

**THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**October 24, 2023**

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, October 24, 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 Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke

Excused was: Commissioner Jeannot

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

**Agenda:**

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot  
Motion carried.

**Minutes:**

Motion by Markey, seconded by Sauer, to approve the regular session minutes of October 10, 2023, as presented. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None  
Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

9:02 a.m. Public Comment - None

**FINANCE**

Bills: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Nye, to approve payment of the bills from October 10, 2023, through October 24, 2023, in the amount of \$354,489.27, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot  
Motion carried.

Michelle Thompson, County Treasurer, presented a written report and stated that her office has been working with the auditors on the year-end audit. Attached is a copy of a letter from the auditors that they ask to be shared with you at your next meeting. The Land Bank Authority accepted a demolition bid last week, which was roughly half of what was estimated this Spring. We got a grant to remove two structures from the Village of Thompsonville, which came back less than one of the bids. We ask the State Land Bank to add an addendum to the grant that would allow us to demolish a 3<sup>rd</sup> home in the Village of Benzonia. The contractor agreed to give us a quote on that, and the Land Bank has accepted it.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Management, stated the Bomb Swatting Training will be this week. The lower-level construction at the Sheriff Department is moving along. There is a kickoff meeting scheduled for the Radio Tower on Thursday. The Local Planning Team and the Local Emergency Planning Committee are helping with major updates to the County Emergency Operations Plan. The Natural Hazardous Mitigation Plan was submitted in late July, and we are still waiting to hear from the State, so we can move forward.

Cory Ellis, 911 Director presented his written report and was available to answer any questions.

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Douglas Durand, Benzie Senior Resources Director provided a written report.

### ACTION ITEMS

Consider approving Solid Circle Jail Management Software License and Support Agreement:

Undersheriff Greg Hubers was available to answer any questions. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to authorize an amendment to the Solid Circle Jail Management Software License and Support Agreement to incorporate necessary security measures, for a period of one year, with automatic one-year renewals for a period of up to five-years, in the annual amount of \$10,136.32, subject to approval as to its form by legal counsel, and that the Chair be authorized to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Time Off Policy: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Cunningham, to adopt the Paid Time Off Policy to replace the old one in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Break Time for Nursing Mothers Policy: Motion by Markey, seconded by Cunningham, to adopt the Break Time for Nursing Mothers Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

9:20 a.m. Joshua Stoltz, Grow Benzie was present and gave a presentation on Grow Benzie's commitment to actively improve lives in Benzie County and what services they offer.

9:30 a.m. Marilyn Passmore was present and gave an update from Spectrum/Charter regarding internet service in Benzie County.

Consider approving Conflict Resolution Policy: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to adopt the Conflict Resolution Policy to add to the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Drug Free Workplace Policy: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Nye, to adopt the Drug Free Workplace Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Classification of Employees Policy: Motion by Nye, seconded by Warsecke to adopt the Classification of Employees Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Rave Mobile Safety Three-year renewal contract for Smart 911 Application:

Cory Ellis was present to answer any questions. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to approve the extension of the Smart 911 service provided by Rave Mobile Safety for a period of three years, in the not to exceed annual amount of \$5,100, with funds available in the Central Dispatch Fund. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

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Accept proposal for final phase of carpeting on main floor of the Government Center: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the final phase of replacing carpeting on the main floor of the Governmental Center, as recommended by the Maintenance Coordinator in the not to exceed amount of \$33,000, with funds available in the Capital Fund and authorizes the Board Chairman to sign any necessary proposal documents. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Approve Benzie Senior Resources 2% grant application to Grand Traverse Band regarding Home-Delivered Meal Program: Motion by Markey, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the grant application for Tribal Council Allocation of 2% funding on behalf of Benzie Senior Resources and authorizes Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving increases to Road Commission members' annual salary: Joe Nedow was present to answer any questions. Motion by Sauer, seconded by Nye, to authorize an increase in the compensation provided to the Benzie County Road Commissioners as follows: Chairperson \$6,000, Vice Chairperson and Members \$5,400, effective January 1, 2024. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider authorizing Priority Dispatch Agreement for Emergency Medical Dispatching: Cory Ellis was present to answer any questions. Motion by Markey, seconded by Warsecke, authorize the implementation of Emergency Medical Dispatch and accept the proposals from Priority Dispatch and ID Networks in the total not to exceed amount of \$41,270, over a five-year period, with funds available in the Central Dispatch Fund, with a reimbursement from the MMRMA, and that the Chair be authorized to sign the appropriate documents. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider authorizing grant application agreement for snowmobile patrol: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to authorize the Fiscal Year 24 Snowmobile Law Enforcement Program Grant Agreement in the total grant amount of \$4,000 and commit to a \$1,000 local match from the General Fund. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

Consider approving Two Seven Oh Inc contract for Animal Control: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Cunningham, to authorize the reimbursement grant agreement with Two Seven Oh, Inc. in the total reimbursable amount of \$32,074.15 for animal shelter upgrades and authorizes the related budget amendments to recognize the expenditure and revenue, and authorizes the Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

10:13 a.m. Break

10:20 a.m. Reconvene

Consider approving a loan to the Frankfort Airport Authority from the DTRF Fund: Coury Carland and Dick Bayer were present to request a loan from the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund and answer any questions.

## **COMMISSIONERS**

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Motion by Sauer, seconded by Cunningham, to allow the Frankfort County City Airport to borrow from the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund, the not to exceed amount of \$150,000, with reimbursement to be made in six months. Providing Crystal Lake Township and the City of Frankfort be pursued as an equal cost share. Along with pursuing adjusting the terms of the relationship of the three entities. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, and Sauer Nays: Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke  
Exc: Jeannot Motion failed.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Chair Roelofs attended the Village of Lake Ann, and Building and Grounds meeting. Veterans Day Celebration will be November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Memorial Park in Benzonia.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report.

Comm Cunningham provided a written report.

Comm Nye attended the Village of Beulah meeting, Benzonia Township meeting, Centra Wellness Board meeting, 2 Headlee Reset Ad Hoc Committee meetings, Building and Grounds meeting, EDC meeting, Joint Court Committee meeting, and MAC Health and Human Services meeting. A written report was provided.

Comm Markey attended the Homestead Township meeting, Centra Wellness Board meeting, LEPC/LPT meeting, Headlee Reset Ad Hoc Committee meeting, and MAC Judiciary and Public Safety meeting.

Comm Warsecke attended the Colfax Township meeting, Inland Township meeting, and Parks and Recreation meeting.

Comm Sauer attended the Building and Grounds meeting, School and Youth Resource Advisory Committee meeting, Joint Court Committee meeting, and Village of Elberta meeting. A written report provided.

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Katie Zeits**

Representatives from Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital will attend the November 14, 2023, Board of Commissioners meeting to talk about the future plans of Munson Medical Center and answer any questions. The second quarter report from MERS looks good. We brought in more money than we paid out. Michelle and herself met with a gentleman last week regarding creating a fund to help pay our pension liability. Planning for next Monday's Town Hall meeting.

**STUDY SESSION - None**

**COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS - None**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Discussion regarding County millages and future needs and growth. Reviewed the minutes of the Ad Hoc Committee meeting held October 17, 2023. This will be discussed further after the October 30, 2023, Town Hall meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS - None**

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### PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

- Benzie Leelanau District Health Department October 25, 2023, Agenda
- Benzie Transportation Authority – August 2023 Income Statement
- Cheboygan County Resolution 2023-14 Opposing Solar and Wind Developments
- Lenawee County Resolution 2023-16 Local Control of Land Used
- Livingston County Resolution 2023-10-177 Establishing Health Advisory Committee
- Osceola County Resolution 2023-0016 regarding septic systems
- Ottawa County Resolution

12:02 p.m. Public Comment

Josh Stoltz, Grow Benzie stated that he plans on coming to the December Study Session meeting to get a little bit more involved in what Grow Benzie is doing.

12:04 p.m. Public Comment closed.

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to adjourn at 12:04 p.m. Ayes: Cunningham, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Jeannot Motion carried.

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Bob Roelofs, Chair

Tammy Bowers, Benzie County Clerk

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3. Adopt the Paid Time Off Policy to replace the old one in the Staff Policy Manual.
4. Adopt the Break Time for Nursing Mothers Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual.
5. Adopt the Conflict Resolution Policy to add to the Staff Policy Manual.
6. Adopt the Drug Free Workplace Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual.
7. Adopt the Classification of Employees Policy to replace the old policy listed in the Staff Policy Manual.
8. Approve the extension of the Smart 911 service provided by Rave Mobile Safety for a period of three years, in the not to exceed annual amount of \$5,100, with funds available in the Central Dispatch Fund.
9. Approve the final phase of replacing carpeting on the main floor of the Governmental Center, as recommended by the Maintenance Coordinator in the not to exceed amount of \$33,000, with funds available in the Capital Fund and authorizes the Board Chairman to sign any necessary proposal documents.

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10. Approve the grant application for Tribal Council Allocation of 2% funding on behalf of Benzie Senior Resources and authorizes Chair to sign.
11. Authorize an increase in the compensation provided to the Benzie County Road Commissioners as follows: Chairperson \$6,000, Vice Chairperson and Members \$5,400, effective January 1, 2024.
12. Authorize the implementation of Emergency Medical Dispatch and accept the proposals from Priority Dispatch and ID Networks in the total not to exceed amount of \$41,270, over a five-year period, with funds available in the Central Dispatch Fund, with a reimbursement from the MMRMA, and that the Chair be authorized to sign the appropriate documents.
13. Authorize the Fiscal Year 24 Snowmobile Law Enforcement Program Grant Agreement in the total grant amount of \$4,000 and commit to a \$1,000 local match from the General Fund.
14. Authorize the reimbursement grant agreement with Two Seven Oh, Inc. in the total reimbursable amount of \$32,074.15 for animal shelter upgrades and authorizes the related budget amendments to recognize the expenditure and revenue, and authorizes the Chair to sign.
15. Allow the Frankfort County City Airport to borrow from the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund, the not to exceed amount of \$150,000, with reimbursement to be made in six months. Providing Crystal Lake Township and the City of Frankfort be pursued as an equal cost share. Along with pursuing adjusting the terms of the relationship of the three entities. Motion failed.



**Art Jeannot**  
**Commissioner Report**  
**October 24, 2023**

- **10/12 – Benzie County Road Commission**

- Attended on behalf of Commissioner Sauers. The take aways were:
  - BCRC continues to work through title issues at Platte River Elementary.
  - Cost of the November election.
  - Funding for the MERS plan.
  - I invited their financial manager to join our discussion on October 30 regarding Headlee.

- **10/17 – Headlee Adhoc Committee**

- I met with Commissioner Nye and Markey, Michelle Thompson, Katie Zeits, and support staff. The out come will be discussed at length at our 10/24 meeting.

- **10/18 – EDC/BRA**

- We discussed the committee's objective, a job description for a paid professional, job sharing with the parks and recreation committee and management of a paid professional. At a future BOC meeting a full presentation will be made to include action to accept proposal.
- An update on broadband was given. Cherry Capital has doubled their construction crews (from 2-4) to speed up implementation. They are using multiple resources. They have been notified that their application for an \$8M ROBIN grant has been approved. A new ISP (Sentech) will be providing fiber for Weldon and Colfax Townships. Time line could be up to 7 years. We have directed our project manager (Mitch Shapero) to contact them to confirm time lines and ask what resources they need to move more quickly. It is anticipated that when this initiative is complete, 95% of Benzie County will have access to broad band.

- **10/19 – Northern MI Community Action Agency**

- The agency is developing a "master lease program" to be entered into with landlords. This would have the agency be the responsible tenant and give them the ability to place homeless people in housing.
- Legislation in Lansing would help subsidize qualified individuals with their water bills. The legislation is referred to as "Water Affordability Legislation." The Village of Beulah recently released information regarding this to their residence.
- I was elected chair of the agency for the 2024 and 2025.

- **Other –**

- Stopped by the Frankfort Land Trust open house on October 11th. It was well attended.
- Participated in a housing meeting with Sleeping Bear Gateways Council. The majority of those in attendance were from Leelanau County. Many housing solutions were discussed. I will follow up with the organizers to determine what opportunities there are for Benzie County.
- Commissioner Nye and myself met with Nick Nissley (NMC President), Chris Bott (NMC Board Trustee) and Maggie Bacon to discuss a possible mileage to partially subsidize tuition for Benzie County residence at NMC. This meeting was at their request. You may remember that Maggie Bacon presented this subject to the BOC at an earlier meeting. There was no outcome and it was made clear that we do not speak for the BOC on this subject.



24 Oct 23 Commissioner Cunningham

13 Oct MAC Environmental Regulatory Zoom meeting.

17 Oct Frankfort City Council.

Crystal Lake Twp.

18 Oct Benzie Chamber

PBLH, gift shop profit margin 69% of close to \$200,000, a record year.

### **Community**

11 Oct 50 Grove Place ribbon cutting.

18 Oct MMP Zoom

19 Oct Coffee with residents.

20 Oct Platte Lake (PLIA) Zoom



Rhonda Nye  
District IV – Benzonia Township  
Commissioner Report  
October 10, 2023

October 10 – Village of Beulah

- Attempting to secure bids to remove spoils from Cold Creek, one received but very high.
- EGLE investigated complaint about riprap on the shore of Beulah Beach which was not in violation, while investigating EGLE representative noted large concrete mooring in the water that required permitting for use.
- Discussion regarding Title VI requirements and implementation.
- Two million dollar EGLE Grant Agreement approved. Grant requires no matching funds and can be used on the front end of the sewer project.

October 11 – Benzonia Township

- New playground equipment installed at Memorial Park.
- DNR will accept email comments until October 28<sup>th</sup> regarding consideration of no wake area on portions of Betsie River: [DNR-LED-RecSafety@mi.gov](mailto:DNR-LED-RecSafety@mi.gov).
- Committee looking into attorney options but continue to use Tim Figura.
- Approved application for unused liquor license.

October 12 – Centra Wellness Board

- Terms 'micro-city' and 'micro-populous' being used to describe Benzie County have been dismissed. These were terms taken from insurance jargon that should not have been applied.
- HAB Waiver Presentation – 5 million dollars of Medicaid received are HAB waivers. Services provided within this funding reviewed.
- Johnston shared that the goal of the mental health law enforcement officer is to reduce incarcerations and hospital admissions with officer training and day crisis services through Centra Wellness.

October 13 & 17 – Headlee Reset Ad Hoc Committee

- Discussions regarding Headlee reset v Headlee override, resolution of support, and separate millage bundling options.

October 16 – Building & Grounds Committee

- Elevator replacement required due to State code changes, options discussed.
- Quotes for building signs along US 31 and campus wayfinding signs reviewed.

October 18 – EDC

- Discussion regarding Community Coordinator position.
- Tim Maylone, Cherry Capital, gave update on Benzie Internet for All effort. Robin Grant project area was challenged and ultimately award was reduced from 10 million to 8 million as Weldon & Colfax Townships will be served by Acentek.

October 19 – Joint Court Committee

- Approved re-establishment of the Community Corrections Board. Board will support stronger pre-trial services such as risk assessments, pre-trial testing, substance abuse assessments and possibly a tether program.
- Community Corrections Board is established but has not been utilized since grant funding was lost in 2015.
- Approved Court adopting a Paid Time Off Policy to be included in the Court's Amended Personnel Policy.
- Update regarding Court and Governmental Center Security; Judge Thompson offered positive comments regarding changes that have been made.

October 23 – MAC Health & Human Services

- Presentation by Renee Beniak, Executive Director, Michigan County Medical Care Facilities Council & Don Haney, Legislative Consultant
  - Facilities in MI – 34 county owned, 450 privately owned.
  - Presented stats on reimbursement amounts which are still based on 2018 costs.
  - Discussed staffing/nursing shortages.
  - Presented stats supporting county owned facilities being high quality providers.

## Tammy Bowers

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**From:** Gary Sauer  
**Sent:** Friday, October 20, 2023 6:17 PM  
**To:** Tammy Bowers  
**Subject:** Commissioner Report district 7

10-12-2023 Road Commission

Thanks to Commissioner Jeannot for making this meeting for me.

10-16-2023 Building and Grounds

Discussed the replacement of the elevator at the government center. Due to new requirements our elevator will be out of compliance. Seeking the 3 bids required.

Looked at signage for the campus, new signs for out front and way fare signage to help the public navigate the campus.

10-16-2023 School and Youth Resource Advisory Committee Talked about drill schedules. Brought up to date on mapping for access to locations at both school campuses, also access to keys for first responders. Discussed possibility of using opioid dollars for education urging the schools to apply.

10-19-2023 Benzie County and Manistee County Joint Court Committee Discussed reestablishing the Community Corrections Board agreed by the committee to do so looking for grant money but not asked to pay more from the county's coffers, will be asked to appoint members by the full board. Approved the amended personnel policy, main change was PTO time, I believe was an excellent decision.

10-19-2023 Village of Elberta

Water project going well should be completed by early November. Paid Elmers and Fleis and Vandenbrink thru draws from the loan and grant dollars. Continue to have some employee issue but the council has a good handle on this, have to acknowledge the effort.

Gary Sauer  
Commissioner District 7  
Sent from my iPad