

TUSCOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Monthly Report of County Activities (May 2005)
Linking County/Local Government for Efficient Public Services

- Tuscola County generates the least amount of property tax revenue per capita from the allocated millage (3.9251 mills) of all 83 counties - this situation combined with unprecedented cuts in revenue from the state, failure of six recent different millage requests to correct the problem and major declines in District Court revenues has forced large expenditure reductions
- Over the past three years, non-mandated services significantly reduced or eliminated total \$469,000 and include MSU-Extension, Economic Development, Road Patrol, DARE, Animal Control, Park, Planning Commission, Recycling, Soil Conservation, Alcohol Enforcement and Thumb Narcotics Unit
- In order to balance the County Budget the County Board and a majority of the Judges reluctantly agreed to eliminate the current security system in the Courthouse effective July 1, 2005 and the county will revert to former security measures – this system cost approximately \$100,000 per year to operate – official Board action is anticipated at the first meeting in June
- Continuing financial pressures for both the county and local government will necessitate joint county/local government service consolidations – we all need to ask ourselves what can we accomplish jointly for cost savings and other efficiencies – please relate any thoughts you may have to your county commissioner
- State officials mandated that a portion of the county allocated property taxes be paid early for the next two years – (called the “Property Tax Roll Forward”) this change enables the creation of a fund to temporarily replace the discontinuation of state revenue sharing payments to the county – 1/3 of property taxes will be paid in July of 2005 with the balance paid in December 2/3 - this process will be repeated in 2006 except 2/3 will be paid in July and 1/3 will be paid in December - in 2007, all county payments will be made in July (All special purpose county millages will continue to be paid in December)
- U.S. Census Bureau indicates Tuscola County population increased .6% over the last four years from 58,266 in 2000 to 58,646 in 2004 - 2004 populations of other regional counties include: Huron-34,948, Sanilac-44,828 and Lapeer-92,510 - Huron County population actually declined 1,131 people from 2000 to 2004
- County Information Systems continues to advance including: web site access improvements, decreases in system maintenance/support costs, enhanced Email system protection, increased revenues through active efforts to retain and renew online tax database customers, implementation of firewall technologies at remote offices to increase network security/stability and numerous application server upgrades to improve data protection, disaster recovery, and reduce operational costs
- The County Clerk’s office now offers complete passport services including picture identification development – these changes make obtaining a passport significantly more convenient to the public at a lower cost than any other entities providing passports