



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

August 26, 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, Kurt Doroh, David DiStefano, Randall Peat, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol. Commissioner Chappell 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.
Commissioner Patterson-Gladney requested to remove Item 8.A. from consent agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes

A. **August 12th, 2025 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs

A. **Proclamation of Appreciation - Bessie Boyd
This item was removed from the consent agenda.

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A50/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, on September 14, 1925, in Hallsville, Texas, (Harrison County, population 695); Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd was the third of 5 children born to John Richard and Willie Mae Hester Dye. At the age of 8 years, Mother Bessie experienced the death of her

mother. However, she was successfully raised with her four sisters under the careful, watchful eye of her father and devoted maternal grandparents, Mount and Rosie Newhouse Hester; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie graduated from Galilee High School in Hallsville, Texas in 1946, and as a young lady sojourned to South Haven, Michigan for a summer visit with her eldest sister and brother-in-law (Horace and Vernilla Arrington) where she began establishing a strong work ethic as a housekeeper at Liders Resort on South Haven's North Side. At that time, South Haven was experiencing a boom in the resort industry, particularly among the Jewish community, earning the nickname "Catskills of the Midwest"; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie was employed by the Michigan Theater, working as a custodian alongside her brother-in-law, cleaning offices, ladies' bathrooms and balcony areas during the next five years. It is worth noting that the employee discounted admission at that time was 10 cents! Although not planned from the beginning, Michigan had now become home to Mother Bessie; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie united with the historic Emmanuel Community Church in 1947, under the leadership of Pastor Robert Fanning and developed lifelong and enduring relationships within the South Haven and surrounding communities. As a member of Emmanuel Community Church, Mother Bessie accepted the call and responsibility to serve in many capacities that included, church clerk and Sunday school teacher. While serving as Sunday school teacher for many years, she provided transportation to and from Sunday school for numerous boys and girls in the community while mentoring and modeling the ways of personal integrity in alignment with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Mother Bessie was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a Senior Citizen Volunteer companion, aiding with shopping, transportation and chores for the elderly; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie's quest to serve and support was not only recognized by her family and church but formally in the community on WOMENS HISTORY DAY 2004; the honorable distinction of ordained deacon was confirmed by the Greater Harvest Full Gospel Church, LaPorte, Indiana in 2008, under the leadership of Pastor M.G. Hunt; and,

WHEREAS, in 1952, it was "noised" in the community that the G.C. Murphy Company, downtown South Haven, was hiring "colored" clerks and Mother Bessie was chosen as one of the first of three "colored" clerks hired by G.C. Murphy Company. This hiring relationship evolved into a time honoring, successful 34-year career of faithful service, ending in retirement only due to the failing health of her beloved husband Samuel Young; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie bestows evidence to her family and community a legacy filled with numerous personal testimonies, two gold service watches, two unforgettable trips to the G.C. Murphy corporate headquarters in Pennsylvania for employee recognition, of which one unforgettable trip was via a first-time airplane travel experience; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd has reached the remarkable milestone of one hundred years of age; and,

WHEREAS, Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd has touched countless lives with her kindness, wisdom, and strength; and,

WHEREAS, her life is a testament filled with accomplishments that demonstrate resilience, community involvement, love of family and community; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, on August 26, 2025, hereby extends heartfelt CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd on her 100th birthday and recognizes her as a cherished member of our community.

Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried

- B. ****Appointment - County Representative to Remonumentation Program:**
David Gariepy

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A51/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, the County Surveyor, Mr. Lossie, has resigned from his elected position and,

following a public notification process, no applicants came forward to fill the unexpired term; and,
WHEREAS, pursuant to the Remonumentation Act, in the absence of an elected County Surveyor, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners is required to appoint a County Representative to the County Remonumentation Program; and,
WHEREAS, following a second public notification process seeking applicants to fill the role of County Representative, only one letter of interest was received, submitted by Mr. David Gariepy; and,
WHEREAS, Mr. Gariepy has expressed a willingness to serve in this capacity and is qualified to assist in fulfilling the obligations of the Remonumentation Program, including facilitating reimbursement from the State of Michigan for past services and submitting the County's Plan for future program funding; and,
WHEREAS, the appointment of Mr. Gariepy will ensure the continuation and compliance of the County's Remonumentation Program, allowing necessary program administration, coordination, and oversight to proceed; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, hereby appoints Mr. David Gariepy as County Representative to the County Remonumentation Program, with a term to expire December 31, 2026.

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

C. ****Elimination of Elected Position - County Surveyor**

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A52/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, the Office of the County Surveyor in Van Buren County is currently vacant due to the resignation of the elected Surveyor, and no applicants came forward following a public notification process to fill the unexpired term; and,
WHEREAS, under MCL 54.95, the County Board of Commissioners may, by resolution, abolish the office of County Surveyor, provided such action is taken before May 15 of the year in which county officers are elected, and provided that the existing term of office is not shortened; and,
WHEREAS, Van Buren County has determined that the Office of the County Surveyor no longer serves a functional need, as its only remaining responsibility pertains to the Remonumentation Program, which the Board is separately addressing through the appointment of a County Representative; and,
WHEREAS, due to the lack of public interest in the position, the limited statutory duties associated with the office, and the increasing number of counties that have chosen not to maintain an elected County Surveyor, it is in the best interest of Van Buren County to formally abolish the Office of County Surveyor; and,
WHEREAS, abolishing this elected position will eliminate the need to include the office in future election ballots and will avoid potential confusion or administrative burden related to write-in candidacy or filing qualifications for a position that no longer holds distinct operational responsibility; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, hereby adopts this resolution to abolish the Office of the County Surveyor, pursuant to MCL 54.95, effective December 31, 2028.

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

9. **Buildings and Grounds**

A. ****CIP Project: BMS Controls / HVAC Controls**

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B14/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, the Buildings and Grounds Department initiated a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for the upgrade of Building Management System (BMS) and HVAC controls; and,

WHEREAS, competitive bids for the project were received from the following vendors: Andy Egan Company in the amount of \$104,443.00; Trane Company in the amount of \$211,193.00; and SBS Building Services in the amount of \$240,000.00; and, WHEREAS, after careful review and evaluation of all submitted bids, the recommendation of the Buildings and Grounds Department is to award the contract to Andy Egan Company as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and, WHEREAS, funding for this project is allocated under the Capital Improvement Project fund, GL Account Number 444.0-265.00-975.0068; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, hereby awards the CIP project for BMS and HVAC controls to Andy Egan Company in the amount of \$104,443.00.

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

10. Finance

A. **Claims

CLAIMS RESOLUTION C8/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$5,209,881.08 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 \$5,209,881.08 for the month of July 2025.

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

B. **Out-of-State Travel Request - Sheriffs Department NCFI Cyber Investigations Course

FINANCE RESOLUTION F41/8-26-2025

WHEREAS, there has been a request for out-of-state travel approval for Detective Chris Orr to attend the National Computer Forensics Institute (NCFI) Cyber Investigations Course in Hoover, Alabama, from September 22 through September 26, 2025; and, WHEREAS, this course, sponsored by the United States Secret Service, provides law enforcement officers with foundational and advanced knowledge in cybercrime investigations, including investigative tactics, digital evidence collection, network operations, and criminal use of darknet technologies and cryptocurrencies; and, WHEREAS, the training and associated travel expenses are fully funded through the NCFI/USSS Grant and will not require any additional funding or reimbursement from the County budget; and, WHEREAS, attendance on this course will enhance the County's capacity to investigate and respond to cyber-related criminal activity and is aligned with the professional development goals of the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, hereby approves the request for out-of-state travel for Detective Chris Orr to attend the NCFI Cyber Investigations Course in Hoover, Alabama, from September 22 to September 26, 2025.

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

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- Antwerp Township satellite location for Road Commission
- Road Commission Regional Meeting
- SW Michigan Materials Management
- Historical Society Committee

15. Chairman's Update

16. Board Correspondence

17. Closed Session

A. Attorney Client Privileged Discussion - Written Legal Opinion

Motion to enter into closed session pursuant to PA 267 Sec. 15.268h to consider exempt material, a written legal opinion regarding FOIA request.

Motion by David DiStefano, Second by Tina Leary, Carried

Roll Call Vote: All Yes

Board went into closed session at 2:48 p.m.

Board returned to open session at 3:10 p.m.

Motion to deny August 18, 2025 FOIA appeal by Julian Allen as recommended by legal counsel.

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

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by David DiStefano, Second by Kurt Doroh, Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 03:12 PM.

Randall Peat, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk