



MINUTES
Board of Commissioners Chambers
219 East Paw Paw Street

Commissioners

Gail Patterson-Gladney, District 1
Kurt Doroh, District 2
Richard Godfrey, District 3
Mike Chappell, District 4
Randall Peat, District 5
Donald Hanson, District 6
Paul Schincariol, District 7

November 9, 2021 10:00 AM

ARPA Committee Meeting

1. Call to Order

Committee Members Present: Commissioner Paul Schincariol, Commissioner Gail Patterson-Gladney, Commissioner Kurt Doroh, Administrator Frank Hardester, Treasurer Trisha Nesbitt, Finance Director Ryan Post

Others in attendance: Commissioner Don Hanson, Commissioner Richard Godfrey, Commissioner Mike Chappell, Judge Kathleen Brickley, CEO of Bloomingdale Communications Steve Schults, Dave Adams of Midwest Energy and Communication, Terry Rubenthaler of Midwest Energy and Communication

2. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

None

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented by Commissioner Doroh, Supported by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney, Motion: Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. 10/26/2021 ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the 10/26/2021 ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes as presented by Commissioner Doroh; Support by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Motion: Carried.

5. Public Comment

- Trisha Nesbitt presented a memo she drafted regarding investments and interest rates. Discussion ensued.
- Judge Kathleen Brickley stated that the current jury rooms are not conducive to COVID or even post-COVID space for jurors. The courts need to find not only a temporary / immediate solution but a long-term resolution to this problem. Ultimately, the need is to provide both a large assembly room and a deliberation room. The entire courthouse building is inept compared to modern courthouses. The courts plan to submit an ARPA proposal. Discussion ensued.

6. Agenda Items

A. ARPA Update

Administrator Hardester presented:

- The final final ARPA guidelines have not been received yet.
- His report regarding the 8 proposals received to date and the amount of funds remaining if those projects are moved forward.
- That the state is being encouraged to match the ARPA amount awarded to each county.
- His discussions with the governor's office about other possible funding that can be used towards broadband services.

Commissioner Patterson-Gladney asked about utilizing a broadband project manager. Administrator Hardester responded that Zach Morris has an internet taskforce and the two of them have an upcoming meeting scheduled to discuss this. Discussion ensued.

B. Proposal # 007 - Bloomingdale Communication - Broadband Expansion

Steve Schults, CEO of Bloomingdale Communications, presented his proposal for providing broadband services to homes and businesses. The ARPA funds requested for this project is: \$3,535,391.00. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Schults stated that he does not need any money to start, he needs a commitment.
- Dave Allen of Midwest Energy and Communications spoke about what his company is doing with communications in Van Buren County. He stated that Bloomingdale Communications are requesting nearly 25% of Van Buren County's total ARPA funds but only providing new services to 10% of Van Buren County residents.

Administrator Hardester asked if there is value in asking them to separate their request into two separate proposals; shovel ready and growth projects.

Motion to break down the proposal into 2 separate proposals and bring it back to the ARPA Committee on 11/23/21 by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

C. Proposal # 008 - Sheriff's Office Furniture Mitigation Purchase

Captain Jim Charon presented his proposal for office furniture to mitigate COVID in the Sheriff's Office. Plexiglass has been used temporarily in an attempt to make the working environment safe for staff. This project will provide cubicle seating with tall walls for staff, replacing the 20+ year-old furniture. Administrator Hardester stated that he has reviewed the proposal and supports the request. Discussion carried.

Motion to support this proposal and move it to the 11/23/21 COW by Commissioner Doroh; Support by Treasurer Nesbitt; Motion: Carried. Commissioner Schincariol voted no.

7. Public Comment

Terry from Midwest Communication stated that each county is doing different projects for broadband and there are other opportunities. He believes there are ways to cut the costs and the county should look carefully at other options.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Supported by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

Meeting adjourned: 12:10 PM