



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

March 14, 2023

Commissioners

Gail Patterson-Gladney, District 1
Mike Chappell, District 2
Kurt Doroh, District 3
Richard Godfrey, District 4
Randall Peat, District 5
Tina Leary, District 6
Paul Schincariol, District 7

Board of Commissioners Meeting

1. Call to Order
On the above date the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 05:04 PM by Randall Peat, Chairman of the Board.
2. Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance / Prayer
Invocation given by Commissioner Doroh.
3. Roll Call
The roll was called by County Clerk Suzie Roehm with the following commissioners answering to their name and district: Gail Patterson-Gladney, Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, Richard Godfrey, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol.
4. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda
Delete Item 8.B. (heard at COW meeting)
Add Item 11.E. John Faul and 11.F. Charles Norton resignation
5. Approval of Agenda
All items on the agenda marked with "***" are part of the consent agenda. Commissioners or the public can request that items be removed from the consent agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes

A. ** February 28th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Minutes
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs

A. Schedule Public Hearing for Hartford Kayak Launch Project
Schedule Public Hearing for March 28, 2023 at 12:50 p.m.
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A16/3-14-2023
WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the scheduling of a Public Hearing for the Hartford kayak launch project, and;
WHEREAS, the purpose of the public hearing is to discuss and comment on the resubmission of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant application for the construction of a public access site on the Paw Paw River in Hartford Township along

County Road 687. The grant request is for \$283,780 with a local match of 121,620 for a total project of \$405,400, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the scheduling of a Public Hearing for the Hartford kayak launch project.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

B. Resolution of Community Support to Change the Routing of the New Consumers Energy Power Line

**This item was moved to the Committee of the Whole agenda.

C. County Administrator Posting - Recruiting Firm Contract - EXPEDITED

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A17/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve for a recruiting firm to conduct the search to fill the vacant position of the County Administrator, and;

WHEREAS, at the February 28, 2023 Committee of the Whole, the Board of Commissioners asked Human Resources to find a firm to conduct a search for the vacant County Administrator position.

WHEREAS, attached are two proposals. One from Walsh Municipal Services and one from Amy Cell. Both have experience with municipal recruiting, but after comparing the two, Walsh Municipal Services separates themselves with their pride in communicating to the whole Board during the entire process, the fair cost with no hidden fees and an ideal timeline. There is also a 1-year guarantee which provides reassurance that if the selected candidate does not fulfill an entire year as County Administrator, Walsh Municipal Services will redo the entire process at no cost to the county, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the request to approve for a recruiting firm to conduct the search to fill the vacant County Administrator position.

Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Richard Godfrey, Carried

9. Buildings and Grounds

A. **Request to use County property - Paw Paw Large Tire Recycling Event

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B7/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, the Van Buren Conservation District is requesting the use of County property for the Paw Paw Large Tire Recycling Event, and;

WHEREAS, the Paw Paw Large Tire Recycling Event is to take place on July 10th from 10:00a - 1:00p and July 11th from 3:00p - 7:00p. The Conservation District is requesting the use of county restrooms inside of the building for their staff/volunteers as well, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the use of County property for the Paw Paw Large Tire Recycling Event.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

10. Finance

A. **Annual Resolution for Continuation of the Collection of 911 Local Surcharge

FINANCE RESOLUTION F9/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to continue the collection of the 911 Local Surcharge, and;

WHEREAS, 911 is solely funded by local and state surcharges. Voters approved in August of 2020 the increase of the local surcharge to \$3.00 per month / per device. Collection of the local surcharge is subject to an annual resolution for the statutory collection period of July 1 - June 30 of each year. Resolution is acted upon each Feb. / March in order to submit to the State of Michigan 911 Office for vendor notification deadlines, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the continuation of collection of 911 local surcharge.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

B. **MML Insurance Renewal - EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F10/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the renewal of the County property and liability insurance policy, and;

WHEREAS, it is time to review and approve the annual liability and property insurance policy with the MML, Liability and Property Pool. The renewal premium is \$348,780. This is an increase from last year's premium of \$325,685. This is mostly due to an increase in property coverage amounts (up \$675,000), an increase in payroll of \$395,000, and 8 additional autos covered on the policy. The county will be receiving a dividend again this year in the amount of \$28,314, which reduces the net premium to \$320,466, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the renewal of the County property and liability insurance policy.

Motion by Paul Schincariol, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

C. **Treasurer's Monthly Report**

Treasurer Nesbitt was unable to attend and provided her report to Chair Peat. Aaron Stevens present via zoom. Bank reconciliations are being worked on. A request for extension of the audit has been submitted to the state, but no response yet.

D. **SCAO Virtual Backlog Response Docket Grant - EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F11/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the grant from SCAO for the funding of a visiting Judge, and;

WHEREAS, the Courts applied for a grant through the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to receive money to address the backlog of cases caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. On 3/8/23, the Courts were notified that the grant was approved in the amount of \$237,110. These funds will cover a visiting judge, up to two days per week, associated administrative costs, increased jury mileage fees and technology for the visiting judge.

While the visiting judge takes on civil and non-criminal cases, our Circuit and District Judges will have more time to hold felony trials. As part of the original grant, another \$74,549.28 was allocated to the Michigan Department of Corrections to cover items like pre-sentence investigation reports and overtime funds, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the agreement for the SCAO grant.

Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

11. **Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts**

A. ****Life EMS Contract Renewal**

LABOR & CONTRACTS RESOLUTION L12/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the three-year contract renewal for Life EMS ambulance services, and;

WHEREAS, Life EMS provides ambulance services to the municipalities of Pine Grove, Bloomingdale, and Columbia Townships, as well as the City of Gobles. The three-year

contract for their services is up for renewal. The only notable change is a standard update to the current fee schedule, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the three year contract renewal for Life EMS ambulance services.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

B. ****MERS 457 Plan**

LABOR & CONTRACTS RESOLUTION L13/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the addition of a MERS 457 plan as an offering to employees, and;
WHEREAS, currently, eligible employees are enrolled in our Defined Benefit Pension Plan through MERS. They contribute 5% into their pension each pay period and this amount cannot be modified. For any employee who wishes to contribute additional money into a retirement account, we currently offer a 457b plan through Fidelity to do so, and;
WHEREAS, administration brought a recommendation to the Board in the past to replace Fidelity altogether. However, we have employees who are satisfied with Fidelity and the services they offer, so instead, we would like to add MERS 457 plan to our offerings and keep Fidelity for those employees who are currently enrolled. Any current employee who has an account with Fidelity can continue to use it or have the option to transfer their funds into MERS. All new employees will only be offered the plan through MERS, and;
WHEREAS, HR has received more inquiries lately from current employees and their desire to have their funds all with MERS. If this is approved, we will be bringing MERS back onsite for educational sessions on what will be all of our offerings (Defined Benefit Pension, Health Care Savings Plan and the new 457 plan), and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the addition of a MERS 457 plan as an offering to employees.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

C. **Fiber Lease to 203 S. Niles St with Bloomingdale Telecom - EXPEDITED**

LABOR & CONTRACTS RESOLUTION I14/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the lease agreement for fiber to the building located at 203 S. Niles street, formally known as the Kelly Page Law Office, and;
WHEREAS, the newly-purchased facility at 203 S. Niles street which will house the Friend of the Court staff, needs network connectivity back to the County. Similar to our fiber leases with Bloomingdale Telecom to the ISD and South Haven Courthouse, the proposed 5-year lease will allow the County to connect the building with secure, high-speed internet and network connectivity at an extremely affordable price. The costs were already approved as part of the overall FOC relocation project, however, the lease agreement was not available at the time and requires approval from the Board. The planned go-live for the facility is April 7th, this request is being expedited to the March 14th, 2023, Board of Commissioners meeting for final approval, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the five year fiber lease with Bloomingdale Telecom to 203 S. Niles Street.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

D. **Salary Exception - Finance Director - EXPEDITED**

LABOR & CONTRACTS RESOLUTION L15/3-14-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve a salary exception for a highly qualified Finance Director candidate, and;
WHEREAS, after conducting interviews for the Finance Director role, one candidate separated themselves through their extensive work experience in municipal finance. We

are keeping the candidate's name confidential as the acceptance is contingent on a salary exception and this candidate would like to give proper notice to their current employer. We are seeking to bring this candidate in at the step our previous Finance Director, Ryan Post, was at prior to taking the County Administrator role. R37, \$121,805.97, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the salary exception for the Finance Director position at R37, \$121,805.97.

Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

E. John Faul

Discussion to contact John Faul to inquire if he would consider serving as a temporary Administrator. Mr. Faul serves on multiple local boards and would need to clarify that there is no conflict of interest. Register of Deeds Paul DeYoung has also offered to assist if needed.

Motion to direct Chairman Peat to verify with legal counsel that no conflict of interest would exist, and authorize him to contact John Faul to inquire and negotiate a contract for a temporary Administrator position, and to engage in discussions with Paul DeYoung if needed.

Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

F. Charles Norton resignation

Interim Administrator Charles Norton has submitted his resignation effective Friday, March 24, 2023. The Board thanked him for his service to Van Buren County and wished him the best in his future endeavors.

Motion to accept Charles Norton's resignation.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

12. Public Comment

13. Board Correspondence

A. Clinton County Board Resolution

B. Cheyboygan County Board Resolution

14. Closed Session

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 05:50 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk

