



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

December 14, 2021 10:00 AM

ARPA Committee Meeting

1. **Call to Order**
Committee Members Present: Commissioner Paul Schincariol (Chair), Commissioner Gail Patterson-Gladney, Commissioner Kurt Doroh, Administrator Frank Hardester

Committee Members Absent: Finance Director Ryan Post, Treasurer Trisha Nesbitt

Others in attendance: Sarah Snoeyink, Kevin Conklin, Steve Schults, Terry Rubenthaler, Lori Antkoviak, Manny DeLaRosa,
2. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**
None
3. **Approval of Agenda**
Motion to approve the agenda as presented by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Supported by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.
4. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. **11/23/2021 ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes**
Motion to approve the 11/23/2021 ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Supported by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.
5. **Public Comment**
None
6. **Agenda Items**
 - A. **ARPA Update**
Administrator Hardester presented the ARPA update including:
 - The Final-Final has not been received yet.
 - A chart representing the proposal amounts received to date, the pending proposals, and the amount spent.
 - Administrator Hardester recommended designating a percentage or dollar amount of the remaining ARPA funds towards broadband. Sarah Snoeyink presented results of research and meetings conducted by Market Van Buren regarding broadband within our communities. Discussion ensued.

Motion to set aside a designated \$7 million to be used towards broadband by Commissioner Doroh; Support by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Motion: Carried.

B. Essential Worker Pay Resolution

Administrator Hardester reported that the essential worker pay amount was slightly larger than the original estimated amount. He proposes creating a resolution to be presented to the Board to show the adjusted amount.

Motion to approve moving a resolution to the Board for the adjusted essential worker pay by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Supported by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

C. Proposal # 009 - Sheriff 's Office Armored Vehicle

Undersheriff Kevin Conklin presented his proposal for the Sheriff's Armored Vehicle for the amount of \$239,525.00.

Administrator Hardester stated that the auditors were not confident that this proposal would be approved as a qualified ARPA expense as written. He suggested making changes to the proposal to better fit within the categories, or placing this item on the CIP project list. Discussions ensued about consulting with Van Buren County Mental Health and surrounding counties to see how they are handling similar proposals.

Motion to table this item until the January 25, 2022 ARPA Committee meeting by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

D. Proposal # 010 - Broadband - Bloomingdale Communications (Reconnect 1/2)

Commissioner Schincariol stated that due to the earlier discussion about broadband, no specific decisions will be made today on this proposal. Recommendations were made to wait until the motion to set aside \$7 million for broadband is fully approved.

Hopefully, at that time, there will be more information about federal funding that may be available specifically for broadband.

Steve Schults, CEO of Bloomingdale Communications, presented the bidding and survey processes. Bloomingdale Communication will continue to move forward with their projects to bring broadband to 4,000 homes in Van Buren and Allegan counties and find the funding to do so.

Motion to table the request until February 8, 2022 by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

E. Proposal # 017 - Broadband - Bloomingdale Communications (build areas in Almena Twnshp)

Motion to table the request until February 8, 2022 by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Motion: Carried.

F. Proposal #018 - Broadband - Midwest Energy & Communications - Hamilton Twp Project

Motion to table the request until ARPA Committee February 8, 2022 by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Motion: Carried.

G. Proposal #019 - VBC Children's Advocacy Center

Lori Antkoviak presented her proposal for a Children's Advocacy Center in Van Buren County using ARPA funds in the amount of \$350,000.00. The total project cost is estimated at \$614,500.00. DHHS has available space that they could use; renovations would need to be made. Discussion ensued.

Administrator Hardester stated that he would like to get more information on what ARPA category this needs to come from and get feedback from the auditors. Discussions were held about possibly using the county's Child Care funds instead of ARPA funds.

Motion to table this project until the January 11, 2022 ARPA Committee Meeting by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Patterson-Gladney; Motion: Carried.

H. Proposal # 020 - Jail Improvements- Privacy Wall/Holding Cells

Jail Administrator Manny DeLaRosa presented his proposal for a privacy wall / holding cells using ARPA funds in the amount of \$17,900.00.

Administrator Hardester stated that he does believe that this is a justifiable ARPA request, but it could also be added to the CIP list. Discussion ensued.

Motion to deny this through ARPA and support this as an addition to the CIP list by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

I. Proposal # 021 - Jail Improvements - Recreation Room Divider Wall

This proposal is for ARPA funds in the amount of \$12,300.00 to create a divider wall for the recreation room in the jail. The discussion on this topic was the same as the wall / holding cell topic with consideration of possibly adding this to the CIP list.

Motion to deny this through ARPA and support this as an addition to the CIP list by Administrator Hardester; Support by Commissioner Doroh; Motion: Carried.

7. Public Comment

Administrator Hardester stated that both jail items would be added to the Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting agenda to discuss as a possible CIP list addition.

8. Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned: 11:43 AM