

HILLSDALE  
**DAILY  
NEWS**

HILLSDALE COMMISSIONERS

**By Andy Barrand**

HILLSDALE — The Hillsdale Board of Commissioners On Tuesday approved the resignation of Commissioner Parke Hayes. The approval was just a technicality, as Hayes resigned during the June 25 meeting. Chairman John Burtka informed the commissioners that the position must be filled within the next 30 days or a special election would have to be held.

Hillsdale County residents interested in filling the position need to reside in District 1. Cover letters and resumes can be dropped off at the Hillsdale County Clerk's office through 9 a.m. July 19. The resumes of interested candidates will be reviewed that day at 10 a.m., with a recommendation being made at the July 23 commissioners' meeting. "We are going to do everything in our power to have someone appointed within 30 days," Burtka said.

Tuesday's meeting was a short one for the commissioners, as several of the items were approved in the consent agenda. In the consent agenda a resolution addressing the county's firearms policy was adopted regarding employee possession of firearms. The resolution states:

- Employees may possess firearms on county property and in the workplace in accordance with federal and Michigan law as well in compliance with any court security orders issued by the chief judge of Hillsdale County.
- An employee who wishes to possess a self-defense firearm in the workplace must first notify their immediate supervisor that they may be in possession of a firearm during working hours.
- Firearms brought into the workplace must be under the immediate control of the employee at all times. Firearms must not be left unattended in a purse, bag, unlocked case or stored in an unlocked desk or locker. Firearms may be securely stored in an employee's vehicle.
- Firearms brought into the workplace shall remain concealed at all times. Inadvertent, momentary exposure or "printing" should be avoided.
- Locking storage lockers shall be provided in both the courthouse and the courthouse annex buildings for employees who may need to enter areas off limits to firearms due to court security orders issued by the chief judge.
- Employees of the Hillsdale County Sheriff 's Department are exempt from this policy and instead governed by the policies, procedures and general orders issued by the Hillsdale County sheriff.

During the public comment portion of the meeting Maxine Vanlerberg, Hillsdale County Community Action Agency director, asked the commissioners for their backing of a grant proposal. The Community Action Agency will be applying for a Financial Empowerment Grant, which would allow the organization to form a financial empowerment center. Vanlerberg said the financial empowerment center would help in aiding those Hillsdale County residents the agency serves. The center would work with residents on financial issues. Commissioners Andy Welden and Brad Benzing spoke in favor of the grant opportunity.

The commissioners were also presented with the findings from the 2012 audit. The audit was done by Anderson, Tackman & Company in Kincheloe. "I am pleased with the audit; I think we are heading in the right direction," Welden said.

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