



MINUTES

**Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street**

September 26, 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 02:10 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

Separate Items on 11H and add items 11K, 11L, and 11M.

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 Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

6. Approval of Minutes

A. **September 12th, 2023 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

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

7. Public Comment

8. Presentation

A. Judge Baillargeon - Regional Veteran's Treatment Court

Judge Baillargeon spoke regarding the Regional Veteran's Treatment Court.

9. Administrative Affairs

A. **ARPA VBISD Youth Center

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A47/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to authorize the use of \$950,000 in ARPA funds for a Van Buren County Youth Center in conjunction with the Van Buren Intermediate School District, and;

WHEREAS, there have been numerous discussions on the use of ARPA funds to address youth mental health issues as a result of COVID. VBISD has worked with Commissioners and other stakeholders to develop a conceptual program, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the authorization to use \$950,000.00 in ARPA funds for a Van Buren County Youth Center in conjunction with the Van Buren Intermediate School District.

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

B. ****Board of Canvasser Appointment**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A48/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to fill the expiring terms on the Board of Canvasser for a 4-year term expiring October 31, 2027, and;

WHEREAS, the county committee of each political party is required to submit to the County Clerk no later than September 1st of each odd-numbered year the names of three persons qualified to serve on the Board Canvassers. The County Clerk presents the submitted names to the members of the Board of County Commissioners who are then required to fill each vacant position with one of the three persons nominated for the position. This is a 4-year term expiring 10-31-2027, and;

WHEREAS, Michigan election law stipulates that the Board of County Commissioners must elect the positions "by ballot." As the Open Meetings Act prohibits voting procedures at a public meeting which prevents citizens from knowing how members of a public body voted, a "secret" balloting process cannot be employed by the Board of County Commissioners when filling the positions, and;

WHEREAS, the names submitted by each party are:

Republican – Nancy Thomas, Tonya Schuitmaker, Douglas Nelson

Democrat – Doug Cultra, Nancy Backas, David Goldenberg, and;

WHEREAS, after discussion, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners voted to select Nancy Thomas (R) and Doug Cultra (D) to fill the expiring terms, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners appoints Nancy Thomas (R) and Doug Cultra (D) to the Board of Canvassers for a 4-year term expiring October 31st, 2027.

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

C. ****Local Emergency Planning Committee Member List**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A49/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the updated LEPC/LPT member list, and;

WHEREAS, the LEPC/LPT Member List has been updated, removing inactive members, removing members that no longer wish to participate, adding new community members that wish to participate, and establishing alternate voting positions for several members/positions, and;

WHEREAS, this was done due to low attendance preventing quorums at LEPC meetings, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the updated member list for the LEPC/LPT.

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

D. ****Keeler Township Ambulance Interlocal Agreement**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A50/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to terminate the Ambulance Services Inter-Local Agreement with Keeler Township and amend the VBEMS Ambulance Services Contract to include Keeler Township effective August 21, 2023, and;

WHEREAS, Keeler Township has belonged to the Cass/Van Buren Emergency Services Authority who contracted with Pride Care for ambulance services in Keeler Township. Pride Care effective August 21, 2023, discontinued operations in Keeler Township, and;

WHEREAS, Keeler Township desires to separate from the Authority and discontinue the inter-local agreement that allows us to distribute millage money to them directly, and;

WHEREAS, in its place, Keeler Township has asked us to add Keeler Township to our existing VBEMS contract. Consequently, our millage money for the third quarter will be:

July 1, 2023 – August 20, 2023: Pride Care

August 21, 2023 – September 30, 2023: VBEMS

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the termination of the Ambulance Services Inter-Local Agreement with Keeler Township and amend the VBEMS Ambulance Services Contract to include Keeler Township effective August 21, 2023.

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

E. ****Keeler Township Ambulance VBEMS Service Contract**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A51/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to amend the VBEMS Ambulance Services contract to expand the geographical service effective August 21, 2023 to include Keeler Township and to terminate the Ambulance Services Inter-Local Agreement with Keeler Township, and;

WHEREAS, the local unit of government (Keeler Township) has requested VBEMS to assume ambulance services paid through the Ambulance millage effective August 21, 2023. There will be no gap in ambulance service coverage, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the amending of the VBEMS Ambulance Services contract to expand the geographical service effective August 21, 2023 to include Keeler Township and to terminate the Ambulance Services Inter-Local Agreement with Keeler Township.

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

10. Buildings and Grounds

11. Finance

A. ****Claims**

CLAIMS RESOLUTION C11/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$ 2,159,344.00 for August 2023 were submitted and reviewed, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the total claims in the amount of \$ 2,159,344.00 for the month of August 2023.

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

B. ****Budget Adjustments**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F34/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners recognizes its duty to appropriate funds for County operations; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act (Public Act 2 of 1968, as amended) provides a system of unified procedures for the preparation, execution, and amendment of budgets for local units of government; and
WHEREAS, instances of budgetary non-compliance are reported in the County's annual financial statements, and, by extension, to the State of Michigan; and
WHEREAS, the last scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting in September is September 26, 2023; and
WHEREAS, budget amendments for the 2022-2023 fiscal year must be performed by September 30, 2023, which is the last day of the fiscal year; and
WHEREAS, the need for, and the amount of, budget amendments may not be known until the last days of the fiscal year.
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Administrator and/or the Finance Director to amend the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget as necessary to maintain compliance with Public Act 2 of 1968, as amended.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the budget amendments so performed be presented for review at the October 10, 2023 meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

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

C. ****Blight Elimination Grant - Round 2**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F35/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to accept the Blight Elimination Grant in the amount of \$115,316.00, and;

WHEREAS, the Blight Elimination Grant Program through the State Land Bank Authority, awarded \$250,000 to all counties in the first round. In the first round, the Van Buren County Land Bank Authority (VBCLBA) did not utilize all available funding. For round 2, we solicited additional projects for both the remaining guaranteed funding and competitive funding, and;

WHEREAS, the following projects were approved for guaranteed funding:

106 South Center Street, Hartford – demolition (fire)

1014 Third Street, Bangor – demolition (fire)

WHEREAS, the following project was approved for competitive funding:

606 East Washington, Lawton – demolition

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the Blight Elimination Grant in the amount of \$115,316.00.

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

D. ****Sale of Old Ambulance**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F36/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to sell a 1995 Ford Ambulance for one dollar to the Van Buren County Intermediate School District, and;

WHEREAS, we would like to sell an old ambulance that we utilized for our dive team. We are requesting that we are allowed to sell this 1995 Ford Ambulance to the Van Buren Intermediate School District for their first responder program. This vehicle is not in a condition to be used by the Sheriff's Office for emergency situations like water rescue or body recovery efforts. We ask the sale price of this vehicle be \$1, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the sale of the 1995 Ford Ambulance for one dollar to the Van Buren County Intermediate School District.

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

E. ****911 Audio Recording Project**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F37/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to proceed with an upgrade of the 911 Audio Recording System, and;

WHEREAS, with the completion of the VHF Radio System upgrade project, we have discovered some challenges with our current audio logging system that have created potential liability concerns. These concerns include multiple instances of the recording system failing to record radio traffic on the MPSCS system. In the course of troubleshooting and investigating source causes, it was determined that additional and upgraded equipment is needed to maintain a technologically forward-facing posture, and; WHEREAS, the estimated cost of the project is \$185,000.00. The current 911 Fund Balance has sufficient funds to cover the cost of the project. (\$1,894,193.00), and; WHEREAS, Equature proposal includes 5 year maintenance. If 100% paid up front, we would realize a savings of approx. \$57,000.00 over the course of the 5 years. Quotes from Motorola (radio) & Equature (recording vendor) have been obtained and are attached. The phone vendor, InDigital, has indicated that their cost would be no more than \$5000.00 but would need to verify current equipment prior to a purchase agreement. These are the vendors who are currently utilized by 911 for recording all audio files including phone & radio systems.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the request to proceed with an upgrade of the 911 Audio Recording System.

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

F. ****Access & Visitation Grant**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F38/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the SCAO Access and Visitation Service Contract and to authorize the Board Chair to sign on the Board's behalf, and;

WHEREAS, for several years, Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Friends of the Court have filed a joint Access & Visitation grant application to share funds between our counties. The FY24 application has been approved and the contract is available for the Board Chair's signature. This grant provides for supervised parenting time in complex cases. We are working to expand use of this service in Van Buren County this year, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the SCAO Access and Visitation Service Contract and authorizes the Board Chair to sign on the Board's behalf.

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

G. ****Opioid Steering Committee - Purchase of Naloxone Kits**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F39/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to purchase 94 Naloxone kits using Opioid Settlement Funds in the amount not to exceed \$10,200.00, and;

WHEREAS, the Opioid Settlement Committee has recommended the use of funds for the purchase of 94 Naloxone Safety Kits to be distributed as follows:

Public Schools 48

Parochial Schools 6

Cities/Villages 11

Townships 17 (Bloomindale Village & Twp Combined)

County 12

Total 94, and;

WHEREAS, the kits are designed to be placed in public spaces that can be accessed quickly in the event of an emergency. The use of these monies for this purpose meets the criteria for harm reduction, which is an allowable expense, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the purchase 94 Naloxone kits using Opioid Settlement Funds in

the amount not to exceed \$10,200 and forward to the September 26, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting for consideration.

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

H. Juvenile Court - QLR & CPLR Grant Contracts - EXPEDITED

This item amended to be for QLR Grant only

FINANCE RESOLUTION F40/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the renewal of the existing Quality Legal Representation (QLR) & Child & Parent Legal Representation (CPLR) grant contracts.

Because of timing concerns, the request is to expedite this for approval at the 9/26/2023 Board of Commissioners meeting, and;

WHEREAS, Juvenile Court has been the recipient of two MDHHS grants for several years - Quality Legal Representation and Child & Parent Legal Representation. These grants reimburse partial costs of attorneys and a social worker who provide ancillary services to families involved in child protective cases. In line with this court's philosophy of being a resource for Van Buren County families, these interventions have proven effective at preventing removal of children from their homes or an earlier return to their home, and;

WHEREAS, services may include establishing paternity or custody, filing for divorce, assisting with domestic violence or landlord tenant issues, helping restore a driver's license, finding housing, completing applications for disability or assistance, resolving contract disputes, and other barriers to permanency for children. Only Van Buren County and Wayne County are pilot counties for these innovative solutions and the State is pleased with our success, and;

WHEREAS, due to many questions and program requirement changes, it has taken a long time to get to the point of contract signature. With the start of the new fiscal year on 10/1/2023, I am requesting an expedited grant contract signature, so we do not lose any days of grant reimbursement. Signature needs to be completed in the EGrAMS online system, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the renewal of the existing Quality Legal Representation (QLR) & Child & Parent Legal Representation (CPLR) grant contracts.

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

I. Friend of the Court - CRP Grant Contract - EXPEDITED

FINANCE RESOLUTION F41/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the Friend of the Courts Cooperative Reimbursement Program Grant Contract and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the appropriate documents on behalf of the Board, and;

WHEREAS, the Friend of the Court is largely funded by the Cooperative Reimbursement Program at a rate of 66%. The previous contract ran from 2017 - 2024 and the current contract is from 2024 - 2028. This contract allows us to bill for reimbursable expenses. Van Buren County is a combined county, which means our office handles establishment and enforcement. Establishment is a function of the prosecutor's office, so this contract has been signed by Chief Judge Brickley and Prosecutor Zuiderveen, and;

WHEREAS, the total grant award is \$10,357,445.06,

FY23-24 \$1,881,388.06

FY24-25 \$1,971,804.86

FY25-26 \$2,066,739.28

FY26-27 \$2,166,423.44

FY27-28 \$2,271,088.82, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the Friend of the Court Cooperative Reimbursement Program Grant Contract and authorizes the Board Chair to sign the appropriate documents on behalf of the Board.

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

J. **Blight Elimination - Round 3 - EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F42/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to authorize the Treasurer to sign the grant agreement with the Michigan State Land Bank Authority, and to expedite the request to the September 26th, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting for final approval due to the hearing deadline of 9/30/23, and;

WHEREAS, there have been numerous discussions on the use of ARPA funds to address youth mental health issues as a result of COVID. VBISD has worked with Commissioners and other stakeholders to develop a conceptual program, and;

WHEREAS, all land banks were awarded \$500,000 in round 3 of the state's blight elimination grant program. The VBCLBA would like to proceed with grant agreement in order for the funds to be used for eligible projects in the county, and;

WHEREAS, the State Land Bank Authority (SLBA) has not yet finalized the criteria for this round of funding. Once that is made available, the VBCLBA will solicit projects and then submit qualifying projects to the SLBA for their approval. Once approved by the SLBA, the projects may proceed. The agreement must be signed and returned to the SLBA by 9/30, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the authorization of the Treasurer to sign the grant agreement with the Michigan State Land Bank Authority.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

K. **Juvenile CPLR Grant Contract EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F43/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to approve the renewal of the existing Quality Legal Representation (QLR) & Child & Parent Legal Representation (CPLR) grant contracts. Because of timing concerns, the request is to expedite this for approval at the 9/26/2023 Board of Commissioners meeting, and;

WHEREAS, Juvenile Court has been the recipient of two MDHHS grants for several years - Quality Legal Representation and Child & Parent Legal Representation. These grants reimburse partial costs of attorneys and a social worker who provide ancillary services to families involved in child protective cases. In line with this court's philosophy of being a resource for Van Buren County families, these interventions have proven effective at preventing removal of children from their homes or an earlier return to their home, and;

WHEREAS, services may include establishing paternity or custody, filing for divorce, assisting with domestic violence or landlord tenant issues, helping restore a driver's license, finding housing, completing applications for disability or assistance, resolving contract disputes, and other barriers to permanency for children. Only Van Buren County and Wayne County are pilot counties for these innovative solutions and the State is pleased with our success, and;

WHEREAS, due to many questions and program requirement changes, it has taken a long time to get to the point of contract signature. With the start of the new fiscal year on 10/1/2023, I am requesting an expedited grant contract signature, so we do not lose any days of grant reimbursement. Signature needs to be completed in the EGrAMS online system, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the renewal of the existing Quality Legal Representation (QLR) & Child & Parent Legal Representation (CPLR) grant contracts.

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

L. **Juvenile Court FY23 QLR Grant Amendment EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F44/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the amendment to the FY23 Quality Legal Representation (QLR) grant contract, and;

WHEREAS, this grant contract was previously signed. The amendment is to change Van Buren County from recipient to sub-recipient with no financial changes, and;

WHEREAS, with the close of the fiscal year on 9/30/2023, I am requesting an expedited grant contract signature, so the state has this amendment signed during the current fiscal year. Signature needs to be completed in the EGrAMS online system. Paper copies attached for reference only, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the FY23 Quality Legal Representation Amended grant contract.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

M. **Juvenile Court RTA Grant EXPEDITED**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F45/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the renewal of the existing Raise the Age (RTA) grant contracts, and;

WHEREAS, Juvenile Court has been the recipient of a Raise the Age grant since the legislation changed in 2021. This grant allows reimbursement for any expense related to a youth who receives a new charge after age 17, and;

WHEREAS, these include wages / fringes for court staff, court appointed attorneys, driving classes, GED test costs, etc., and;

WHEREAS, with the start of the new fiscal year on 10/1/2023, it is being requesting an expedited grant contract signature, so we do not lose any days of grant reimbursement. Signature needs to be completed in the EGrAMS online system. Paper copies attached for reference only, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the renewal of the existing Raise the Age (RTA) grant contracts.

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

12. **Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts**

A. **Elected Officials Salaries - EXPEDITED**

LABOR RESOLUTION L35/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request to adopt new salaries for the County Clerk, Treasurer and Register of Deeds to be in alignment with the averages of our comparable counties for an effective date of October 1, 2023, and;

WHEREAS, In July, Administration conducted and provided results from a salary study of Elected Official's salaries of our comparable counties. In that survey, it concluded that our County Clerk, Treasurer, and Register of Deeds fell below that average. We are seeking to bring each of those Elected Officials salaries to be the average and also to increase our County Clerk's Election stipend as it hasn't been updated in several years, and;

WHEREAS, Clerk: \$85,047.96 and Election Stipend increased from \$2,000 to \$5,000, Treasurer: \$83,661.76, Register of Deeds: \$80,516.66, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the adoption of the new salaries for the County Clerk, Treasurer and Register of Deeds to be in alignment with the averages of our comparable counties for an effective date of October 1, 2023.

Motion by Richard Godfrey, Second by Tina Leary, Carried

13. **Public Transit**

A. ****MDOT Contract 2022-0144/P5**

TRANSIT RESOLUTION T7/9-26-2023

WHEREAS, there has been a request for approval, a resolution, and signatures for MDOT Contract 2022-0144/P5 which provides Federal Section 5311 Capital funding for replacement buses, and;

WHEREAS, MDOT has issued this contract for buses to replace aging vehicles in Transit's fleet, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the request for approval, a resolution, and signatures for the MDOT Contract 2022-0144/P5 which provides Federal Section 5311 Capital funding replacement buses.

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

14. Veterans Services

15. Commissioner's Update

- MAC - Health & Human Services Committee
- Childhood obesity
- Statewide Septic
- Covert Generating Pass the Key
- Remonumentation
- SW Michigan Behavioral Health
- Human Services
- ORV Ordinances
- Kalamazoo County Veteran's Court

16. Chairman's Update

- VB/Cass Health Department
- Discussion update on Commissioner's wages

17. Public Comment

Wayne Nelson advised that the county's fiscal year ends September 30th.

18. Board Correspondence

19. Closed Session

20. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 03:06 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk

