



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

June 10, 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: Gail Patterson-Gladney, Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, David DiStefano, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol.
4. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**
Delete Item 8.A.
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 Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
6. **Approval of Minutes**

A. ****May 27th, 2025 Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes**
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
7. **Public Comment**
8. **Administrative Affairs**

A. ****Van Buren Community Mental Health - Resolution to Address Public Behavioral Health Funding Shortfall**
This item was removed from the agenda.

B. ****Approval of Opioid Settlement RFP Process and Timeline**
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A34/6-10-2025
WHEREAS, Van Buren County participated in national litigation against opioid

manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies for their role in the opioid crisis and resulting public health impacts; and
 WHEREAS, because of this litigation, Van Buren County is projected to receive nearly \$2.8 million in settlement funds over eighteen (18) years, beginning in January 2023; and
 WHEREAS, opioid settlement funds must be used in accordance with the terms and allowable uses defined in Exhibit E of the settlement agreements and consistent with the definition of opioid remediation; and
 WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners previously established an Opioid Settlement Steering Committee to provide leadership and guidance in the planning, development, and oversight of strategies for distributing opioid settlement funds; and
 WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of including diverse and informed perspectives in the decision-making and oversight of opioid settlement funds, and intends for membership on all opioid-related committees to reflect a broad cross-section of the community, including but not limited to representatives from government, public health, health care providers, public safety, the criminal-legal system, prevention coalitions, harm reduction and recovery support providers, schools and universities, behavioral health and treatment professionals, medical examiners or coroners, individuals with lived experience with substance use, their family and friends, and tribal citizens and governments; and
 WHEREAS, the Steering Committee has developed a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process as the framework for disbursing opioid settlement funds, beginning with a two-year grant cycle totaling \$300,000 (approximately \$150,000 annually) to help sustain resources over the expected 18-year life of the settlement; and
 WHEREAS, funding shall only be awarded to proposals that meet eligibility criteria and align with the allowable uses under Exhibit E of the national opioid settlement and the priorities identified in the 2024 Van Buren County Community Health Needs Assessment;
 NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED:

1. The Opioid Settlement Steering Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and scoring proposals submitted in response to the County's opioid settlement RFP and shall make funding recommendations to the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, who retain final authority over the approval and distribution of all opioid settlement funds.
2. The Opioid Settlement Steering Committee shall also monitor all funded activities for compliance with program requirements and performance outcomes.
3. The Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the following targeted RFP timeline for 2025:
 - Beginning of July 2025 – RFP Issued
 - Mid-August 2025 – Application Deadline
 - End of September 2025 – Grant Awards Announced

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

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

9. Buildings and Grounds

A. **CIP 2025 Request: Courthouse - Jail Courtyard Repaving

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS RESOLUTION B9/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board of Commissioners to approve a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to repave the courtyard between the Van Buren County Courthouse and Jail; and
 WHEREAS, the condition of the courtyard pavement has significantly deteriorated, creating safety hazards and accessibility concerns for County staff and the public; and
 WHEREAS, the project was publicly bid, and Kalamazoo Excavation submitted the lowest responsible proposal in the amount of one hundred nine thousand eight hundred seventy-

four dollars (\$109,874.00); and,
WHEREAS, the 2025 approved CIP budget allocated eighty-two thousand ninety-four dollars (\$82,094.00) for this repaving project under CIP Project # Paving, account number 444.0351.00.975.042; and,
WHEREAS, although the submitted proposal exceeds the allocated amount, the additional cost will be offset using surplus funds from other 2025 CIP projects that were completed under budget, resulting in no net increase to the overall CIP expenditures; and,
WHEREAS, this project supports the County's ongoing investment in its physical infrastructure and promotes a safe, accessible, and well-maintained government campus; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the Capital Improvement Project request to repave the courtyard between the Courthouse and Jail at the quoted cost of \$109,874.00.

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

B. ****CIP 2025 Request – Replacement of Security Fence at Courthouse and Jail**

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS RESOLUTION B10/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board of Commissioners to approve a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to replace deteriorating security fencing located between the Van Buren County Courthouse and Jail; and
WHEREAS, the fencing is critical to maintaining the security and operational integrity of County facilities, protecting both personnel and the general public; and
WHEREAS, the fencing replacement project was reviewed and quoted by Justice Fence at a total cost of fourteen thousand seven hundred ninety-five dollars (\$14,795.00); and,
WHEREAS, funding for this project was included in the 2025 approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget, which allocated fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00) under CIP Project # Gate and Fence, account number 444.0.351.00.975.038; and,
WHEREAS, the project aligns with the County's long-term infrastructure investment goals and supports safe, secure, and well-maintained facilities; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the Capital Improvement Project request to replace the security fencing between the Courthouse and Jail at a cost of \$14,795.00.

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

C. **AEP Easement - Fairgrounds Expedited**

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS RESOLUTION B11/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board of Commissioners to approve an easement to Indiana Michigan Power Company on County Property for the purpose of installing electric lines at the Van Buren County Fairgrounds; and
WHEREAS, to install electric lines to improve service to the campground sites, Indiana Michigan Power must secure permission to cross a portion of County property (Parcel Number 80-11-013-001-00, Section 13, T3S, R16W, Hartford Township, Van Buren County); and
WHEREAS, they have requested use of their standard right-of-way easement form, which has been reviewed by Building & Grounds, GIS, the Road Commission, and the Register of Deeds, all of whom have indicated their familiarity and approval of the form; and,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the request to grant an easement to Indiana Michigan Power Company on County Property for the purposes of installing electric lines at the Van Buren County Fairgrounds.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

10. Finance

A. **Parks Millage - 2025 Renewal

FINANCE RESOLUTION F29/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, act 261 of 1965 authorizes Michigan counties to create Parks and Recreation Commissions to manage recreation activities and develop park facilities. Van Buren County established its parks and recreation commission in August 2022; and
WHEREAS, act 90 of 1913 facilitates County Commissions to fund parks and recreation through an ad valorem property tax, which must not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1 mill unless approved by county voters; and

WHEREAS, Van Buren County Parks and Recreation Commission, recommends that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners adopt a .10 mill (1/10) tax levy; and,
WHEREAS, millage will generate approximately \$440,000.00 for County Parks and Recreation; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve a levy of a County-wide Parks and Recreation millage of .10 mill (1/10) tax levy and passes a resolution to implement the millage.

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

B. **L- 4029 2025 Tax Rate Request

FINANCE RESOLUTION F30/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, the request is to review and approve the 2025 Tax Rate Request, Michigan Department of Treasury Form L-4029 as prepared by the Equalization Director, Anthony Meyaard; and

WHEREAS, the annual tax rate request form needs to be approved, signed, and submitted to the Michigan Department of Treasury by the end of June 2025; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the 2025 Tax Rate Request Form L-4029 as presented and approved the Board Chair to sign on the Boards behalf.

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

C. **2025 PC Refresh

FINANCE RESOLUTION F31/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, the Information Technology Department conducts an annual PC Refresh Program to replace aging computer hardware and ensure optimal performance and security of County systems; and

WHEREAS, the lifecycle goal for all desktop and laptop computers is five years, and the 2025 purchase will replace desktop computers that have reached the end of this operational lifecycle; and

WHEREAS, the current proposed purchase includes forty-six (46) desktop computers as part of the overall 2025 PC Refresh Plan, with laptop procurement being handled separately upon finalization of vendor pricing; and,

WHEREAS, this purchase represents a planned, budgeted expense for 2025 and will be fully funded by the Technology Improvement Fund, account number 636.0-228.00-752.005; and,

WHEREAS, the total cost for the proposed desktop PC purchase is thirty-eight thousand eight hundred eighty-three dollars and eighty cents (\$38,883.80), and the expenditure exceeds the threshold requiring Board approval pursuant to County purchasing policies; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the 2025 PC Refresh desktop purchase in the amount of \$38,883.80.

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

D. Van Buren County Specialty Court FY 2026 SCAO Grant Applications - EXPEDITED

FINANCE RESOLUTION F32/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, Van Buren County's Specialty Courts—comprised of the Drug Treatment Court, Family Treatment Court, Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program, Mental Health Court, and Sobriety Court—seek continued funding through annual grant applications submitted to the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO); and

WHEREAS, these programs deliver evidence-based interventions designed to promote accountability, reduce recidivism, and enhance public safety and community well-being across the County; and

WHEREAS, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) has allocated targeted award recommendations for Van Buren County totaling \$734,543.66 for FY 2025, broken down as follows: Drug Treatment Court - \$190,344.13; Family Treatment Court - \$76,802.56; Mental Health Court - \$185,241.00; Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program - \$194,560.35; and Sobriety Court MDCGP - \$87,596.09; and,

WHEREAS, these awards reflect the State's recognition of Van Buren County's effective implementation of treatment-focused justice programs and its commitment to addressing complex behavioral health and substance use issues within the criminal justice system; and,

WHEREAS, the grant application process is occurring on an expedited timeline due to a delayed release of the FY 2025 materials by SCAO and the need to review and align with new targeted allocation guidelines prior to the June 20th submission deadline; and,

WHEREAS, while the County is responsible for temporarily covering program costs, reimbursements are issued quarterly by SCAO, allowing for fiscal continuity and uninterrupted service delivery during the interim; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recognizes the strategic and social value of these specialty court programs in supporting individual recovery, public health, and justice system efficiency; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, authorize the Specialty Courts to submit the FY 2025 grant applications to the State Court Administrative Office in support of the Drug Treatment Court, Family Treatment Court, Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program, Mental Health Court, and Sobriety Court.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by David DiStefano, Carried

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

A. **Assistant Prosecuting Attorney (APA) Starting Salary Exception - Prosecutor's Office

LABOR RESOLUTION L9/6-10-2025

WHEREAS, there is a vacant Assistant Prosecuting Attorney (APA) position at the South Haven Office that became available on January 1, 2025, following the election of Ms. Emily Jipp as Circuit Court Judge in Allegan County; and

WHEREAS, the South Haven Office operates with greater independence due to its physical separation from the main Prosecutor's Office in Paw Paw and requires an attorney with the skill, judgment, and experience to independently manage a high-volume caseload with limited supervision; and

WHEREAS, the Prosecutor's Office conducted a search and received fourteen (14) applications, ultimately interviewing the top three (3) candidates, and identified a highly qualified attorney with twenty (20) years of legal experience practicing in Oklahoma and Arkansas, who is currently in the process of obtaining licensure to practice law in the State

of Michigan; and,

WHEREAS, the candidate's current salary is \$100,000 and, to attract and retain a candidate of this caliber, the Prosecutor's Office is requesting approval to offer a starting salary of \$103,718.94, corresponding to Step D-2 on the Court Association Scale (Level 35), which is consistent with the applicant's professional experience and market comparability; and,

WHEREAS, the posted salary range for this position is \$84,565.46 to \$117,700.25, but the requested step exceeds the entry-level starting salary and requires Board authorization under existing policy; and,

WHEREAS, there is no financial impact on the General Fund in the current fiscal year as \$53,000 in salary savings from the vacant position were partially used to fund reclassification adjustments for the remaining APA staff (\$26,000), with \$27,000 in savings remaining; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed salary exception cost for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$23,000, which will be fully absorbed by the existing vacancy-related savings, with future costs incorporated into the FY 2025-2026 budget; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve a salary exception for the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney position at Step D-2, \$103,718.94, on the Court Association Scale (Level 35), with an anticipated start date of August 4, 2025.

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

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- Luc's Light Open House June 19th
- Health/Wellness Fair
- Memorial Day Ceremony
- Conservation Recycling Event
- Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity home repair
- SW Michigan Planning Commission
- Berrien County Youth Detention Center

15. Chairman's Update

- Palisades contractors and staff

16. Board Correspondence

A. Genesee County - Pride

B. Genesee County - Juneteenth

17. Closed Session

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 02:51 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk