

**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**

OF  
MUSKEGON  
C O U N T Y  
GOVERNMENT

**1954**

February 9, 1955

To: Board of Supervisors, Muskegon County

INTRODUCTION

The following pages contain valuable information relative to the operation of Muskegon County Government for the year 1954:

The various department heads are to be commended for their cooperation in supplying much of the financial and statistical data.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

From a financial standpoint, Muskegon County government experienced a bad year in 1954. While no money was borrowed during the year for operations, the General Fund ended the year with a deficit of \$106,732.37. This deficit was financed by tax advances out of the 1955 tax collections.

The over-all budget performance was not good. With a total appropriation of \$1,595,553.62, the County spent \$1,790,214.47. The excess of expenditures was caused by one thing - a \$250,000.00 over-expenditure by the Welfare Department.

The following table shows the record of budget performance during the past four years. Over-expenditure of the budget is shown in parenthesis.

COMPARISON OF EXPENDITURES WITH BUDGET

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1951	\$1,664,891.00	\$1,746,720.72	(\$81,829.72)
1952	1,676,819.00	1,646,347.02	30,471.98
1953	1,624,998.96	1,581,715.97	43,282.99
1954	1,595,553.62	1,790,214.47	(194,660.85)

There is one encouraging note in the 1954 picture. If the Welfare Department had not spent the extra \$250,000.00, total expenditures would have been \$1,540,214.47. This amount would have represented a saving in the budget of \$55,339.15 instead of the over-expenditure of \$194,660.85 shown in the above table.

Elimination of welfare expenditures from the amounts spent for operations shows the following results:

COST OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT EXCLUSIVE OF WELFARE

1951	\$1,241,006.54
1952	1,160,788.02
1953	1,079,828.47
1954	1,149,628.47

While the 1954 cost is more than the 1953 cost by \$69,800.00 the increase is explainable. Some of the cost of remodeling the Supervisor's Room and the Courthouse Annex is included in this figure, as well as the cost of additional help for the second court, additional help in the Sheriff's Department, as well as the Safety Director's office, and \$11,868.54 of other Capital improvements.

In comparing expenditures with the budget, savings were effected in all categories with the exception of two. The appropriation for elections was \$9,000.00 and the total expense was \$15,237.18. The Sheriff's budget also was exceeded by \$7,878.21. This over-expenditure is the result among other things of additional help hired for which no appropriation was made, as well as painting cost of approximately \$1,100.00 which was ordered by the State, and a deficiency in the appropriation for cost of new Cruisers.

General Fund revenue increased again as shown in the following table:

GENERAL FUND REVENUE

1951	\$1,420,700.89
1952	1,464,660.26
1953	1,563,159.43
1954	1,648,385.38

FUTURE OUTLOOK

A record budget has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors for 1955. The total budget is \$2,038,264.67. With anticipated receipts of a like amount, the budget was in balance at the beginning of the year.

The greatest increase in the new budget is, of course, for the Welfare Department. Unless substantial savings can be effected in this category, a bank loan in 1955 appears to be a certainty.

CONCLUSION

The tax payers of Muskegon County are much concerned about the high cost of government. This concern is justified in view of the results of a careful analysis of departmental cost for the four year period ending December 31, 1954 which indicates rising costs in practically all departments with few exceptions.

While the County is growing and the activities of government necessarily expand, those of us who are charged with responsibility for spending public funds must weigh carefully each new proposal and ask ourselves, "Is this expenditure absolutely necessary?"

The controller's office will continue to look for ways to reduce cost within the framework of the budget which the Board of Supervisors approves.

Respectfully submitted

Theodore P. Strunck  
Controller, Muskegon County