



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

May 9, 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

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**
Add Item 8.B. Animal Control Building
3. **Approval of Agenda**
Motion to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Tina Leary, Carried
4. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. **April 26, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes**
Motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting as presented.
Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried
5. **Public Comment**
6. **Presentation**
 - A. **Proclamation Christmas Spirit Foundation - Wahmhoff Farms**
Betsy Perales, of Wahmhoff Farms Nursery, was presented a Proclamation from the State of Michigan and the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners for receiving the Christmas Spirit Award for the Trees for Troops program. The community thanks her for her many years of dedication to serving our military personnel.

WHEREAS, , the Christmas Spirit Foundation is a charitable organization founded in 2005 that works to recognize and support the true spirit of Christmas through programs such as "Trees for Troops", and;
WHEREAS, the "Trees for Troops" program has provided a total of 293,392 free Christmas trees to military members and their families every year to different armed services bases through-out the Country, and;
WHEREAS, as the "Trees for Troops" program continues to grow the Christmas Spirit Foundation recognizes the success of the program depends on many people being involved to source the trees to donate, coordinating volunteer efforts to load/unload trees, raising funds to support the program, and just creating awareness, and;
WHEREAS, the Christmas Spirit Foundation formalized their recognition of

individuals/companies for superlative support of the “Trees for Troops” program by creating the Christmas SPIRIT Award, and;

WHEREAS, this year one of the persons recognized for their outstanding service to the program include Betsy Perales of Wahmhoff Farms Nursery in Gobles, Michigan, and;

WHEREAS, Betsy Perales of Wahmhoff Farms has hosted and is the lead organizer of “Trees for Troops” utilizing around 200 of local volunteers on their farm in Gobles since 2006 on the Monday after Thanksgiving to load FedEx Freight with up to a thousand of donated Christmas trees for transportation to military personnel each year, and;

WHEREAS, Betsy Perales goes above and beyond of what is expected of her by having elementary students in Gobles write messages to the military personnel, which are attached to each tree, contacts each person who participated in the event by sending photos and thank you notes from the troops, and contacts veterans’ organizations, schools, and the media to promote the event, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners congratulates Betsy Perales of Wahmhoff Farms Nursery on her receiving the well-deserved Christmas SPIRIT Award from the Christmas Spirit Foundation and thank her for her dedication to serving our military personnel through her years of service organizing and supporting the “Trees for Troops” program.

B. DCS Presentation

Chris Scharrer, DCS Technology, provided an update on the Van Buren County Broadband Project. The ROBIN grant program has closed and preliminary announcements are expected by Memorial Day. Many of the FCC challenges have been upheld and review continues. Remaining gaps were identified.

7. Administrative Affairs

A. Pride Care Ambulance Services Contract Extension

The Pride Care contract expired the end of 2022. The service area is interested in changing the provider to VBEMS effective July 1, 2023. The contract with Pride Care needs to be extended to June 30, 2023 to continue coverage until that time.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, extending the Pride Care contract to June 30, 2023.

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

8. Buildings and Grounds

A. Hazen Street Road Extension and Village of Paw Paw Housing Development

Zach Morris and Trisha Nesbitt gave an update on the Hazen Street road extension. The Village of Paw Paw would like to obtain ownership of the County-owned service drive that connects Hazen Street west to the Paw Paw Public Schools Elementary School campus. A developer is working on a site plan for mixed housing units south of the drive and is required to have access to the drive in order to have an additional ingress/egress to the development. The drive would have to be rebuilt to meet village road standards. A land survey to establish the parcels is needed.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, proceeding with a land survey for the 3 parcels for the Hazen Street road extension.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

B. Animal Control Building

John Small reported that the State Inspection of the Animal Control Building revealed several deficiencies that need to be remedied. He will prepare a list of repairs needed and present it to DLZ for an estimate to complete the repairs and/or construct a new facility. Further information will be provided at the next meeting.

9. Finance

A. Commissioner Per Diems

Commissioner per diems were reviewed.

Motion to approve per diems for payment as submitted.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

Chairman Peat discussed that many counties pay a straight wage instead of including per diems. He has asked for a wage study of Elected Officials to review wages.

B. Claims

Claims were reviewed.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, claims in the amount of \$3,092,330.76 as submitted.

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

C. Monthly Financial Statement

The monthly Financial Statement was reviewed.

Motion to accept the Monthly Finance Statement as presented.

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

D. Foster Swift Invoice

The Foster Swift invoice was reviewed.

Motion to pay the Foster Swift invoice for NCG litigation in according to the the cost sharing agreement.

Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

10. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

A. Creation of New Position in Specialty Courts

Natalie Dean presented the request to create a new full-time position in Specialty Courts. The Specialty Courts Program Supervisor position would be placed at the R-28 non-union payscale. The position is 100% covered through federal grants.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the creation of a Specialty Courts Program Supervisor position at the R-28 non-union payscale.

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

B. Out of State Travel Request-Courts

Natalie Dean is requesting approval for out-of-state travel for three court employees to attend the NACM annual conference July 9-13, in Miami, Florida. This item was budgeted and attendees have applied for scholarships to have conference fees covered.

Motion to approve by resolution at the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners, out of state travel for three court employees to attend the NACM

conference in Miami, Florida on July 9-13, 2023.
Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

11. Public Transit

12. Veterans Services

A. FY2024 MVAA Grant Request - EXPEDITED

David Krzycki presented the request for approval of the FY2024 MVAA grant submission. The County has been preapproved for \$86,361 which is an increase of approximately \$20,000.

Motion to approve by resolution at today's meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the FY2024 MVAA grant submission and for the Board Chair to sign all required documents.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

13. Public Comment

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 03:08 PM.

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk