



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

January 28, 2025

Commissioners

Gail Patterson-Gladney, District 1
Mike Chappell, District 2
Kurt Doroh, District 3
David DiStefano, 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 02:30 PM by Randall Peat, Chairman of the Board.
2. **Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance / Prayer**
Invocation 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: Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, David DiStefano, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol. Commissioner Patterson-Gladney absent and excused.
4. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**
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 presented.
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried
6. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. ****January 14th, 2025 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes**
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried
*Approved with notation that DiStefano had abstained from approving the December 10th minutes
7. **Public Comment**
8. **Administrative Affairs**
 - A. ****Appointments - Michigan Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)**
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A5/1-28-2025
WHEREAS, the Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC) is responsible for developing and implementing the Materials Management Plan for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties; and,

WHEREAS, two vacancies have arisen on the MMPC due to the departure of previous appointees from their places of employment; and,
WHEREAS, Donovan Kelley, Site Manager for Recycle Works in Elkhart, Indiana, with over 14 years of experience in solid waste and recycling management, is recommended to fill the role of Materials Recovery Facility Operator; and,
WHEREAS, Kimberly Haneberg, Superintendent for the Department of Public Services at the City of Dowagiac, with extensive experience in public works and compost facility operations, is recommended to fill the role of Compost Facility Operator; and,
WHEREAS, these appointments are essential to ensuring continuity in the MMPC's mission to manage materials effectively and promote sustainable practices across the three counties; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners appoints Donovan Kelley as the Materials Recovery Facility Operator and Kimberly Haneberg as the Compost Facility Operator to the Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC).

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

B. ****North Lake Drain Petition Project - Full Faith & Credit**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A6/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, pursuant to a petition filed with the Drain Commissioner of the County of Van Buren, State of Michigan (the "Drain Commissioner"), proceedings have been initiated under the provisions of Act 40, Public Acts of Michigan, 1956, as amended (the "Act"), for the purpose of maintenance and improvements to the North Lake Drain in Columbia Township (the "Project"), which includes the replacement of 2 to 3 road crossings as part of the drain maintenance petition submitted by the Village of Breedsville; and,

WHEREAS, the Project is necessary for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare, and Columbia Township and the Van Buren County Road Commission have expressed their support for the Project; and,

WHEREAS, the Drain Commissioner intends to issue the Drainage District's note or notes (the "Note") in an amount not to exceed \$692,681.02 to finance the costs of the Project, with the principal of and interest on the Note to be payable from special assessments levied against public corporations and/or benefited properties in the Special Assessment District established by the Drainage District; and,

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners (the "Board") is authorized, by resolution adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Board, to pledge the full faith and credit of the County of Van Buren (the "County") for the prompt payment of the principal of and interest on the Note pursuant to Section 434 of the Act; and,

WHEREAS, the pledge of the full faith and credit of the County to the Note will reduce the cost of financing the Project and will be a benefit to the people of the County.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

1. The County pledges its full faith and credit for the prompt payment of the principal of and interest on the Note in a par amount not to exceed \$692,681.02. The County shall immediately advance sufficient moneys from County funds, as a first budget obligation, to pay the principal of and interest on the Note should the Drainage District fail to pay such amounts when due. The County shall, if necessary, levy a tax on all taxable property in the County, to the extent other available funds are insufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the Note when due, subject to constitutional and statutory limitations on the taxing power of the County.
2. Should the County advance County funds pursuant to the pledge made in this Resolution, the amounts shall be repaid to the County from assessments or reassessments made upon benefited properties in the Special Assessment District as provided in the Act.
3. The Chairperson of the Board, the County Administrator, the County Clerk, the County Treasurer, the County Finance Director, and any other official of the County, or any one or

more of them ("Authorized Officers"), are authorized and directed to take all actions necessary or desirable for the issuance of the Note and to execute any documents or certificates necessary to complete the issuance of the Note, including, but not limited to, applications to the Michigan Department of Treasury, certificates, receipts, orders, agreements, instruments, and any certificates relating to federal or state securities laws, rules, or regulations.

4. All resolutions and parts of resolutions are, to the extent of any conflict with this resolution, rescinded to the extent of the conflict.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

9. Buildings and Grounds

A. **Request to use County Property - 2025 Paw Paw Recycle Roundup Event

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS RESOLUTION B1/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, there has been a request from the Van Buren Conservation District for permission to use County property for their Paw Paw Recycle Roundup Event scheduled for June 7, 2025, from 9:00AM to 2:00PM; and,

WHEREAS, the request includes the use of the parking lot at the Van Buren Community Mental Health building (801 Hazen St., Paw Paw, MI), the restrooms located in the Van Buren County Buildings and Grounds barn (753 Hazen St., Paw Paw, MI), and access to a forklift for the event; and,

WHEREAS, the Paw Paw Recycle Roundup Event aims to provide the community with an opportunity to recycle large tires and other materials, supporting the Conservation District's mission to promote sustainable practices and environmental stewardship in Van Buren County; and,

WHEREAS, the Van Buren Conservation District has submitted the required application and proof of insurance as part of this request, ensuring compliance with County policies for the use of County property; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the request on behalf of the Van Buren Conservation District to use County property, including the parking lot at 801 Hazen St., restrooms at 753 Hazen St., and access to a forklift, for the Paw Paw Recycle Roundup Event on June 7, 2025, from 9:00AM to 2:00PM.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

10. Finance

A. **Claims

CLAIMS RESOLUTION C1/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$3,294,741.11 were submitted and reviewed, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve of the total claims in the amount of \$3,294,741.11 for the month of December 2024.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

B. Budget Stabilization Transfer

FINANCE RESOLUTION F3/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Budget Stabilization Fund was established in accordance with the Budget Stabilization Act, Public Act 30 of 1978, to assist in ensuring financial stability and maintaining fiscal responsibility within Van Buren County; and,

WHEREAS, the Budget Stabilization Fund is required to maintain a balance of no less than 5% of General Fund expenditures and no more than 20% of the most recent General Fund budget or the average of the last five adjusted budgets, whichever is less; and, WHEREAS, since 2019, the Budget Stabilization Fund balance has remained at \$1,258,430.00, while the revenue and expenditures in the General Fund have grown, resulting in an increase in the five-year average of General Fund expenditures; and, WHEREAS, to remain compliant with the requirements of the Budget Stabilization Act, a transfer in the amount of \$715,000 from the General Fund to the Budget Stabilization Fund is necessary, which will bring the fund balance to approximately 7.5% of the General Fund five-year average, exceeding the minimum threshold of 5% and reflecting prudent financial planning in anticipation of increasing expenditures; and, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the transfer of \$715,000 from the General Fund to the Budget Stabilization Fund, ensuring continued compliance with the Budget Stabilization Act and supporting the County's financial stability.

Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by David DiStefano, Carried
Roll Call Vote

Yes: Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, David DiStefano, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol

C. ****Out of State Travel Request - Finance**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F4/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) is hosting its annual conference from June 28, 2025, through July 2, 2025, in Washington, DC, providing an opportunity for government finance professionals to receive essential training and updates on current issues in the field of government finance; and, WHEREAS, Finance Director Becky Grabemeyer and Finance Operations Manager Rebekka Garvison have requested approval for out-of-state travel to attend this conference, which is crucial for maintaining professional credentials and ensuring compliance with the latest standards and practices in government finance; and, WHEREAS, the conference offers over 70 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) accredited sessions on topics such as Financial Reporting, Petty Cash, Budgeting, Investments, Auditing, Debt, Payroll, Asset Management, GASB Standards, Procurement, and Long-Term Planning, making it an invaluable resource for County finance staff; and, WHEREAS, all associated expenses, including air travel, accommodations, and conference fees, will be funded through existing budget line items, ensuring no additional financial burden on the County; and, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the out-of-state travel request for Finance Director Becky Grabemeyer and Finance Operations Manager Rebekka Garvison to attend the Annual GFOA Conference in Washington, DC, from June 28, 2025, through July 2, 2025.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

D. ****Purchase of Patrol Car - Sheriff's Department**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F5/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office has identified the need for a patrol car to support the operations of the newly appointed Undersheriff Casey Davis; and, WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office has requested the purchase of a patrol car from Tapper Ford at a cost of \$45,408.96, with funds to be paid out of budget line item 207.0-301.00-981.000, which has sufficient funding to accommodate this purchase; and, WHEREAS, the purchase will be made under a state bid purchase agreement, with Tapper Ford being the preferred vendor due to their knowledge of bid specifications, which improves the efficiency of the purchasing process for patrol cars; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the purchase of a patrol car for the Sheriff's Office from Tapper Ford at the cost of \$45,408.96, to be funded from line item 207.0-301.00-981.000.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

E. ****Disposal of County Property - Sheriff's Department**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F6/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office has identified four old patrol cars that are no longer needed for operations due to their condition; and,
WHEREAS, efforts to donate these vehicles to other County departments were unsuccessful as there was no interest in acquiring them; and,
WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office recommends disposal of the vehicles through Biddergy, a trusted platform for the sale of surplus County property; and,
WHEREAS, the titles for the four vehicles are attached for reference and will be transferred as part of the disposal process; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, authorize the disposal of the four old patrol cars through Biddergy.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

F. ****Purchase of FOC Deputy Vehicle**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F7/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Friend of the Court (FOC) collaborates with the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office to employ two deputies who provide critical security and operational support, including office security, inmate and juvenile transport, and serving legal paperwork; and,
WHEREAS, the FOC currently utilizes two transport vehicles for these duties, a 2023 Ford Explorer and a 2017 Dodge Charger, the latter of which has accumulated 141,000 miles and is no longer suitable for operational needs due to high mileage, intermittent ABS issues, lack of modern safety features, and poor functionality for transport duties; and,
WHEREAS, the replacement of the 2017 Dodge Charger was included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for FY25/26 at an estimated cost of \$75,000, but a recent quote from Tapper Ford for a 2025 Ford Explorer Police Interceptor is \$51,651.00, with potential accessory costs dependent on equipment transferability from the Charger to the new vehicle; and,
WHEREAS, the purchase will be made under a state bid purchase agreement, with Tapper Ford being the preferred vendor due to their expertise in bid specifications, ensuring an efficient and cost-effective procurement process; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, authorize the purchase of a 2025 Ford Explorer Police Interceptor from Tapper Ford at the cost of \$51,651.00, ensuring continued operational efficiency and safety for the Friend of the Court deputies.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

12. Public Transit

A. Annual Application Information for MDOT - EXPEDITED

TRANSIT RESOLUTION T1/1-28-2025

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) requires all public transit agencies in the state of Michigan to complete and submit an Annual Application and

supporting documents each year to secure operating and capital funding for the following fiscal year; and,
WHEREAS, the submission of the FY 2026 Annual Application is critical for Van Buren County's Public Transit program to receive necessary funding to continue providing transportation services to the community; and,
WHEREAS, the deadline for submission of the FY 2026 Annual Application is February 1, 2025, and includes the required Contract Clauses Certification and Resolution of Intent, which must be signed by the Board Chair on behalf of the County; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the MDOT FY 2026 Annual Application and authorize the Board Chair to sign the attached Contract Clauses Certification and Resolution of Intent on behalf of the County.

Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- AI Committee
- Luc's Light
- Public Health
- Planning Commission

15. Chairman's Update

- AI Board Training

16. Board Correspondence

17. Closed Session

A. Hoekstra Litigation

Motion to enter into closed session under MCL 15.268E regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with pending litigation with Kati Hoekstra that would have a detrimental effect if it were held in open session.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

Roll Call Vote

Yes: Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, David DiStefano, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol

Board went into closed session at 2:46 p.m.

Board returned from closed session at 3:25 p.m.

18. Public Comment

Discussion of what Commissioner information listed would be listed in the County Directory. Commissioner email addresses and phone numbers will be published in the directory.

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by Paul Schincariol, Second by Tina Leary, Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 03:25 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk