MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

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

March 14, 2023

Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. Call to Order

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 01:00 PM by Randall Peat, Chairman of the Board. Present: Patterson-Gladney, Chappell, Doroh, Godfrey, Peat, Leary and Schincariol.

2. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

- Move Item 8.B. from Board of Commissioners Agenda to Item 4.B. on Committee of the Whole Agenda.
- Move Item 9.H. to Item 6.C.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

4. Approval of Minutes

A. February 28th, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting as presented.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Richard Godfrey, Carried

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

This item was added to the agenda

The community has voiced its strong opposition to the routing of a new power line proposed by Consumers Energy that will negatively affect resident's safety, well-being, property values, and destroy natural resources.

Motion to approve a resolution of support to encourage Consumers Energy to change the routing of its proposed power line project.
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Richard Godfrey, Carried
Roll Call Vote: All Yes

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A15/3-14-2023
WHEREAS, Consumers Energy ("Consumers") has proposed building a new 20-mile High Voltage Distribution powerline, and;
WHEREAS, the project is anticipated to take several years, starting in 2024 and projected to be completed by the end of 2025, and;
WHEREAS, Consumers has proposed placement of the new powerline above ground

across various residential, agricultural, and park lands within this County, and;
WHEREAS, Consumers will unnecessarily condemn public and private lands to implement their upgrade, and;
WHEREAS, Van Buren County citizens, by and large, object to Consumers' placement of the new powerlines because of safety concerns, inconvenience, and reduced property values, and;
WHEREAS, Consumers' stated necessity to build this new line is "to deliver more reliable service to the entire County", and;
WHEREAS, Consumers has rejected less intrusive routes for the powerline, (e.g. adjacent to the I-94 corridor or along the existing line) and opted for route that will burden Van Buren County residents in the short term, but also affect residential home values and trees and vegetation for years to come, and;
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The County of Van Buren stands with its citizens in their objection to placement of Consumers' powerlines across residential, agricultural and park lands. The County of Van Buren does not find that a public necessity exists for the taking of residential, agricultural, and park lands for the placement of the Consumers' new powerlines. Therefore, the County of Van Buren, through its Board of Commissioners, objects to Consumers' unnecessary placement of their new electric lines across residential, agricultural, and park lands.

5. Public Comment

The following residents spoke in opposition to the Consumers Energy New Power Line:
Julia Richardson, Pricilla Woodhams, Jerry Labadie, Faith Fletcher, Tammy Tapper, Kraig Jones

Dan Ruzick spoke in favor of the ARPA request for Red Arrow Ministries Youth Center

6. Presentation

A. EGLE Recycling Infrastructure Grant

Kallie Marshall, Van Buren Conversation District, gave an overview of the 2023 EGLE Recycling Infrastructure Grant and eligible activities.

B. Dark Sky Presentation

Mauren Lewandowski, presented information on the Dark Sky Project.

7. Administrative Affairs

A. Van Buren/Cass District Health Department by-laws approval

Danielle Persky, District Health Department, presented the by-laws for approval and reviewed the changes.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the updated Van Buren/Cass District Health Department by-laws.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

B. Opioid Settlement Fund Steering Committee

The County has received funds as part of the nationwide opioid settlement. The creation of a steering committee for the allocation of funds is recommended. Stakeholders that were identified as potential members of the committee were identified and additional members may be added. Proposed members are Commissioners Godfrey and Chappell for Prevention Task Force, Jewell Daily for Recovery Zone, Becky Fatzinger for CMH Suicide Prevention Task Force, Danielle Persky for District Health Department, and Nikki Van Sandt for CMH SUD Treatment.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the creation of a steering committee, and proposed members, for the allocation of funds from the nationwide opioid settlement.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

C. 2nd March Board Meetings Schedule

Discussion to determine a necessity to adjust the next meeting due to any spring break scheduling conflicts. Being none, the meeting will remain as scheduled.

D. County Administrator Posting - Recruiting Firm Contract - EXPEDITED

Human Resources Director, Anna Cerven, presented the proposals from recruiting firms to conduct a search for the County Administrator position, and is recommending Walsh Municipal Services.

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, contracting with Walsh Municipal Services for the County Administrator Search for an amount not to exceed $14,900.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

E. Remote Work Policy Review

Discussion of the Remote Work Policy. Anna Cerven contacted other counties and their policies are very similar to Van Buren's policy. No changes or action to be taken.

8. Buildings and Grounds

A. FOC Building Parking Lot

The County purchased the Kelly Page Building to house Friend of the Court. There are 8 parking spaces behind the building but there is no way to access them except through a small parking lot owned by Arbor Credit Union. ACU's only response to granting an easement has been an offer to sell the property to the County for $90,000 and then for the County to grant them an easement. The parking lot is not needed to be ADA compliant.

Motion to reject Arbor Credit Union's offer to purchase a parking lot in the amount of $90,000.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Richard Godfrey, Carried

9. Finance

A. Commissioner Per Diems

Commissioner per diems were reviewed and a correction is needed on Commissioner Patterson-Gladney's January submission.

Motion to approve Commissioner per diems for payment with the correction of Patterson-Gladney's January submission.
Motion by Paul Schincariol, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

B. Claims

Claims were reviewed.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the payment of claims in the amount of $2,310,061.73.
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

C. ARPA Request Review - Covert Township Sanitary Sewer Project

Commissioner Patterson-Gladney requested to review the ARPA request for the Covert Township Sanitary Sewer Project again as there have been changes. A letter from Covert

Township Supervisor Daywi Cook was read by Patterson-Gladney.

Motion to request Covert Township Supervisor Daywi Cook to present an update to the Board of Commissioners at the next meeting.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Tina Leary, Carried

D. ARPA Request Review - Red Arrow Youth Ministries

Commissioner Patterson-Gladney requested to review the ARPA request for the Red Arrow Ministries Youth Center again. Commissioner Schincariol, Debbie Hess, Maria and Ben Bowater spoke on the matter. Discussion of finding an existing brick and mortar location and collaboration with other entities. Commissioner Schincariol to bring further information back to the Board.

E. MML Insurance Renewal - EXPEDITED

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, renewal of the County property and liability insurance policy with MML in the amount of $320,466.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

F. Fiscal Year 2023 – Adult Recovery Court Contract

Circuit Court is requesting Board approval and signature for the FY23 Adult Recovery Court Contract with Van Buren Community Mental Health.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the FY23 Adult Recovery Court Contract with Van Buren Community Mental Health.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

G. SCAO Virtual Backlog Response Docket Grant - EXPEDITED

A State Court Administrative Office grant was requested to fund a visiting judge to address the backlog of cases caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the agreement for the SCAO Backlog Response Docket Grant in the amount of $237,110.00.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

H. Road Commission Bond Request

**This item was heard as Item 6.C.

Bret Witkowski, Road Commission Director, is requesting the Board to authorize the borrowing of funds and issuance of the County's limited tax general obligation bonds to pay the costs of a CIP project in the amount of twenty million dollars. The project would include a new garage and maintenance facility located in Bangor, remodeling and expansion of the Lawrence office and other improvements. Discussion of the financial impact to the county, exploration of other sites offered and other questions. Commissioners to submit questions to Chuck Norton to compile and forward to Witkowski. Further information will be brought back to the board at the next meeting.

I. Budget Adjustments

Budget adjustments were reviewed.

Motion to approve the monthly budget adjustments required to maintain a balanced budget.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

J. Monthly Financial Statement

The monthly financial statement was reviewed.

Motion to accept the monthly financial statement as presented.
Motion by Paul Schincariol, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

10. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

A. Cost Allocation Plan Service Agreement with Maximus

Maximus has historically provided the County with services to develop the cost allocation plan. The renewal service agreement has no increase in cost.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the Cost Allocation Plan service agreement with Maximus for a three-year term in the amount of $9,000 per year.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

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

The recently purchased facility at 203 S. Niles Street needs network connectivity back to the County. A five-year lease with Bloomingdale Telecom is being recommended.

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, a 5-year fiber lease with Bloomingdale Telecom to 203 W. Niles St, Paw Paw, MI in the amount of $125/mo recurring fee and a one-time cost of $1,200 for construction and fiber terminations.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

C. Wage Scale Placement - Chief Deputies

The Chief Deputies were removed from the collective bargaining units beginning in 2023. They will be placed on the non-union payscale as follows:
Chief Deputy Clerk R26F; Chief Deputy Drain Commissioner (vacant) R26; Chief Deputy Register of Deeds R25F; Chief Deputy Treasurer R26G.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, placing the Chief Deputies on the non-union payscale as presented.
Motion by Paul Schincariol, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

D. Salary Exception - Finance Director - EXPEDITED

Interviews have been conducted for the Finance Director position and one candidate has extensive work experience in municipal finance. A salary exception is requested to bring the candidate in at the same step as the previous employee was.

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the salary exception for the Finance Director candidate at R37, $121,805.97.
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

11. Public Transit

A. Transit Financial Reports

Motion to accept the Transit Financial Report as presented by Tami Naber.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

B. Transit Operations Reports

Motion to accept the Transit Operations Report as presented by Tami Naber.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

C. Director's Report

Motion to accept the Transit Director's Report as presented by Laurie Schlipp.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

12. Public Comment

Veronice Stillson, Friend of the Court, addressed the Board regarding the need to have a designated parking area for Friend of the Court patrons. Discussion of possible resolutions. Commissioner Leary will meet with John Small to explore options and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 04:58 PM.

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk