



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

May 12, 2026

Commissioners

Gail Patterson-Gladney, District 1
Mike Chappell, District 2
Kurt Doroh, District 3
David DiStefano, District 4
Mike Toth, 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 02:38 PM by Kurt Doroh, 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, Mike Toth, Tina Leary, Paul Schincariol.
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 Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes

A. **April 30th, 2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs

A. **New County Drain, Drainage District Application Deposit
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS RESOLUTION A36/5-12-2026
WHEREAS, Section 51 of the Michigan Drain Code, Public Act 40 of 1956, as amended ("Drain Code") allows the Board of Commissioners for the County of Van Buren to authorize the requirement of a cash deposit, sufficient to cover the preliminary costs, as determined by the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner ("Drain Commissioner"), associated with any application to lay out and designate a drainage district submitted to the Drain Commissioner; and,
WHEREAS, if such project is completed, the cost advanced shall be returned to the

depositor out of the first installments of special assessments, and if the project is uncompleted, any excess above costs shall be so returned; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve that pursuant to Section 51 of the Drain Code, the Van Buren County Drain Commissioner, in his discretion, may require a cash deposit to cover the estimated preliminary costs, in an amount determined by the Drain Commissioner as sufficient, associated with any application to lay out and designate a drainage district.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

9. Buildings and Grounds

A. **Request to use County Property - 2026 Van Buren County Youth Fair Parking

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B3/5-12-2026

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Youth Fair is a long-standing community tradition that provides educational, social, and economic benefits to residents throughout the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Youth Fair is scheduled to take place from July 20 through July 25, 2026, with anticipated peak attendance during this period requiring overflow parking accommodations near the Fairgrounds; and,

WHEREAS, the Youth Fair has formally requested the use of County-owned paved parking facilities adjacent to the Fairgrounds, specifically those serving the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Building and the former Health Department Building; and, WHEREAS, the use of this parking area will be restricted to hours outside of the posted business operations for DHHS and other tenants, ensuring no disruption to County operations or public services; and,

WHEREAS, the proximity, accessibility, and available capacity of the DHHS parking lot provide an ideal solution for accommodating overflow traffic during the Fair, supporting both public safety and event logistics; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the use of the paved County-owned parking lots adjacent to the Fairgrounds- specifically those serving the Department of Health and Human Services Building and former Health Department Building- for overflow parking during the Van Buren County Youth Fair from July 20-25, 2026, outside of posted County business hours.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

B. **Request to Use County Property- First Baptist Church of Lawton

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B4/5-12-2026

WHEREAS, there has been a request for the Board to approve the use of County property by the First Baptist Church of Lawton on May 17, 2026, from 2:00-3:00pm, for the purpose of having a prayer gathering; and,

WHEREAS, the First Baptist Church of Lawton is requesting use of the main Courthouse steps as the main site for the gathering; and,

WHEREAS, Pastor Lonnie Carpenter will preside over the gathering; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the use of the main Courthouse steps by the First Baptist Church of Lawton on May 17, 2026, from 2:00-3:00pm, for the purpose of holding a prayer gathering.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

10. Finance

A. ****Grant Purchase of TruNarc**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F27/5-12-2026

WHEREAS, a TruNarc Analyzer is a handheld device used by law enforcement to quickly and safely identify suspected narcotics in the field; and,

WHEREAS, the device operates using Raman spectroscopy, which directs a laser at a substance and analyzes how the light scatters to determine its chemical composition. This allows officers to identify drugs without opening the package, reducing exposure to hazardous substances such as fentanyl; and,

WHEREAS, key features of the device include:

- non-contact testing through plastic or glass containers
- rapid results, typically within seconds
- a preloaded drug library capable of identifying hundreds of controlled substances
- data storage and reporting capabilities suitable for evidentiary use; and,

WHEREAS, the device also allows for immediate printing of test results, which can be used for court proceedings; and,

WHEREAS, the implementation of this device has significantly reduced the need for frequent trips to the Grand Rapids Crime Lab for narcotics testing. As a result, it saves investigators several hours of travel time each week and reduces fuel costs associated with those trips; and,

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office applied for a grant to purchase a TruNarc Delta Analyzer for \$41,200.00. This grant was approved, and money has been distributed for the item; and, WHEREAS, this equipment was obtained through a grant, resulting in no financial burden to the County; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the payment of \$41,200.00 for the TruNarc Delta Analyzer.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

B. ****Parks Millage - 2026 Renewal**

FINANCE RESOLUTION F28/5-12-2026

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 ¼ of 1 mill unless approved by County voters; and,

WHEREAS, earlier this year, the Parks and Recreation Commission completed and adopted the Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan 2026–2030; and,

WHEREAS, the Plan establishes six primary goals: preserving and maintaining County park assets; leveraging partnerships and grant opportunities; investing in universal accessibility improvements; considering creation of a parks and recreation management position or department; maintaining a comprehensive inventory of county recreational resources; and supporting local municipalities with recreation planning efforts; and, WHEREAS, capital improvement priorities include upgrades to existing park facilities and the Hartford Kayak Launch; trail and water access improvements; natural resource conservation; signage, parking, and accessibility pathways; and future countywide recreation development projects; and,

WHEREAS, to assist in funding these identified priorities, the 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, the millage will generate approximately \$460,000.00, to be used for the purpose of funding specific priorities, capital improvements, maintenance, and recreational initiatives identified in the Van Buren County Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan 2026-2030; 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 Mike Chappell, Second by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Carried

C. Strategic Facilities Fund Transfer

FINANCE RESOLUTION F29/5-12-2026

WHEREAS, the County has established a Strategic Facilities Fund to address long-term facility needs in accordance with adopted budget policies; and,
WHEREAS, said policies require that funds transferred into or expended from the Strategic Facilities Fund must be authorized by a resolution adopted by a roll call two-thirds vote of the full Board of Commissioners, and such funds must be used solely for strategic facility investments; and,
WHEREAS, the County maintains a budgetary goal of preserving a 30% fund balance in the General Fund, and at the conclusion of the previous fiscal year's audit, the fund balance exceeded this threshold; and,
WHEREAS, Finance recommends, and it is consistent with established fiscal policy, that \$400,000 of the excess General Fund balance be transferred to the Strategic Facilities Fund to align with the Board's priority of planning for infrastructure improvements and long-term facility maintenance; and,
WHEREAS, this transfer supports the County's commitment to proactive capital planning and ensures that funds are reserved for future facility improvements and infrastructure needs; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the transfer of \$400,000 from the General Fund to the Strategic Facilities Fund.

Motion by David DiStefano, Second by Paul Schincariol, Carried
Roll Call Vote: All Yes

D. Budget Stabilization Fund Transfer

FINANCE RESOLUTION F30/5-12-2026

WHEREAS, the Budget Stabilization Fund is governed by the Michigan Budget Stabilization Act (Public Act 30 of 1978), which allows counties to establish and maintain a reserve fund to be used for operational needs during periods of revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenditures; and,
WHEREAS, in accordance with the County's fiscal policy, the Budget Stabilization Fund must maintain a minimum balance of 5% 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, Fiscal Year 2024 marked the first instance since 2019 where a significant transfer (\$715,000) was required to maintain compliance with the Budget Stabilization Act, bringing the fund to 7.5% of General Fund expenditures. \$100,000 was transferred into the fund in Fiscal Year 2025; and,
WHEREAS, Finance recommends a proactive annual transfer strategy to avoid large one-time corrections in future years and maintain the fund within a target range of 7.5% to 8% of General Fund expenditures; and,
WHEREAS, the proposed transfer of \$40,000 from the General fund to the Budget Stabilization Fund aligns with these goals and ensures continued compliance with State law and prudent fiscal management practices; and,
WHEREAS, all transfers into or out of the Budget Stabilization Fund require a resolution adopted by a roll call two-thirds vote of the full Board of Commissioners and may only be used for operational needs as permitted by law; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the transfer of \$40,000 from the General Fund to the Budget

Stabilization Fund.

Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Mike Toth, Carried
Roll Call Vote: All Yes

11. Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- SW Michigan Behavioral Health
- Pine Grove Twp/Parks & Rec
- Forgotten Man Ministries

15. Chairman's Update

- NACo application

16. Board Correspondence

A. Mecosta County Drain Code of 1956 Resolution

17. Closed Session

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by Gail Patterson-Gladney, Second by Mike Chappell, Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 02:51 PM.

Kurt Doroh, Chairperson

Suzie Roehm, County Clerk