



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

August 25, 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 2:24 PM by Kurt Doroh, Chairman of the Board.
2. Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance / Prayer
3. Roll Call
The roll was called by Chief Deputy County Clerk Beth MacDonald 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 Mike Toth, Carried
6. Approval of Minutes

A. **August 11th, 2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried
7. Public Comment
8. Administrative Affairs
9. Buildings and Grounds

A. **Memorandum of Understanding - Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) Use of Van Buren County Fairgrounds Tower
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTION B7/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) has historically utilized a Van Buren County 911 communications tower located at the Van Buren County

Fairgrounds, at no cost, for equipment used in the dispatching of school buses; and, WHEREAS, a formal agreement documenting this long-standing arrangement cannot be located, WHEREAS, following the construction of a new 911 communications tower and the relocation of County 911 equipment to the new tower, VBISD remains the sole user of the former communications tower and has requested to continue utilizing the tower for its school bus dispatch operations; and, WHEREAS, the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizes VBISD's continued access to the tower for its communications equipment and establishes VBISD's responsibility for the maintenance of the tower and associated equipment, including required inspections and maintenance of the generator; and, WHEREAS, the MOU memorializes the parties' long-standing arrangement and results in no financial impact to Van Buren County; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Van Buren County and the Van Buren Intermediate School District for the continued use and maintenance of the communications tower located at the Van Buren County Fairgrounds

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

B. ****Acquisition of Parcels - Village of Bloomingdale**
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS RESOLUTIONS B8/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, Van Buren County acquired Parcels 626 and 626A through the tax foreclosure process in 2008; and, WHEREAS, at the time of acquisition, the County elected to retain the parcels rather than offer them for sale at auction due to their proximity to the Kal-Haven Trail, which was then operated by the Van Buren County Road Commission and, WHEREAS, the parcels have remained unused by the County, and both the Van Buren County Road Commission and the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources have indicated that they have no interest in acquiring or utilizing the parcels; and, WHEREAS, the Village of Bloomingdale has expressed an interest in acquiring Parcels 626 and 626A for public purposes, including snow storage and providing a safe and accessible location for members of the Amish community to park horse-drawn buggies while conducting business within the Village; and, WHEREAS, the transfer of tax-foreclosed property to another local unit of government for a public purpose may be completed without offering the property for sale at public auction; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, authorize the transfer of Parcels 626 and 626A to the Village of Bloomingdale for the public purposes described herein.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

10. Finance

A. ****Claims**
CLAIMS RESOLUTION C9/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, claims in the amount of \$7,189,940.24 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 \$7,189,940.24 for the month of July 2026.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

B. ****Report and Jail Management System - CORE Technology**
FINANCE RESOLUTION F46/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Jail and Road Patrol currently utilize Motorola FLEX as the County's on-premise Jail Management System (JMS) and Records Management System (RMS); and, WHEREAS, the existing Motorola FLEX contract is ending, and ongoing performance issues with the system have created operational challenges within both the Jail Management and Records Management system,
WHEREAS, CORE Technology provides a cloud-based JMS and RMS solution that will reduce reliance on in-house Information Technology resources and eliminate the need to maintain and replace costly on-premise server infrastructure; and,
WHEREAS, the total implementation cost for the CORE Technology system is \$238,900, which will be funded through \$148,488 from the Public Safety Fund Balance and \$90,412 from the Jail Fund Balance; and,
WHEREAS, beginning in 2027, the annual General Fund budget for the Jail Management and Records Management systems will increase from approximately \$62,000 to \$80,387; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the implementation of the CORE Technology Jail Management and Records Management System.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

C. **L-4029 Update EXPEDITED**
FINANCE RESOLUTION F47/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners previously approved the 2026 Tax Rate Request (L-4029); and,
WHEREAS, voters approved the renewal of the extra-voted millage for the Van Buren Conservation District at the August 4, 2026, election, which was not reflected on the previously approved 2026 Tax Rate Request,
WHEREAS, the 2026 Tax Rate Request must be revised to include the renewed Conservation District millage to ensure the millage is included on the December 2026 tax roll; and,
WHEREAS, the Revised 2026 Tax Rate Request must be approved no later than September 30, 2026; however, expedited approval at the August 25, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting is necessary to incorporate the renewed Conservation District millage revenue into the final Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the Revised 2026 Tax Rate Request (L-4029), reflecting the renewed extravoted millage for the Van Buren Conservation District as approved by voters on August 4, 2026, and authorize the appropriate County officials to execute and submit the revised L-4029 as required.

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

11. **Labor, Negotiations, and Contracts**

A. ****Elected Officials Salary Schedule**
LABOR RESOLUTION L20/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2026, Van Buren County implemented a county-wide unified pay scale for County employees, which did not include the County's Elected Officials; and; and,
WHEREAS, following implementation of the unified pay scale, a review of Elected Official

compensation and the comparable counties previously utilized for salary analysis determined that updated comparable counties and compensation data were appropriate, WHEREAS, a methodology was developed to establish a consistent group of comparable counties for all Elected Officials, utilizing a population greater than 75,000 as an indicator of a comparable service base and taxable value as an indicator of ability to pay; and, WHEREAS, based upon this methodology, Clinton, Midland, Lapeer, Lenawee, and Bay Counties were selected as comparable counties, and current salary information from those counties was utilized to establish average compensation levels for comparison; and, WHEREAS, based upon this compensation review, revised salaries for Van Buren County Elected Officials have been recommended, as presented to the Board of Commissioners, with an effective date of January 1, 2027; and, WHEREAS, in addition to the recommended salary adjustments, the County Clerk's annual stipend for ballot coding responsibilities is recommended to increase from \$5,000 to \$10,000 effective January 1, 2027; and, WHEREAS, the estimated annual implementation cost of the proposed salary and stipend adjustments is approximately \$57,000 in wages, excluding associated benefit costs; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the revised compensation for Van Buren County Elected Officials, as presented.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

B. ****Prosecutor - Assistant Prosecutors Early Hire**
LABOR RESOLUTION L21/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2027, two Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys and the Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney are anticipated to retire or take the bench, resulting in three attorney vacancies within the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office at the same time; and, and, WHEREAS, filling these vacancies without an adequate transition period would create significant operational challenges for the Prosecutor's Office, including the ability to provide appropriate court coverage while simultaneously training new attorneys; and, WHEREAS, the Prosecutor's Office is requesting authorization and funding to hire one Assistant Prosecuting Attorney effective November 1, 2026, and a second Assistant Prosecuting Attorney effective December 1, 2026, allowing both new attorneys to overlap with existing staff for training and knowledge transfer prior to the anticipated departures on January 1, 2027; and, WHEREAS, the third vacant attorney position will remain unfilled until March 1, 2027, providing additional salary savings to offset the cost of the requested training overlap; and, WHEREAS, the estimated cost to hire an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney at Level C effective November 1, 2026, is approximately \$22,500, and the estimated cost to hire a second Assistant Prosecuting Attorney at Level C effective December 1, 2026, is approximately \$13,500; and, WHEREAS, these costs will be partially offset by approximately \$2,000 in savings associated with filling the Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney position with a new employee and approximately \$14,000 in savings associated with hiring a new Assistant Prosecuting Attorney at Level C, resulting in an estimated net financial impact of approximately \$20,000 for the training overlap; and, WHEREAS, the requested overlap will provide for continuity of operations, appropriate training and knowledge transfer, and continued court coverage during a significant staffing transition within the Prosecutor's Office; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the Prosecuting Attorney's request for additional funding to allow for the hiring and training overlap of Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys as presented.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

C. ****Prosecutor - Victim Rights Grant Shortage**

LABOR RESOLUTION L22/8-25-2026

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Prosecuting Attorney's Office employs two Victim Advocates who provide services and support to individuals who are victims of crimes prosecuted by the office; and, WHEREAS, the Victim Advocate positions are funded through federal and state grants, and while grant funding has remained unchanged, the cost of wages and employee benefits has increased, resulting in a funding shortfall; and, WHEREAS, one of the current Victim Advocates is anticipated to leave the position effective January 1, 2027, and the replacement employee is expected to require Countysponsored benefits, creating an additional estimated cost of \$25,000; and, WHEREAS, no additional state or federal grant funding is available to offset the increased costs, resulting in a funding shortage of \$38,318, plus the anticipated \$25,000 in benefit costs, for a total funding request of \$63,318; and, WHEREAS, Victim Advocates provide essential services in accordance with the Crime Victims Rights Act, and since October 1, 2025, have issued 1,154 notices, provided assistance to victims 4,472 times, and attended 274 court hearings, with 751 cases involving victims currently open; and, WHEREAS, should the departing employee remain employed by Van Buren County in another position, there may be corresponding benefit savings that would reduce the overall financial impact to the County; and, WHEREAS, the requested overlap will provide for continuity of operations, appropriate training and knowledge transfer, and continued court coverage during a significant staffing transition within the Prosecutor's Office; and, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, approve the Prosecuting Attorney's request as presented.

Motion by Mike Chappell, Second by Mike Toth, Carried

12. Public Transit

13. Veterans Services

14. Commissioner's Roundtable

- Japan Trip
- Building restoration update
- Wellness Committee update
- South Haven Elkenburg Park rehab update
- bat story
- Data Center/Battery plant update regarding Township request

15. Chairman's Update

16. Board Correspondence

17. Closed Session

18. Public Comment

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM .

Kurt Doroh, Chairperson

Beth MacDonald, Chief Deputy County Clerk