

GENESEE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND TREASURERS
MARCH 2, 1994, 12:00 P.M., R. C. COOPER'S RESTAURANT

ATTENDANCE: 32

Don Becker, President, called the meeting to order at 12:45 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MTA will be held at Vienna Township on Thursday, March 17, 1994 at 7:30 P.M.

Jerry Stadler, Vienna Township Treasurer, said because he had such a problem with the tax statements, he is denying payment for the tax statements and maintenance fees. He said according to the County, there is not enough help in data processing. The County Commissioners do not realize what our problems are with data processing. If we could all get together as a group and speak with the County Commissioners regarding more help in data processing, possibly this would prevent us from having the problems we recently encountered.

Bill Barkey, Genesee County Treasurer, said he agrees with Jerry Stadler. The County has cut personnel in MIS severely. We don't want to see more people going out on their own systems. Should you meet as a group of Treasurer's with the Commissioners, it could be a very strong concept. If we don't get more people in data processing, it is a loss for all involved.

Ginger Spencer said the problem is, there isn't anyone in data processing who understands the whole taxing system.

Doris Carpenter said there are many problems with the new tax bill. The County is wondering if all Treasurers are willing to go to white paper vs. green paper, as it is cheaper. Doris explained the screens which would be used if the ballot proposal passed.

Carl Liepmann asked about the municipalities charging school districts for the collection of their taxes. He said he is uncertain if this practice will continue.

Don Becker said he spoke with Ted Mansour, and according to him, the State would be charged for this, not the school districts.

Jerry Stadler said he spoke with the Clio School District and said they will not collect debt retirement as long as the charge is the same.

Guest Speaker: Patrick McDougall, Criminal Diversion Officer

Mr. McDougall said we all read about tragedies and victims of crimes. His line of work consists of crimes not so serious in nature, but costly from the budget standpoint. The less serious crimes put a burden on the police enforcement agencies and the number is increasing.

Mr. McDougall said as of February 16th, it was 12 years since he went to the City of Burton with a proposal on how to deal with first-time offenders. The people are brought into the Court system and turned over to the diversion program. This has been at no cost to the taxpayers. We have had 3,000 clients go through the program and 2,300 have completed it. We need to have more and more municipalities look into this type of program.

If a person were to get caught shoplifting in areas other than Burton, they may never see a Courthouse or Police Department. In Burton, we take them into the court system up to the pre-trial. We try to get them not to repeat the offense

by intervening in their life sytle. If the person keeps their appointments, stays out of trouble and pays the fees, the record is expunged. We have had people do public service work and we can waive part of the fee if the person is disabled.

Shoplifting costs approximately \$2.5 Billion and we are paying for all those losses. We need the diversion system in all municipalities. We are fair and equal to all those who participate in the program. We have people from ages 17 through 88 years of age in the program. The City Council set the fees for the program and there are no benefits included in his wages.

Janet Johnston asked if he is the only employee in this program. Mr. McDougall replied yes. She also asked how many clients he had and how he handled them all, being the only employee.

Mr. McDougall said he has an active case load of 160 people per month. If they come in and see me and are not getting into trouble, it doesn't take long to meet with them as long as things are progressing okay. Burton is unique, in that it has one Judge, one Prosecutor and one Police agency, where other areas have two or more municipalities under one judicial jurisdiction. The chances of a repeat offender are four times greater when there is no intervention in their life from the authorities. When there is intervention, they think about what they have done and many times make a decision to not make the same mistakes or errors in judgement. The clients I deal with are 90% mistakes and 10% habitual criminals. The majority of them are people who have been charged with local ordinance violations.

Janet Johnston asked how this program got started. Mr. McDougall said he graduated from U of M in 1981 and met all six District Court Judges. The program was created through Judge Snodgrass and Attorney Richard Hamilton. We looked at the State program and had a need to keep track of those who had been in and out of the justice system. It has been a big success in the Burton area. If anyone is interested in setting up a program, please contact me.

Mr. Becker adjourned the meeting at 1:20 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl M. Ladd, CMC/AAE
Secretary