with them or they will actually crumble. Mr. Wilde asked how old they were – she said they were 1912 adoption files. Ms. Bishop said that they have volunteers that will flat fold them for scanning, but they are at a standstill until they can find someplace to put them.

Mr. Wilde asked if the books had been scanned. Mr. Mushett explained that the books had been professionally redone, but they had not been scanned yet. Ms. Bishop said you could see the difference – they were in acid free folders, they were in nice binders, but they are still the only records. Ms. Tkach explained this was the project she had brought to their attention last fall when they were doing budget, asking for continued funding so that once the jail records were finished they could start work on these. Mr. Hintz asked if the books had to be kept after they were scanned. Ms. Tkach explained it was a historical record, so yes. Mr. Boose questioned whether the scanned records were being used or if the scanning was just being done for storage. Ms. Bishop and Ms. Tkach both stressed the scans were being actively used by their department and other departments. Ms. Bishop explained there is a computer portal that not only saves a copy of the document in case something happens to the actual file, it also made the file more accessible. Ms. Tkach explained this was not a public program, and the images were only available to the office that holds those records.

There was a discussion about the readability of the scanned images and the resolution with which they were scanned. Mr. Stephens thought, if it wasn't cost prohibitive, they should be scanned at the highest resolution possible. Ms. Tkach agreed to get more information.

Mr. Wilde moved the group downstairs, which Ms. Ziemba indicated contained more Probate Court records.

Once they entered the basement, Ms. Bishop told them it had flooded several times. Ms. Tkach explained that was why there was nothing on the bottom shelves. Ms. Bishop showed them file boxes that were packed as full as possible. She identified each area of records and said they have other things that belong down there but they can't squeeze it in.

Mr. Mushett explained there were some empty storage racks in the Juvenile file area. He said they had received a grant last year and had been able to destroy a lot of their files. He indicated Juvenile records are able to be destroyed after a certain amount of time, and they do so on an ongoing basis. Ms. Bishop said those racks will eventually fill back up.

There was a discussion regarding which files could be destroyed and which had to be retained. Mr. Wilde noted that finding the manpower to sort through everything was another issue that had to be addressed. Ms. Bishop hoped they would find a long term solution. Probate has to hold on to everything for historical purposes, so they will continually need more storage space.

Mr. Stephens asked Ms. Bishop if their caseload had increased at all. She said it had stayed steady but had not increased. Mr. Stephens indicated their criminal cases were up by about 30% each year. Ms. Bishop did note they had seen an increase in marriages, and only had space for 3 more marriages. Mr. Mushett said that last year they had almost a 300% increase in Dependent/Neglect/Abuse cases. He mentioned an office across the hall where the Probation Department was located. If they could be moved he thought that space would help with at least some of the storage needs.

Ms. Bishop lead them into what is referred to as the “catacombs” where there were additional Probate files. On the way there she explained it was not a dry space. Mr. Hintz indicated it had flooded down here in the past. Ms. Hazel explained they have dried the Clerk’s records out three times since she has been the Clerk, and the prior Clerk had dealt with more than just water.

Mr. Boose asked who was in charge. Ms. Hazel indicated she was. She then pointed out files that had already been microfilmed, but Strategic suggested that they be rescanned for better readability. Next Ms. Hazel pointed out old journals in the back row. They were on racks but the racks were so tall they were limited to where they could put them. Lastly, Ms. Hazel said some of the journals in the back were the Sheriff’s records too, it wasn’t all just the Court’s records. Mr. Boose asked if the Sheriff knew they were there, but she didn’t know.

They moved upstairs, where Ms. Hazel said one of the projects she was hoping to get in place this year was to ask for more shelving. She was trying to determine the most cost effective way to proceed. There are two rooms Ms. Hazel was thinking about using. She also had some shelves she thought could be converted to rolling shelves. However, they would have to be emptied in order to convert them. She also showed them an area where a boiler had been removed and she thought more shelving could be put in.

They moved to a different set of rooms. Ms. Hazel thought it would be more cost effective to put shelving in two rooms for now, then down the road switch to rolling shelves. Ms. Tkach inquired how much additional space she would need each year. Ms. Hazel said they usually bring down two years’ worth at a time, and showed them the number of shelves they filled with two years’ worth of boxes. It came to about one of the units per year. She thought eventually they could have all the old records in electronic format.

Ms. Hazel informed them the next stop was the storage area in the basement of the Antique Mall, 22 E. Main Street.

Once they got to the Antique Mall Ms. Hazel pointed out old blueprints that, according to her records, had historic value and needed to be maintained. Mr. Boose informed her that the intent was to find a place to store all those types of documents. Ms. Hazel asked if there were blueprints available for the new Title Building. Ms. Ziemba informed her that Mr. Welch may have them, as he had some of the more recent ones. She said they were trying to get maps for the buildings in order.

Ms. Tkach asked who had records stored at that location. Mr. Tkach informed her that he did. He said that, fortunately according to the Retention Schedules his office could get rid of quite a few of their records. Mr. Tkach thought his records were probably the least of the County’s worries.

Ms. Tkach asked who the rest of the records belonged to. Ms. Ziemba stated that the Commissioners have some records there, she thought they were at the far end. Mr. Stephen’s informed her, with the exception of the Auditor’s records, all the rest were all Prosecutor’s records. Mr. Wilde was amazed by the volume of Prosecutor’s records located at the facility. Mr. Stephen’s told them this was not the only place they have files. Mr. Wilde asked – theoretically the Prosecutor’s office could use the whole corridor. Ms. Tkach agreed, they could use all the space that was there. Mr. Stephens agreed and said they still have stuff out at Shady Lane. Mr. Boose questioned why we didn’t put shelving in that area. Mr. Wilde thought that was a good question. There was discussion as to how this could be accomplished.

Mr. Boose and Mr. Wilde discussed building a wall in the room and other ways the space could be utilized.

Ms. Ziemba located the Commissioner’s CDBG files. She mentioned she would like to have some of the Commissioner records scanned – some could then be gotten rid of. She said as far as the CHIP grants, there is a difference of opinion as to what is a permanent record based on who the Grant Administrators were. Once they are monitored by the State again, she will have them put in writing so they know what can be destroyed. It looked like the Commissioners only had two shelves. Ms. Hazel explained that the one room was supposed to be space to accommodate the Clerk’s records that were still at the old jail.

They moved to another room. Ms. Ziemba explained to Mr. Boose it was her goal was to work with Ms. Tkach and her scanning system. She thought they could get a part time or person to scan the Resolutions that have the attachments/contracts attached to them. Then they would be able to get rid of some of the contract files.

There was discussion on the amount of space available for storage. At first it appeared as if there was plenty of space, but it was filling up quickly. There was also talk on high the files could be placed, as they would still need to be accessible.

Mr. Wilde moved the group out the back door. Ms. Ziemba and Mr. Boose discussed the possibility of using the back part of the building for additional storage.

They moved down the street to the second floor of Public Defender’s office. Ms. Tkach noted the storage area was a lot more organized than the last time she saw it. Mr. Stephen’s pointed out Victim’s Assistance records, as well as some older stuff from Municipal Court that was buried in the back. Ms. Hazel said she thought it was all Public Defender’s records, but she saw that some of it was also Prosecutors. Mr. Stephens identified an area that was all Prosecutor records, some Victim Assistance records, and a couple boxes in the back that were Municipal Court.

They moved into another area that Ms. Hazel indicated was all Public Defender records. Ms. Ziemba noted that the Public Defender records had an envelope on the box that indicated what was in the box. She thought that was a good idea.

IN THE MATTER OF CERTIFICATION

The Clerk to the Board does hereby attest that the foregoing is a true and correct record of all actions taken by the Board of Huron County Commissioners on April 4, 2019.

IN THE MATTER OF ADJOURNING

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Terry Boose

Joe Hintz

Bruce Wilde

ATTEST

Clerk to the Board