

# County commissioners must approve all contracts more than \$15,000

On Jan. 1, 2011, the Macomb County Board of Commissioners began its new duties as approved by Macomb voters through the new county charter. Those legislative duties are primarily budgetary oversight and policymaking. Given the recent headlines generated by neighboring counties, our board has attempted to set a framework to minimize our own occurrence of similar headline-grabbing issues involving contracts, as we reach out to work collaboratively with the county executive. We feel strongly that collaboration and compromise are keys to effective governance of Macomb County.

Resolution 11-23, passed by the board in October, calls for all county contracts totaling more

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than \$15,000 to be sent to the Board of Commissioners for review and approval. The action called for is a direct illustration of checks and balances. It promotes fiscal responsibility on behalf of county govern-

ment as a whole, entails good purchasing policies and continues the commitment to public transparency by which this board has always operated. For those reasons, we were disconcerted when County

Executive Mark Hackel vetoed a measure intended to protect Macomb County taxpayers.

We need to remember that it is not the executive office's money, nor the board's money, but the public's money. If we are to truly operate in an open fashion, public disclosure needs to happen before contracts are entered into, not by online postings after the fact. Open decision-making does not happen behind closed doors; it is a public process. In addition, the Board of Commissioners is dedicated to an efficient approval process that ensures smooth day-to-day operations of the county.

Board members have a right and responsibility to fulfill our duties

as charged by the voter-approved charter. It is also incumbent upon us to carry out the principles of checks and balances and the measure of transparency that this new form of government requires. With that said, we will pursue an override of the county executive's veto of Resolution 11-23 at our Thursday evening meeting.

The Board of Commissioners meets today at 7 p.m. on the ninth floor of the Administration Building, 1 S. Main, Mount Clemens. We invite everyone to attend and make their voice heard.

— **Macomb County Commissioners Toni Mocerl, Phil DiMarla, David Flynn, Ray Gralewski, Jim Carabelli, Don Brown, Kathy Vosburg, Fred Miller, Roland Fraschetti, Kathy Tocco and Joe Sabatini.**