



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

June 24, 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 01:51 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 Kurt Doroh, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes

A. **June 10th, 2025 Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs

A. **Saddle Lake Level Assessment Roll
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A35/6-24-2025
WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner ("Drain Commissioner"), as the delegated authority designated by the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners (the "Board") under Part 307 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994, as amended ("Part 307"), has jurisdiction to operate and maintain the normal lake levels of Saddle Lake; and,
WHEREAS, a special assessment district was established by the Van Buren County

Circuit Court for Saddle Lake, located in Columbia Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, under Part 307. MCL 324.30704; and,
WHEREAS, the Drain Commissioner held a public hearing on June 5, 2025, to review the computation of costs of a lake level project and a corresponding special assessment roll consistent with the requirements of Part 307. MCL 324.30714(2); and,
WHEREAS, the Drain Commissioner presented the computation of costs of the project and the special assessment roll to the Board for final approval; and,
WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the computation of costs of the project and the special assessment roll presented by the Drain Commissioner.
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Board approves the computation of costs of the project and the special assessment roll as presented by the Drain Commissioner and attached to this resolution.
2. The special assessment roll with the assessments listed shall be final and conclusive unless appealed in a court within 15 days of the adoption of this Resolution. MCL 324.30714(4).
3. The Van Buren County Clerk shall forward to the Drain Commissioner a copy of this Resolution so that action can be instituted by Van Buren County in an expedient manner.
4. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as the same that may be in conflict herewith are hereby rescinded.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

B. ****Saddle Lake Level - Approve Issuance of Bonds**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A36/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, pursuant to Part 307 of Act 451, Public Acts of Michigan, 1994, as amended ("Part 307"), the Van Buren County Circuit Court, (i) by order dated February 4, 2025, established the normal summer lake level of Saddle Lake in the County of Van Buren to be 667.55 and the winter lake level to be 667.22 feet, subject to reasonable variations; and (ii) established the boundaries of the Saddle Lake - Lake Level Special Assessment District (the "Special Assessment District") for the purpose of financing lake level improvements and activities necessary to establish and maintain the lake levels; and,

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners has appointed the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner as the "delegated authority" within the meaning of Part 307 (the "Delegated Authority") to take such actions as are necessary to maintain the normal level of Saddle Lake; and,

WHEREAS, the Delegated Authority has caused to be prepared a computation of cost for the improvements necessary to maintain the normal level of Saddle Lake (the "Project") in the amount of \$254,000 and has prepared a special assessment roll assessing such amount against parcels of land in the Special Assessment District that benefit from the Project; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to notice given as required by Part 307, the Delegated Authority has conducted a hearing on the cost of the Project and the special assessment roll to be held on June 5, 2025, and, following the hearing, approved the cost of the Project and the special assessment roll; and,

WHEREAS, the Delegated Authority has proposed that the Special Assessment District issue bonds in the principal amount of not to exceed \$254,000 (the "Bonds") to pay all or part of the cost of the Project and that the County pledge its full faith and credit to the payment of the Bonds; and,

WHEREAS, Part 307 requires that the Board of Commissioners approve the cost of the Project and the special assessment roll by resolution and approve the issuance of the Bonds by the Special Assessment District.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, as follows:

1. The Special Assessment District shall be designated and hereafter referred to as the "Saddle Lake-Lake Level Special Assessment District."
2. The appointment of the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner as the "delegated

authority" within the meaning of Part 307 and the actions of the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner as delegated authority to date are all ratified and confirmed.

3. The Board of Commissioners hereby approves the issuance of the Bonds by the Special Assessment District pursuant to Part 307 to pay all or part of the cost of the Project, the Bonds to be payable from the special assessments for the Project, and authorizes the Delegated Authority to take all actions on behalf of the Special Assessment District as are necessary to issue and sell the Bonds as provided in Part 307. The special assessment role shall be payable in installments in amounts sufficient to pay the principal of interest on the Bonds.

4. Pursuant to the authorization provided in Section 30705 of Part 307, provided that the Bonds are issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$254,000, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of its members elect, does hereby irrevocably pledge the full faith and credit of the County of Van Buren for the prompt payment of the principal of and interest on the Bonds, and does agree that in the event that property owners in the Special Assessment District shall fail or neglect to account to the County Treasurer of the County of Van Buren for the amount of any such special assessment installment and interest (in anticipation of which the Bonds are issued) when due, then the amount thereof shall be immediately advanced from County funds, and the County Treasurer is directed to immediately make such advancement to the extent necessary.

5. In the event that, pursuant to said pledge of full faith and credit, the County of Van Buren advances out of County funds, all or any part of the principal of and interest due on the Bonds, it shall be the duty of the County Treasurer, for and on behalf of the County of Van Buren, to take all actions and proceedings and pursue all remedies permitted or authorized by law for the reimbursement of such sums so paid.

6. The Chairperson of the Board, 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 Bonds and to execute any documents or certificates necessary to complete the issuance of the Bonds, including, but not limited to, any applications including the Michigan Department of Treasury, Application for State Treasurer's Approval to Issue Long-Term Securities, any waivers, certificates, receipts, orders, agreements, instruments, and any certificates relating to federal or state securities laws, rules, or regulations and to participate in the preparation of a preliminary official statement and a final official statement for the Bonds and to sign a continuing disclosure certificate and such other documents on behalf of the County and give any approvals necessary therefor.

7. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as the same may be in conflict herewith are hereby rescinded to the extent of the conflict.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

C. ****Change of Meeting Date September 9, 2025 to September 8, 2025**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A37/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Board of Commissioners' by-laws, changes to the regular meeting schedule may be made if such changes are noted and approved by resolution; and,

WHEREAS, the September 9, 2025, meeting is a critical session during which the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 Budget will be considered, and full commissioner participation is highly desirable to ensure proper deliberation and decision-making; and,

WHEREAS, Commissioner DiStefano has respectfully requested that the Board consider rescheduling the meeting to ensure participation without compromising the Board's budgetary responsibilities; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed rescheduled date of Monday, September 8, 2025, falls within the permissible range of meeting changes per Board rules and will be formally noted in the Board's official calendar; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the change of the regularly scheduled Board meeting from Tuesday, September 9, 2025, to Monday, September 8, 2025.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

D. ****Re-Appointment Public Transit Local Advisory Council**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A38/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the Van Buren Public Transit Local Advisory Council (LAC) serves to provide community input and advocacy in support of public transit planning and accessibility for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and other riders within Van Buren County; and, WHEREAS, Melanie Giddings and Faith Dowd have both served multiple terms on the LAC, with Ms. Giddings representing Education and Disabled constituents and Ms. Dowd representing the Area Agency on Aging and Senior constituents; and, WHEREAS, both Ms. Giddings and Ms. Dowd have demonstrated long-standing commitment and effective participation in advancing the Council's mission and ensuring inclusive transit services; and,

WHEREAS, there is a recommendation to re-appoint both individuals to continue serving four-year terms on the Van Buren Public Transit Local Advisory Council; and,

WHEREAS, their new terms will extend through July 1, 2029, pending formal approval by the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the re-appointment of Melanie Giddings and Faith Dowd to four-year terms on the Van Buren Public Transit Local Advisory Council, to expire on July 1, 2029.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

E. ****Appointment Materials Management Planning Commission**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A39/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC), in coordination with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), has made recommendations for appointments to the Materials Management Planning Commission (MMPC); and,

WHEREAS, the MMPC is charged with regional coordination of materials management planning efforts and includes balanced representation from Van Buren, Berrien, and Cass Counties, as well as the Pokagon Sovereign Nation; and,

WHEREAS, due to ongoing scheduling conflicts, Van Buren County's representation on the MMPC has changed and a new appointment is needed to ensure consistent participation; and,

WHEREAS, it is recommended that Commissioner Kurt Doroh be appointed as the Van Buren County elected official representative to the MMPC to ensure the County's interests are represented and its responsibilities fulfilled; and,

WHEREAS, Commissioner Doroh's appointment will support the ongoing work of the MMPC and enhance Van Buren County's engagement with regional materials management strategies in compliance with EGLE planning requirements; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the appointment of Commissioner Kurt Doroh as the Van Buren County elected official representative to the Materials Management Planning Commission (MMPC).

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

F. **Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP) Resolution EXPEDITED**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A40/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan currently operates a publicly managed and community-

based system for the delivery of specialty behavioral health services through 10 Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs), which are responsible for managing Medicaid mental health, developmental disability, and substance use disorder services; and, WHEREAS, the current PIHP system has consistently demonstrated value, local accountability, and community engagement, while successfully managed costs and improving health outcomes for vulnerable populations; and, WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recently announced plans to initiate a competitive procurement process for the management of PIHP functions, which may open the door to private, non-profit health plans or managed care organizations (MCOs) assuming control over behavioral health services; and, WHEREAS, such privatization could disrupt longstanding relationships between local mental health authorities, providers, and the communities they serve, and jeopardize the person-centered, recovery-oriented approach that has been cultivated under the public system; and, WHEREAS, many stakeholders, including individuals receiving services, advocates, local officials, and providers have expressed significant concerns about the potential impact of a competitive procurement process on care quality, access, local control, and transparency; and, WHEREAS, counties across Michigan have historically played a vital role in the governance, funding, and oversight of the public behavioral health system, and any change to that structure without meaningful county input undermines the principle of local governance; and, WHEREAS, maintaining a publicly accountable and locally governed behavioral health system is essential to ensure that individuals with mental health and substance use service receive timely, appropriate, and high-quality care; and, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Board of Commissioners formally opposes the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS) plan to implement a competitive procurement process for Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs); and, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board urges Governor Whitmer, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Michigan Legislature to halt any plans for privatization and instead work collaboratively with counties, PIHPs, Community Mental Health Services Programs (CMHSPs), service users, and other stakeholders to strengthen and improve the public behavioral health system, by only allowing public organizations with experience in managing Michigan's public mental health system to be part of any bid process should one occur; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel, members of the Michigan Legislature representing Van Buren County, Senator Aric Nesbitt, Representative Pauline Wenzel and Representative Joey Anderson and the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC).

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

9. Buildings and Grounds

10. Finance

A. **Claims

CLAIMS RESOLUTION C6/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$12,927,134.52 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 \$12,927,134.52 for the month of May 2025.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

B. Child and Parent Legal Representation Grant Application - EXPEDITED

FINANCE RESOLUTION F33/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the Child & Parent Legal Representation Grant provides partial reimbursement for the costs of court-appointed attorneys and a social worker who delivers essential ancillary services to parents involved in child protective proceedings; and, WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), Van Buren County received \$81,250.00 in reimbursement from this grant, significantly aiding the County in managing these critical services; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the acceptance of the grant contract for continued funding and support of these legal representation services; and,

WHEREAS, the approval of the Board Chair, or an authorized designee, to submit the grant contract will allow the County to secure the grant funds and continue providing essential legal services to parents in need; and,

WHEREAS, the department has followed all applicable policies in preparing this travel request and is seeking Board approval to proceed with arrangements; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, authorize the Board Chair, or their designee, to submit the Child & Parent Legal Representation Grant contract.

Motion by Tina Leary, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

C. Quality Legal Representation Grant Application - EXPEDITED

FINANCE RESOLUTION F34/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the Juvenile Court seeks approval to apply for the Quality Legal Representation Grant through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS); and,

WHEREAS, this grant provides partial reimbursement for costs associated with court-appointed attorneys and a social worker who offer ancillary services to parents involved in child protective proceedings; and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of the grant is to improve the quality of legal representation and support provided to families, thereby strengthening outcomes in child protection cases; and,

WHEREAS, the application process for the Quality Legal Representation Grant is conducted through the EGrAMS (Electronic Grants Administration and Management System); and,

WHEREAS, it is recommended that the Family Division Administrator, Veronica Stillson, be authorized to sign the Quality Legal Representation Grant application in the EGrAMS system on behalf of the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners; and,

WHEREAS, this request is time-sensitive and must be expedited to June 24, 2025, Board of Commissioners meeting to ensure timely submission and consideration for funding; and, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Board of Commissioners approve the Juvenile Court's application for the Quality Legal Representation Grant and authorize the Family Division Administrator, Veronica Stillson, to sign the application in the EGrAMS system on behalf of the Board.

Motion by David DiStefano, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

A. ****Out of State Travel - Veteran Services**

VETERANS SERVICES RESOLUTION V2/6-24-2025

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Veterans Services Department has requested approval for out-of-state travel to attend the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) training conference; and,

WHEREAS, the NACVSO national training conference will take place in Louisville, Kentucky, from July 11, 2025, through July 18, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, this training is required to maintain national accreditation and Veterans Service Department (VSD) status, ensuring continued eligibility to represent veterans in the preparation and filing of benefit claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and,

WHEREAS, ongoing accreditation is essential to maintaining the integrity, professionalism, and effectiveness of Van Buren County's services to its veteran population; and,

WHEREAS, the department has followed all applicable policies in preparing this travel request and is seeking Board approval to proceed with arrangements; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the out-of-state travel request for the Veterans Services Department to attend the NACVSO national training conference in Louisville, Kentucky, from July 11 through July 18, 2025).

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health
- Wellness Fair

15. Chairman's Update

- Federal budget

16. Board Correspondence

A. Ontonagon County

B. Washtenaw County

17. Closed Session

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 02:00 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk