

TUSCOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Monthly Report of County Activities (April 2006)
Linking County/Local Government for Efficient Public Services

- 2006 County State Equalized Value (SEV) is \$1,861,296,396 which is an increase of 7.67% from the previous year - SEV is the official measure of overall county worth, but no longer is used to determine property tax revenue which is now based on Taxable Value. Taxable Value growth has a cap under Proposal A - Additional information can be obtained by contacting Walt Schlichting, County Equalization Director at 989-672-3833 - Specific values by local unit of government are on the County web site: www.tuscolacounty.org
- County emergency services officials met on April 6 and April 11 for simulated emergency situations involving: agricultural food contamination and bird flu - the county and other governmental units in the region continue to prepare for emergency situations – experience from other emergency situations has shown that it will be the local officials and local resources that will be most relied upon and can quickly be deployed to deal with emergency situations
- Finances continue to be a major challenge for county, municipal, and township government – At the county level a financial plan is being prepared that projects financial status over the next three-year period and the difficult adjustments that will likely have to be made to continue to maintain a state required balanced county budget
- In 2005, the governor formed a task force to determine methods of strengthening local government financial capabilities and other efficiency methods – a preliminary draft of this information is now available and can be obtained from the Municipal League or Township Association Officials – this could impact the financial fate of county and local government
- Another important financial matter for county government at the county level is a court case to be heard soon by the Michigan Supreme Court – this case could have far reaching financial implications and determine the services that can be provided by county government – the principles involved and the Michigan Association of Counties position on these issues are:
 1. Trial courts should be prevented from unilaterally hiring of counsel, suing the county, which results in excessive legal fees, and having the county responsible for the payment of the fees.
 2. The Supreme Court of the State of Michigan should enforce its own administrative order which prevents trial courts from unilaterally raising employee benefit levels without the consent of the County Board of Commissioners.
 3. Michigan Association of Counties opposes a lower court's decision in the 46th Circuit Trial Court v. Crawford County et. al. which would require the county to direct all discretionary funds of the county to be used to fund the reasonable and necessary costs determined by the court
- The county jail has encountered recurring overcrowding problems – there is no simple solution to this problem because the county has significant financial limitations – it is likely the costs to house prisoners in other county jails will increase and exceed budget – causing further financial strain to the county

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