

THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
October 10, 2023

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, in the Frank Walterhouse Board of Commissioners Room, 448 Court Place, Government Center, Beulah, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bob Roelofs.

Present were: Commissioners Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke

Excused were: Commissioners Cunningham and Sauer

The invocation was given by Commissioner Roelofs and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda:

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to approve the agenda as amended, removing Action Item K – Discussion regarding loan to Frankfort Airport Authority from DTRF, adding Action Item L - Reconsideration of the Animal Control water/sewer project. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Minutes:

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Jeannot, to approve the regular session minutes of September 26, 2023, as amended. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

9:03 a.m. Public Comment

Karen Mallon, Prosecutors office, thanked the Board of Commissioners for allowing her to go to the MERS Conference as an employee delegate. It was an awesome conference. Investing can be daunting to young people. With MERS the financial advisor and educational programs they offer are tremendous. Asking that the County allow her to speak to the Human Resource Committee on what she learned at the MERS conference and start a program for our county employees that would encourage them to invest in their future.

9:05 Public Input closed.

FINANCE

Bills: Motion by Markey, seconded by Nye, to approve payment of the bills from September 22, 2023, through September 30, 2023, in the amount of \$119,573.25, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Motion by Nye, seconded by Jeannot, to approve payment of the bills from October 1, 2023, through October 5, 2023, in the amount of \$317,540.10, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS - None

ACTION ITEMS

Accept the 2023 Apportionment Report: Brianne Lindsey, Equalization Director, was present to answer any questions. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to approve the 2023 Apportionment Report as presented by the Equalization Department. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot,

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Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Establish Ad Hoc Interview Committee for Veteran Affairs Committee: Katie Zeits, County Administrator, stated that this position has been advertised and there have been no other applicants. Mr. Bailey has stated that he would like to be re-appointed to this committee. Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Markey, that the Board of Commissioners appoint Lawrence Bailey to the Veterans Affairs Committee, with term expiring December 31, 2027. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approve Social Security Policy: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Jeannot, to adopt the Social Security Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approve Investment Policy: Motion by Nye, seconded by Warsecke, to adopt the Investment Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Operation Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approve Dress/Hygiene Policy: Katie Zeits, County Administrator request Blue Jean Friday be changed to Blue Jean Day. Motion by Markey, seconded by Warsecke, to adopt the Dress and Hygiene policy as amended, to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approve Credit Card Policy: Motion by Nye, seconded by Warsecke, to adopt the Credit Card Use Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual, with an amended policy to be presented to the Board of Commissioners within 90 days. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approval of Cherry Capital Communication Agreement for fiber extension to Communication Tower: Tim Maylone, Cherry Capital Communication was present to answer any questions. Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Nye, to approve the Fiber Optic Broadband Network Construction Agreement in support of the Public Safety Tower with Cherry Capital Connection, and authorizes the Chair to sign subject to approval as to its form by legal counsel. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Approval of the 2023 Emergency Management Performance Grant Agreement and all related budget amendments: Motion by Markey, seconded by Warsecke, to approve the 2023 EMPG Grant Agreement with the Michigan State Police – Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, and authorizes the Chair and Emergency Management Coordinator to sign, and further authorizes the related budget amendment to recognize an additional \$8,796 in revenue and expenditures related to the grant award. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Consider amending the employee roster to add a Paramedic position and remove an EMT position, to include the necessary budget adjustments: Tom King, EMS Director and Jackie Palfey, Human Resources, were present to answer any questions. Motion by Nye, seconded by Jeannot, to approve

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the roster change from a full-time Emergency Medical Technician to a full-time Paramedic position and the budget adjustment within the Ambulance Fund. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

9:40 a.m. Presentation from the Northwest Food Coalition about what the Coalition does. Kathy Rhoades from Northwest Food Coalition, Taylor Moore from Goodwill NMI Food Resue, and Christina Barkel from Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, were present and provided a history and overview on how they collaborate to secure food and get it to the food pantries and community meal sites. In 2023, 262,745 pounds of food was distributed into Benzie County.

10:13 a.m. Break

10:24 a.m. Reconvene

Consider approving the MOU regarding the FAPE Agreement with North Ed, Benzie Central Schools, Frankfort Elberta Area Schools, and the Benzie County Sheriff Office: Sheriff Rosa was present to answer any questions. Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Markey to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Northwest Education Services, Benzie County Central Schools, and Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools and authorizes the Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Reconsideration of Animal Control Water/Sewer project: Motion by Nye, seconded by Jeannot, to rescind the approval of the prior proposal from the September 26, 2023, Board of Commissioners meeting, with AJ Excavating and approve the new proposal from Kerby Backhoe in the not to exceed amount of \$52,000, with funds available from the ARPA and Capital funds. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Roelofs attended the Veterans Affairs meeting and the Area Agency on Aging Joint meeting.

Comm Jeannot attended the Platte Township meeting, Lake Township meeting, Almira Township meeting, Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency meeting, Coffee Hour with Coffia, and provided a written report.

Comm Cunningham provided a written report.

Katie Zeits stated that Michelle Barefoot from the Benzie Area Chamber of Commerce had reached out to her regarding Commissioner Cunningham reported at the September 26, 2023, meeting, that the golf outing secured \$45,000 in revenue. This is incorrect as they typically only generate \$2,500 to \$4,000 historically. That event did not generate \$45,000.

Comm Nye attended the Benzie Leelanau Health Department meeting, Village of Benzonia meeting, Central Wellness Executive Committee meeting, Land Bank meeting, Benzie School Board meeting, Sewer Feasibility Study meeting, and provided a written report.

Comm Markey attended the Central Wellness Networks Community Service Relations Committee meeting, and the Village of Honor meeting.

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Comm Warsecke attended the Solid Waste Advisory meeting.

Comm Sauer provided a written report.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Katie Zeits

Attended the MAC Conference and MERS Conference recently. Both were very good and informative. Benzie County received the \$400,000 Sparks Grant, this will pave the Betsie Valley Trail to Case Road. Rose has been working on getting proposals for upgrades to the campus regarding lighting in the parking lot, signage, and concrete work. She will be scheduling a Building and Grounds meeting. Senator Bumstead will be in the Government Center on October 30, 2023, at 10:00 am, room 206. The Auditors will be here later this week. Invite everyone to the Kickoff of the Digital Equity Compass Task Force meeting at Grow Benzie, 2:00 p.m. on October 18, 2023. Will be attending a Material Management Plan meeting with Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County next Thursday. Getting proposal regarding IT services.

STUDY SESSION - None

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

- Crystal Lake Elevation
- Little Platte Lake Elevation
- Alcona County Resolution 2023-16 Opposing Solar and Wind Development
- Alpena County Resolution 23-20 Opposing Solar and Wind Development
- Betsie Valley Trailway Management Council September 5, 2023, minutes
- Benzie Leelanau Health Department September 27, 2023, Agenda
- Clinton County Resolution 2023-17 Opposing Solar and Wind Development
- Kalkaska County Resolution 2023-41 Opposing Solar and Wind Development
- Osceola County Resolution 2023-0015 Opposing Solar and Wind Development
- Benzie Leelanau Health Department August 23, 2023, minutes
- St. Clair County Resolution 23-21 Opposing Solar and Wind Development

11:20 a.m. Public Comment

Sheriff Rosa introduced Deputy Corrections Officer Victor Moore.

Judge John D. Mead stated that he had held a preliminary examination a few weeks ago and the Record Eagle stated that Magistrate Walter Armstrong had held it. There is a shortage of private practice attorneys in Manistee County. He is getting 30% of the cases from Manistee County due to Jared Henry being appointed the Manistee County Probate/District Judge. He may be in Manistee County one day a week to handle these cases for a while.

11:24 a.m. Public Input closed.

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Commissioner Warsecke suggested that the Study Session meeting be moved up from 1:30 p.m. The consensus of the board was to take a 15-minute break and then come back for the Study Session meeting.

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to adjourn at 11:26 a.m. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: None Excused: Cunningham and Sauer Motion carried.

Bob Roelofs, Chair

Tammy Bowers, Benzie County Clerk

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2. Approve the regular session minutes of September 26, 2023, as amended.
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4. Approve payment of the bills from October 1, 2023, through October 5, 2023, in the amount of \$317,540.10, as presented.
5. Approve the 2023 Apportionment Report as presented by the Equalization Department.
6. Appoint Lawrence Bailey to the Veterans Affairs Committee, with term expiring December 31, 2027.
7. Adopt the Social Security Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual.
8. Adopt the Investment Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Operation Policy Manual.
9. Adopt the Dress and Hygiene policy as amended, to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual.
10. Adopt the Credit Card Use Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual, with an amended policy to be presented to the Board of Commissioners within 90 days.
11. Approve the Fiber Optic Broadband Network Construction Agreement in support of the Public Safety Tower with Cherry Capital Connection and authorizes the Chair to sign subject to approval as to its form by legal counsel.
12. Approve the 2023 EMPG Grant Agreement with the Michigan State Police – Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division and authorizes the Chair and Emergency Management Coordinator to sign, and further authorizes the related budget amendment to recognize an additional \$8,796 in revenue and expenditures related to the grant award.
13. Approve the roster change from a full-time Emergency Medical Technician to a full-time Paramedic position and the budget adjustment within the Ambulance Fund.
14. Approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Northwest Education Services, Benzie County Central Schools, and Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools and authorize the Chair to sign.
15. Rescind the approval of the prior proposal from the September 26, 2023, Board of Commissioners meeting, with AJ Excavating and approve the new proposal from Kerby Backhoe in the not to exceed amount of \$52,000, with funds available from the ARPA and Capital funds.

**Art Jeannot
Commissioner Report
October 10, 2023**

- **10/5 – Platte Township**
 - The township clerk complimented Tammy Bowers on the training she is providing leading up to November elections.
 - The Township is reviewing options for legal representation now that Dick Figura has retired. They are considering using the firm Tim Figura is moving to—Mika Meyers.
 - The township supervisor indicated that he and the clerk will be attending the October 30 discussion on Headlee.
- **10/5 – Lake Township**
 - The Trustees approved a donation to Darcy Library in the amount of \$1300 to help cover the cost of replacing the lighting.
 - A job description and pay range is being developed for hiring a code enforcement officer.
 - The township supervisor indicated he will be attending the October 30 discussion on Headlee.
- **10/9 – Almira Township**
 - The Township is working a potential dog park, noise ordinance update, new website and qualifying for membership in the MI Class funds.
 - The clerk acknowledged the training Tammy Bowers is providing.
 - The township supervisor indicated he will be attending the October 30 discussion on Headlee.
- **Other –**
 - Met with staff from Northwest MI Community Action Agency to look at potential sites for Head Start beginning school year 2024-2025.
 - I have accepted an invitation to meet with Nick Nissley (President of NMC) and others on October 19th to learn more about annexation to Grand Traverse County for the purpose of assessing a mileage to subsidize tuition for Benzie County students. I have invited Rhonda Nye to join me.
 - Attended Representative Coffia town meeting. The take aways—
 - Median housing cost have increased 83% from 2013.
 - Bills in discussion 1. To move the MSHDA housing bond cap from \$5M to \$10M. This is for housing assistance. 2. Increase the eligibility for this 185%-300% of federal poverty level (family of 4 is currently \$30k).
 - Reduce regulations for child care and tax credits for qualified families.
 - Create parity in mental health insurance to match health care insurance.
 - Potential of financially assisting families housing minor relatives (Kinship) similar to foster parent assistance.
 - I will be attending the October 12th BCRC meeting at Gary Sauer's request.



10 October 2023

Cunningham,

District 3

- 27 Sept HSBC, presentation Donna Norkoli, chair of the Reduce Stigma Against Mental Illness Action Team, part of the NW Community Health Innovation Region.
Reducing Stigma Against Mental Illness. Two useful handouts. Identified mental illness as a chronic disease. Survey to assess county needs for mental illness. The agency has presence on social media, created a storytelling video with local/Cadillac Club residents. Goal to reduce the stigma and educate public/employers so people with mental illnesses can contribute, be viable realizing their potential.
- 24 October, "Screen-agers", being shown at The Garden Theatre.
- BACN has a small fund to help support enrichment experience (example; for dance, chess, etc.) classes for students. This grew out of the successful summer camp program. Contact BACN.
- Sara May, Benzie Human Services Collaborative inquired about opioid moneys? County, to date received approximately \$100,000, \$15,000 allocated to Drug Court Program through Curcuit Court. On 11 July BoC approved admin to publish RFP for projects eligible for opioid moneys. The RFP was extended to 30 Sept, it was on the county website, published in the paper, sent to agencies and discussed at BoC meetings. Admin received four applications.
- 28 Sept Airport- public comment; application filed for low power radio in the county. It will have capability to broadcast to homes, businesses, cars and over water.
- 1-3 Oct MAC Conference, Kzoo. Commissioner Sauer, Admin Zeits and I attended.
- Opening: Deena Bosworth, Dir of Gov Affairs, questions: Bosworth@micounties.org, 517.372.5379.
- \$181.6 million for 27 critical infrastructure projects, Elections,\$30 million incentive for multi county. HB4 350-51, Raise Up Local Grant, match amount of state and local funds. SB 271-276, Clean Renewable, "stay tuned".
- I attended: Anatomy of Cyber Attack, big takeaways: top three being attacked, Healthcare, Education and Local Government, 98% through phishing, 82% through inside agency fraud. Average 'ransom', \$214,000.
- Materials Management Plan: New state law, county MMP required. Significant components- BoC will receive the money, will require a standing committee, ordinances and education. MMP, \$60,000 non competitive money goes to county to write and start implementing plan, encouraged to work with neighboring counties then an additional \$10, 000 awarded. This money is annually renewable. If the county does not have an MMP then EGLE will do it, with no money to county. MMP process time, 3 years, 180 days to initiate, it is a task-based grant/suggested to consider benchmarks and a compliant facility. On 18 Oct there will be an online presentation, link to be forwarded. Questions: MillerC1@michigan.gov
- MAC Regional Caucuses, Region II, Richard Schmidt elected.
- MAC Annual Business meeting, all platforms accepted. Only Environmental & Regulatory Affairs had discussion.
- Attended, How AI is Transforming the County Operations Landscape: Generative AI programs, Chat GPT, Bard, Office 365. AI serves to save time and money, CarMax and Progressive use. Challenges: check work for accuracy, relevancy, bias, privacy, mis-dis information. Currently lacking policies and guidelines for AI. AI is quickly evolving into "Deep Learning" capabilities, meaning it functions like a brain. Suggested that county should be internal/ "closed environment", to safeguard information.

I encourage public to access MI 83 podcasts, micounties.org/podcasts83.

Community

28 Sept Local biochar demonstration, Paul May

29 Sept Rep John Roth, Frankfort Town Hall, asked to speak on septic bill

Sept shared Juvenile Justice bill to increase funding from 50% to 75% by state of MI. with Kinship Group (though it does not seem to have direct impact)

Rhonda Nye
District IV – Benzonia Township
Commissioner Report
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September 27 – Benzie Leelanau District Health Department

- Health Officer, Dan Thorell, led discussion on 750k State funding for each health department. Funds are earmarked for infrastructure and cannot be used for new buildings. Funds will need to be spent in four years.
- Board approved cost sharing for Leelanau Environmental Health Office Space Agreement.
- FY 2024 Budget Approved. Dodie Putney gave a detailed and informative fiscal presentation.
- Local appropriations of 500k matching portion brings in an additional 451K of funding to provide local health services.

October 2 – Village of Benzonia

- Discussed recommendation of USDA and approved payoff of water loan just under 113k.
- New plow truck arrived, old one sold to Bear Lake for 5k.
- Approved request from Steve Adams to close Traverse Ave from 5pm – 8pm for Trunk or Treat event on Halloween.
- Hired Assistant Superintendent, Brady Cole.
- Village was not selected for Round 1 EGLE DWRP funding; approved intent to apply with Fleis & VandenBrink for Round 2. Village of Benzonia qualified for 'overburdened' status for this funding.

October 3 – Centra Wellness Executive Committee

- Second Public Hearing for procedures:
 - 02.04 Coordination and Continuity of Care
 - 2.05.02 Habilitation Support Waiver
 - 02.36 Service Delivery Using Technology
- Executive Director Evaluation discussed.
- Behavioral Health Home may make shift to include children.

October 4 – Land Bank

- Inventory reviewed.
- Special Meeting will be held Oct. 20 to review bids for demolition of two structures in Thompsonville that will enable Habitat for Humanity to build new homes on lots.
- Due to median income in Benzie County, Blight Elimination Grant monies can be used only for renovation where income is 80% of AMI; attempting to identify projects that would qualify.
- Information shared that the estimated median home value in Benzie County is 227k which is approximately 20% higher than the State median.

October 9 – Benzie School Board

- SafeNet services are in every elementary school in Benzie County. Lake Ann Elementary Prevention Specialist, Marc Greene, gave presentation.
- Drawings of three bay bus garage to be built shared.

- Approved renewal of Sinking Fund CD.
- BWAC has improved their offer to purchase Crystal Lake Elementary to 425k. Attorneys are still negotiating terms including purchase price, indemnification and time parameters.
- Audit deadline is November 1st and will be on time this year.

Update on Sewer Feasibility Study will be given next meeting.

Tammy Bowers

From: Gary Sauer
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 12:07 PM
To: Tammy Bowers
Subject: County commissioner report district 7

9-27-2023 Health Department

They received a grant for infrastructure 750,000. Can't use for new construction of a building but could be used for remodeling and other things. All the health departments received this grant. A new Covid booster shot has been developed the health department has ordered but not available yet.

9-28-2023 Road Commission

Paving of a section of Brownell was scheduled to be paved that day by Elmers. The crew will be taught safe ways to cut trees and keep everyone safe. Working on agreements with villages, city, Benzie schools, and Benzie County looking for a 5 year agreement with them. The second meeting in November has been eliminated.

9-28-2023 Public Hearing in Benzonia

DNR was by resolution asked to hold this involving possible no wake ordinance on the Betsie River along Grace Road. 12 people attended, public can still submit concerns in writing by October 28 must be postmarked by October 24th. Concerns were jet ski boats and power boats causing unsafe conditions for fishermen along those sections, and erosion of the banks.

10-1,2,3 2023 Mac Conference

Good conference at the Radisson in Kalamazoo, excellent accommodations. Breakout session's that I attended Manage Unfunded Liabilities put on by MERS, they still have concerns. Building an Effective Multi-generational Workplace, working with many different view points and getting things done. Cyber security put on by KARHU CYBER, they have been in touch with Katie to present to the board I believe at the second October meeting, should be a good meeting looking forward to it. Also adopted the platforms for the committee's of MAC.

10-3-2023 BVTMC

Spent the DNR grant for last year's maintenance. Helping the Friends with their ability to get grants in the future. Sunkist residents along the trail in the Bigilow Agreement have the ability to have certain access to use the trail for their wells, tree trimming, and construction as examples in the agreement, we as a group want to develop a permitting process that protects the trail and the residents, also the public who uses the trail. The management council and DNR have that authority to do so. Approved the Brew to Brew trail request for next year on June 29 th. Had one of our new signs for Service dogs vandalized, if seen by anyone please notify the DNR Rap line and report any issues like this thank you.

Gary Sauer Commissioner District 7
Will not be in attendance on the 10th

Sent from my iPad