

**Berrien County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole Minutes
March 12, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Elliott called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M. in the Board of Commissioners' Room at the Berrien County Administration Center in St. Joseph, Michigan.

ROLL CALL:

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

12 PRESENT: Bill Chickering, Jim Curran, Teri Freehling, Chris Heugel, Bob Harrison, Jon Hinkelman, Mike Majerek, Don Meeks, Ezra Scott, David Vollrath, Mamie Yarbrough (arrived at 8:55 A.M.) and R. McKinley Elliott.

0: ABSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Meeks moved, seconded by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the Committee of the Whole minutes of March 5, 2020. 1 Abstention: Chickering due to being absent at that meeting. Motion carried, no nays.

REQUISITION REVIEW

- Executive Administrative Assistant Annette Christie presented the requisitions for the Board's review and discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Per the Berrien County Board of Commissioners' Bylaws, those speaking during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9B-C): None.

SCHEDULED DISCUSSION: Administrator Wolf

Administrator Wolf asked Chief Deputy Mensinger to update the Board on how the March 10th Presidential Primary went in Berrien County. Chief Deputy Mensinger stated that overall the election went well. Local results were submitted to the Clerk's Office in a timely manner. The car crash at the Coloma Charter Township Hall disrupted the voting for about 45 minutes, but the staff at Coloma acted quickly to clean up the mess and Election Source was called in to clean the equipment. Chief Deputy Mensinger answered questions from the Board regarding Absentee Voter ballots.

Administrator Wolf introduced Rhiannon Cizon, Executive Director of The History Center at Courthouse Square to update the Board on the new plans and programs at the Center.

Executive Director Cizon presented a PowerPoint program to highlight the 2019-2024 Strategic Plans:

Strategic Directive 1: Design and implement interactive programming that engages visitors and communicates the history of Berrien County.

- Develop an experiential model of engagement.
- Develop interpretive aids for the courthouse and surrounding buildings.
- Design engagement events to utilize the exterior space of the courthouse complex.

- Conduct collaborative events with other organizations.
- Develop and implement a Marketing and Communications Plan.

Strategic Directive 2: Cultivate a culture of volunteerism.

- Develop a formal volunteer program.
- Use a concentric-circle model of recruiting volunteers.
- Empower volunteers to lead projects they are most passionate about.

Strategic Directive 3: Communicate the relevance of history to the next generation.

- Promote educational services, resources and programs to Berrien County schools.
- Create interpretive and reenactor experiences at the Courthouse Square property.
- Coordinate field trip experiences for Berrien County schools.
- Develop a School Promotion Plan to market specific programming for elementary and high school age/grades.
- Design targeted programming in civics, government, social justice, law and law history.
- Assist the County Administration in the creation of a Capital Improvement Plan to maintain and restore historical buildings within the museum complex.
- Work with the Village of Berrien Springs to adopt the Courthouse Complex as the cornerstone of the Historical District.

Strategic Directive 4: Attain Financial Stability.

- Secure grants for school programming and various lecture series.
- Maintain rigorous financial controls.
- Increase the number of paid programming to comprise 30% of gross event revenue.
- Improve and expand existing revenue streams.
- Increase association membership by 10% each year.
- Develop and nurture relations with major donors and community sponsors.
- Maintain appropriate staffing mix to sufficiently meet the administrative requirements of the Association.
- Cultivate fundraising initiatives.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Berrien County Health Officer, Nicki Britten, addressed the COVID-19 virus. There have been two (2) confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State of Michigan. There are no confirmed cases in Berrien County at this time. Health Officer Britten encourages social distancing at this time to help manage the chances of spreading the virus. If there is a large number of cases reported all at once, it would put a strain on our medical facilities. Social distancing will result in saved lives.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:20 A.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Diane Mensinger, Chief Deputy Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the full board meeting on March 19, 2020.