



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

**October 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 03:00 PM by Paul Schincariol, Vice-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, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol. Absent and excused: Randall Peat and Mike Chappell.
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 Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes  
  
A. \*\*October 14th, 2025 Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes  
Motion by Kurt Doroh, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs  
  
A. \*\*Re-Appointment Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) - Ontiveros, C.  
**ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A65/10-28-2025**  
WHEREAS, Cathy Ontiveros has been a long-standing County appointee to the Van Buren County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Board; and,  
WHEREAS, Ms. Ontiveros' current term is scheduled to expire on November 11, 2025, and she has expressed her continued interest in serving by formally reapplying for a new term; and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Ontiveros has demonstrated committed service to the DHHS Board, contributing to the oversight and direction of critical health and human service functions within the County; and,  
WHEREAS, the continuation of her service will support the consistent and knowledgeable governance of the Van Buren DHHS Board; and,  
WHEREAS, the recommendation is for the Board of Commissioners to formally reappoint Ms. Ontiveros to a new three-year term, which will extend from November 2, 2025, through November 1, 2028; and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the reappointment of Cathy Ontiveros to the Van Buren County Department of Health and Human Services Board for a three-year term ending November 1, 2028.

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

B. **\*\*PA 116 Applications 01-2025 and 02-2025 Drozd Family Grain**

**ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A66/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, P.A. 116 applications for Farmland Agreements have been submitted by Drozd Family Grain requesting the County's approval to place property located in Bloomingdale Township (Parcels 80-05-036-021-00 and 80-05-002-15) into the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program; and,  
WHEREAS, the P.A. 116 applications have been sent to the Van Buren County Planning Commission and Van Buren County Conservation District for review and recommendation prior to Board action; and,  
WHEREAS, upon approval by the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, the application will be forwarded to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) for final review and approval; and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the P.A. 116 applications by Drozd Family Grain to place the requested property into the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program.

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

C. **\*\*Diversion Management Platform - Prosecutors Office**

**ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A67/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to approve a three-year contract with Advent, a Diversion Management Platform, for use by the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office; and,  
WHEREAS, Advent is a behavior-changing, web-based instructional platform designed to support responsible personal development and cognitive behavioral treatment; and,  
WHEREAS, the use of Advent will allow the County to reduce court and incarceration costs by enabling online screening, approval, and management of diversion cases, while maintaining community safety and enhancing behavioral outcomes; and,  
WHEREAS, the platform includes features such as real-time case notifications and customized program requirements, and has demonstrated greater effectiveness in altering negative behaviors than traditional incarceration methods; and,  
WHEREAS, the cost of the contract is \$1,200.00 annually for three years, and sufficient funds have been allocated in the current proposed budget to support this expense; and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approve the three-year contract with Advent, a Diversion Management Platform for the Prosecutor's Office.

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

9. **Buildings and Grounds**

A. **\*\*CIP 2025-2026: Purchase of a 3/4 Ton Replacement Truck - B&G**

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B20/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to approve the purchase of a new ¾ ton replacement truck for the Van Buren County Buildings and Grounds Department; and, WHEREAS, this vehicle purchase is included as an approved Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for the 2025/2026 fiscal year; and,

WHEREAS, the total cost of the new truck is \$52,952 and is to be paid from General Ledger account #444.0-265.00-981.004; and,

WHEREAS, the replacement of this vehicle is necessary for the continued efficient operation of Buildings and Grounds services throughout the County; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the purchase of a new ¾ ton replacement truck for the Buildings and Grounds Department in the amount of \$52,952, to be paid from GL #444.0-265.00-981.004.

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

B. **\*\*Use of County Property - Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Village Holiday Celebration**

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B21/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to approve the use of County property by the Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) from December 12–14, 2025, for the purpose of hosting a Village Holiday Celebration; and,

WHEREAS, the Paw Paw DDA is requesting use of the main Courthouse parking lot and the tree in front of the Courthouse on December 12, 2025, for staging Santa's float following the Village Holiday Parade and holding a public tree lighting celebration; and,

WHEREAS, the Village Parade Grand Marshalls will preside over the lighting ceremony, and Register of Deeds Paul DeYoung will be honored for his community service during this event; and,

WHEREAS, the request to use the tree in front of the Courthouse is being made due to the destruction of the Village's traditional holiday tree in a summer storm; and,

WHEREAS, the DDA intends to close Paw Paw Street for the weekend and host a Holiday Fair and shopping market, similar to activities held during the Wine & Harvest Festival, and has further requested use of the County Park in the Village to accommodate the market and its participants; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the use of County property by the Paw Paw DDA from December 12–14, 2025, for the purposes of the Village Holiday Celebration.

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

10. Finance

A. **\*\*Claims**

**CLAIMS RESOLUTION C10/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$7,688,012.65 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 \$7,688,012.65 for the month of September 2025.

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

B. **\*\*Equalization - 2025 Apportionment Report**

**FINANCE RESOLUTION F48/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, it is the statutory duty of the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners,

under P.A. 87 of the M.C.L.A. 46.1 at its annual session in October of each year to ascertain, determine and apportion such amounts as directed by 211.37 of the General Property Tax Law; and,  
WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners has received the 2025 Apportionment Report, which displays the millage rates and tax levies for all governmental units in Van Buren County to be collected from the July and December 2025 tax bills; and,  
WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Equalization Department is responsible for ensuring that millage rates are rolled back in accordance with the Headlee Amendment and Truth in Taxation regulations. Following confirmation, a report is assembled tabulating the results for each taxing jurisdiction; and,  
WHEREAS, the report includes a breakdown of millage rates and tax levies by County, Townships, Cities, Villages, School Districts, Colleges, Libraries, and Renaissance Zones, and estimates the total dollars to be collected. The report does not include adjustments made by the July and December Boards of Review; and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt the Van Buren County Tax Report of 2025 and the apportionment and millage of taxes to be spread in accordance with the statute in such case made and provided as evidence by exhibits attached hereto and made a part of; and,  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that statement of the explanation of the Tax Rate for each separate tax in the various units is attached to the Tax receipt in accordance with Sec. 21.39 of the General Property Tax Law.

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

C. **\*\*2025 Drain and Lake Level Assessments**

**FINANCE RESOLUTION F49/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, the Drain and Lake Level Special Assessment Rolls for the year 2025 are dated, signed, and filed in the office of the County Clerk by the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner; and,  
WHEREAS, the total for the Drain and Lake Level Special Assessment Rolls is \$972,669.17 representing drain and lake level projects and maintenance work performed; and,  
WHEREAS, these Drains and Lake Level Special Assessment Rolls are to be spread on the various tax rolls of the appropriate townships, cities, villages in Van Buren County (see attached breakdown and detail); and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners hereby moves to accept the 2025 Drain and Lake Level Special Assessment Rolls totaling \$972,669.17 and authorizes the spread of the project special assessments to the various municipalities involved.

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

D. **\*\*Purchase of Four New Sheriff's Office Patrol Vehicles**

**FINANCE RESOLUTION F50/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office is requesting the purchase of four new patrol vehicles as part of its regular annual replacement cycle; and,  
WHEREAS, this replacement plan is a standard fiscal year practice aimed at retiring aging and high-mileage units in the fleet to promote officer safety, minimize repair costs, and maintain operational readiness; and,  
WHEREAS, this is a budgeted general fund expense, not to exceed \$260,000, and the purchase is to be paid out of line item 101.0-302.00-981.000; and,  
WHEREAS, the requested purchase supports public safety by ensuring that officers have reliable, up-to-date vehicles in the course of duty; and,  
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the purchase of four new patrol vehicles for the Sheriff's Office, in an amount not to exceed \$260,000 from the General Fund.

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

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

A. \*\*Position Creation - Digital Communications Coordinator

**LABOR RESOLUTION L13/10-28-2025**

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to approve the creation of a new full-time position titled Digital Communications Director, to support both Van Buren and St. Joseph Counties; and,

WHEREAS, this role will be housed under the Digital Information Department and will be responsible for modernizing public-facing digital communications, improving accessibility and usability of government websites, and supporting strategic outreach across both counties; and,

WHEREAS, the position will focus on enhancing citizen engagement, content development, and regional collaboration, while also supporting various departments with public messaging strategies, technical assistance, and training related to digital communication platforms; and,

WHEREAS, the position will be classified as Non-Union Grade R26, full-time at 37.5 hours per week, with an annual salary range of \$48,822.11 to \$67,881.65, and will be funded through the Digital Information Department budget using a cost-sharing arrangement between Van Buren and St. Joseph Counties; and,

WHEREAS, the current funding plan includes a combination of confirmed and prospective contributions:

- \$30,000 from St. Joseph County via intergovernmental agreement;
  - \$15,000–\$20,000 in additional SJC project funds;
  - \$20,000 in savings from website transition efforts (across fiscal years 2024–2026);
  - \$48,000 ORP grant request (decision pending November 15, 2025);
  - \$20,000 from SWMPC project funds (near approval);
  - Additional funding discussions underway, including SJC E911 GIS-related support; and,
- NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners approves the creation of a new full-time Digital Communications Director position, classified as Non-Union Grade R26.

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

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- Area Agency on Aging
- Antwerp Township

15. Chairman's Update

16. Board Correspondence

- MACC Resolution Opposing RankMIVote Ballot Proposal

17. Closed Session

A. Attorney Client Privileged Discussion - Litigation Regarding NCG v Van Buren County

Motion to enter into Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268(e) for Attorney-Client Privileged Discussion regarding NCG v Van Buren County litigation.

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

Roll Call Vote: All Yes

Board went into closed session at 3:09 p.m.

Board returned to open session at 3:43 p.m.

Motion to approve the litigation and settlement strategy as recommended by counsel and authorize counsel to take action consistent with that litigation strategy in consolidated case MTT Docket No. 17-001737.

Motion by David DiStefano, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 03:45 PM.

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**Paul Schincariol, Vice-Chairperson**

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**Suzie Roehm, County Clerk**



# VAN BUREN COUNTY BOARD AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

Administration Address  
219 E Paw Paw Street - Suite 302, Paw Paw, MI 49079  
Website: [www.vanburencountymi.gov](http://www.vanburencountymi.gov)

Telephone No.  
(269) 657-8253  
Email: [Admin@vanburencountymi.gov](mailto:Admin@vanburencountymi.gov)

Board meetings are scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month. All agenda items initially go on a Committee of the Whole agenda at 1:00 PM. You *must* be in attendance to present your item, Zoom is available. Requests must be submitted no later than the Wednesday prior to the meeting date.

Email this form and all attachments to: [admin@vanburencountymi.gov](mailto:admin@vanburencountymi.gov)

|                                                                            |                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Requester's Name<br><i>Wendy Springer</i>                                  | Title<br><i>SSA Coordinator</i>                          |
| County Department or Company Name<br><i>Downtown Development Authority</i> | Telephone No.<br><i>269-547-0179 - OR - 269-415-0060</i> |
| Email<br><i>m.springer@pawpaw.net</i>                                      | COW Meeting Date You are Requesting<br><i>10-14-25</i>   |

Please complete ALL fields below as these are the items on the agenda program.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item Name<br><i>Christmas in the village - Parade + Tree lighting</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Request (Be direct)<br><i>Requesting the county park on Dec. 12-14, 2025<br/>* Requesting to use the tree in front of the court house for the tree lighting ceremony on Dec. 12 + (partnership? for person to light tree)<br/>Courthouse parking lot on Dec 12 from 6-10 pm.</i>                                                                                                                                                                |
| Background (Give details)<br><i>The Village (DDA) is changing the Christmas events to include a night parade - stepping off from behind freshwater church and moving west through town to Gremps where the bulk of the parade will continue down Gremps. Santas unit, Grand Marshal will turn left onto St Joseph and go on to court house parking lot where Santa will light the tree and school will participate in singing + celebration</i> |
| Financial Impact (Please include the General Ledger number that will be associated with the request.)<br><i>No charge for participation<br/>Benefits downtown businesses + restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores. downtown business owners. etc)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Recommendation (what you recommend the board to do)<br><i>Approve: use of tree in front of courthouse + someone to light tree<br/>use of county park</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

For more information about the Board meetings please visit our website:  
<https://www.vanburencountymi.gov/129/Agendas-Minutes>