

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Virtual Board Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2020

Staff Present: County Clerk Sharon Tyler
Annette Christie, Executive Assistant to the Administrator
William Wolf, County Administrator
Dan Fette, Community Development Director (via Zoom)
Evan Smith Transportation & Planning Coordinator
Braeden Wilson, Information Systems (via Zoom)

BOC Present: Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott
Vice Chairperson Ezra Scott
Commissioner William Chickering
Commissioner Teri Freehling
Commissioner Robert Harrison
Commissioner Dave Vollrath

CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott called the regular meeting to order at 10:37 A.M. in the Board of Commissioners' (BOC) room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

ROLL CALL:

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

12 PRESENT: R. McKinley Elliott, Mamie Yarbrough, Robert Harrison, Jon Hinkelman, Ezra Scott, Jim Curran, Don Meeks (Arrived at 11:21 A.M.), Christopher Heugel, Michael Majerek, William Chickering, David Vollrath and Teri Freehling.

0 ABSENT.

INVOCATION:

Commissioner Jim Curran gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Commissioner Michael Majerek led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 14, 2020 MEETING:

Commissioner Yarbrough moved, seconded by Commissioner Harrison, to approve the BOC virtual meeting minutes of May 14, 2020.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

11 YEAS: Yarbrough, Harrison, Hinkelman, Scott, Chickering, Vollrath, Freehling, Curran, Heugel, Majerek and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

County Clerk Sharon Tyler received the following email communications and distributed them to the Board:

- Adam Rochefort, St. Joseph, an email requesting the County to reopen, received on May 15, 2020.

- Menominee County Board of Commissioners, a resolution in response to Executive Order 2020-77, received on April 24, 2020.
- John Proos, Executive Director of the Strategic Leadership Council and Mike Garey, Chairman of the Best Practices Committee of the Strategic Leadership Council and the Mayor of the City of St. Joseph, inviting you to an Educational Forum, regarding the response to food insecurity and the impact of COVID-19 on Berrien County Families on Thursday, May 21, 2020 from 9:00 A.M. to 10:15 AM.
- Tuscola County Board of Commissioners, a resolution to move Tuscola County forward, received on May 19, 2020.

PRESENTATION – Berrien Bus Operations – Evan Smith/Dan Fette:

Administrator William Wolf introduced Transportation & Planning Coordinator Evan Smith. Evan Smith gave a Berrien Bus Update and discussed the following:

- Presentation Agenda
 - Review of recent Berrien Bus events.
 - Berrien Bus Financial/Operating Summary.
 - Review Berrien Bus Program Options.
 - Staff Request.
 - Questions/Discussions.
- Berrien Bus FY 2020 Timeline.
- Expense Distribution.
- Berrien Bus FY 2020 Vehicle Hour and Fuel Cost Breakdown.
- Revenue Distribution:
 - State
 - Federal
 - Contract/Farebox
 - Fund Balance
- Use of Fund Balance.
- COVID-19 Revenue Impact.
- CARES Act Funding Operational Revenue Impact.
- FY 2020 Budget vs. Projected Breakdown.
- Berrien Bus Options Post – Transportation Management, Inc. (TMI):
 - Option One (Staff Recommendation):
 - Berrien County operates the Berrien Bus program “directly” utilizing primarily former TMI employees turned part-time or “temporary” County employees.
 - All administrative functions currently provided by TMI via contract will be absorbed by existing County staff.
 - Berrien County contracts with the City of Buchanan to operate the Buchanan Dial-A-Ride program.
 - The goal of this model would be to maintain service in the short-term while reducing expenses and preserving Berrien Bus fund balance.
 - We would start with a “skeleton crew” of operations staff and bring on additional staff as needed as demand for services picks back up.
 - Berrien Bus/Buchanan Staffing Levels (Current):
 - Full-time Transportation & Planning Coordinator (County).
 - Full-Time Operations Manager (TMI).
 - FTE Assistant Manager (TMI).
 - (2) FTE Dispatchers (TMI).
 - (12) FTE Drivers (TMI).
 - (1) FTE Mechanic (TMI).
 - (1) PT Maintenance Assistant (TMI).
 - (1) PT Vehicle Washer (TMI).
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 - Berrien Bus/Buchanan Staffing Levels (Proposed):

- Full-time Transportation & Planning Coordinator (County).
 - (2) PT Dispatchers (County).
 - (6) PT Drivers (County).
 - (1) PT Mechanic (County).
 - (1) PT Vehicle Washer (TMI).
- Option Two:
 - Close down Berrien Bus program effective June 30th, 2020 and liquidate all Berrien Bus assets.
 - County staff is projecting that the Berrien Bus program can operate without the need for local funding through FY 2022 at a minimum under Option #1.
- Berrien Bus Program Long-term Options:
 - Re-bid Berrien Bus/Buchanan operations contract and seek another contracted service provider for FY 2021 and beyond.
 - Consolidation of services with other transit providers in the County including Niles Dial-A-Ride, TCATA and Buchanan Dial-A-Ride.
 - Continue with Berrien County Pilot Program as planned (albeit delayed) minus TMI (staff recommendation).
- Staff Request:
 - County staff is seeking approval from the BOC to move ahead with putting together an operations plan under Option#1 that will be reviewed by the BOC on June 4th.
 - Community Development staff will continue to work with Financial Services, Personnel Services, MDOT, TMI staff and the City of Buchanan to provide the BOC with a detailed operations/transition plan that can be implemented beginning July 1st, 2020.

Discussion was held. The Board will continue the discussion next week. Commissioner Freehling was reappointed to the Transportation Steering Committee who will have a meeting to discuss Berrien Bus Operations further.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS - Public comments at this portion of the meeting must be related to resolutions listed on today's agenda only. Those speaking through the You Tube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village:

Tony Benhart, Sodus Township, spoke about Resolution #B2005077 - Approve Weekly Requisitions.

Commissioner Meeks arrived at 11:21 A.M.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Vollrath moved, seconded by Commissioner Harrison, to approve today's Consent Calendar as presented:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
P2005005	Per Diems
F2005031	Weekly Bills
B2005077	Approve Weekly Requisitions
P2005234	Spectrum Health Community Wellness Grant
F2005249	Approve budget amendment for Road Department
P2005252	Application for Minority Health grant from MDHHS
F2005262	Approve Millage Rates
F2005263	Renew Berrien Conservation District agreement for Drain Soil Erosion Program
A2005265	Approve amendment to SWMBA funding agreement Drug Court

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

12 YEAS: Yarbrough, Harrison, Hinkelman, Heugel, Scott, Chickering, Vollrath, Freehling, Curran, Majerek, Meeks and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

INTERVIEW WITH COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR APPLICANT - Brian Dissette:

Chairperson Elliott explained the interview process and introduced Brian Dissette. Brian Dissette spoke about himself and distributed his resume to the Board. Questions were given by Board Members to Brian Dissette. After the interview was completed, Chairperson Elliott discussed the next steps and the transition process. Chairperson Elliott, Commissioner Chickering, PHSC with the Administrator will coordinate and facilitate this process.

Commissioner Scott moved, seconded by Commissioner Freehling, to authorize Chairperson Elliott and Chairperson Chickering of PHSC Committee to work with Corporate Counsel to draft an employment agreement.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

12 YEAS: Yarbrough, Harrison, Hinkelman, Heugel, Scott, Chickering, Vollrath, Freehling, Curran, Majerek, Meeks and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (PHSC) ACTION: Approve Pension Refunds/Rollovers as presented:

Chairperson Chickering of PHSC Committee, explained why this motion was being taken during the Board meeting.

PHSC Chairperson Chickering moved, seconded by PHSC Committee member Vollrath, to approve the pension rollovers/refunds as presented. Support needed by PHSC Committee members.

Chairperson Chickering instructed the Clerk to call the roll of the PHSC Committee resulting as follows:

3 YEAS: Chickering, Vollrath and Freehling.

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS: None.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: None.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Those speaking through the You Tube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village.

Adolf Pelzer, Hagar Township, asked why Rocky Gap County Park is closed and Silver Beach County Park is open.

Kim Jorgensen Gane, St. Joseph, asked a question for the candidate regarding imminent domain for lake front property.

Julie Pioch, MSU Extension District 13 Director, Paw Paw, is pleased with the choice of Brian Dissette by the Board and looks forward to working with him in the future.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Freehling gave an update to the Board on a meeting regarding broadband with Southwest Planning Commission Executive Director John Egelhaaf. Commissioner Freehling spoke about broadband hot spots needed for education due to the COVID-19. Commissioner Scott and Commissioner Curran were in attendance at the meeting too.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Chairperson Elliott made the following announcements:

- The County facilities will be closed on Monday, May 25, 2020 in observance of Memorial Day.
- The BOC will meet on Thursday, May 28, 2020 and Thursday, June 4, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 P.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.