

THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 8, 2023

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, August 8, 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, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke

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

Minutes:

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the regular session minutes of July 11, 2023, as amended. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

9:03 a.m. Public Comment – None

FINANCE

Bills: Motion by Markey, seconded by Warsecke, to approve payment of the bills from July 7, 2023, through August 3, 2023, in the amount of \$985,680.70, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Nate Loop, Maples Director, stated that the Maples is operating at near full capacity. There has been a 25% reduction in contract staffing. Have been doing a lot of outings with the residence. They have 114 days cash on hand. There will be a Luau on August 18, 2023, which will be open to the public, along with a car show on September 9, 2023.

Doug Durand, Benzie Senior Resource Director, provided a written report and presented the Benzie Senior Resources 2024 Fiscal Year Draft Budget. This past Saturday was the Walk-a-thon.

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Management provided a written report.

9:30 a.m. Public Hearing: Regarding County creation for the PACE Program.

Todd Williams, President and General Counsel, was present to answer any questions.

9:31 a.m. Public Hearing Open.

Jeremy Jones, Lake Township, stated that he is an owner of a solar development company, and would like to have the PACE program in Benzie County. He is really interested in this program for a project they are looking at doing in Benzie County.

John Brinkinmulder, he is on the building and grounds committee at Michigan Shores, stated that they are exploring solar for their electricity. They are very interested in the program.

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Jim Dulzo stated that he was involved when the PACE Program was brought into other counties around Michigan. This program will help a business to move forward and urge the Board of Commissioners to pass this program. This is good for businesses, townships, and the county.
10:01 Public Hearing closed.

9:45 a.m. Frankfort Area Community Land Trust Presentation.

Anette Knowles and Jay White were present and gave an update on what is happening with the Frankfort Community Area Land Trust.

10:24 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. Reconvene

ACTION ITEMS

Advantage Benefits Group Renewal Presentation and consider approval of the 2023/2024 Benefits Renewal: Lauren Harris was present to answer any question. Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey, to approve the 2023/2024 Benefits Renewal with the recommendations as presented and authorize the County Administrator's Office to sign the benefits provider agreements. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to opt out of Public Act 152. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider approving Emergency Management 2024 Work Agreement: Rebecca Hubers was present to answer any questions. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to authorize the Chair of the Board of Commissioners and the Emergency Management Coordinator to sign on behalf of Benzie County the 2024 EMPG Work Agreement with the Michigan State Police – Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Budget Amendment Treasurer's Office – Library Penal Fund Interest: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Nye, to approve the 2022-23 budget amendment in the amount of \$500 recognizing the budget use of fund balance and disbursement of interest for the Library Fund.

Increase:

701-000-691.00	Budgeted Use of Fund Balance	\$500.00
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Increase:

721-000-957.00	Misc – Disburse Interest	\$500.00
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Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider waiving EMS bill and authorize the related policy and procedure.: Tom King was present to answer any questions. Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey, to waive the EMS bill, not to exceed \$1,500, due to financial hardship, and adopt the Benzie County EMS Financial Hardship Policy and Procedure as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider declaring an EMS snowmobile trailer surplus and authorize its sale: Tom King was present to answer any questions. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Cunningham, that a 2010 Van Kam snowmobile trailer be declared surplus and the proceeds from the MIBid Internet Auction system be

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deposited into the EMS ALS refunds and rebates. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider declaring a Sheriff's 2006 snowmobile surplus and authorize its sale.: Motion by Nye, seconded by Warsecke, that a 2006 Ski-Doo Bombardier Legend be declared surplus and authorized for sale on the MIBid Internet Auction system, with proceeds to be deposited into the equipment replacement fund. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Distribution of 23/24 Fiscal Year Draft Budget and consider setting the Public Hearing: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Cunningham that the Board of Commissioners schedule a public hearing regarding the fiscal year 2023/2024 budget on August 22, 2023. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider approving 2024 Secondary Road Patrol Agreement and grant application: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to approve the Secondary Road Patrol Agreement and Accident Prevention Program Grant Application as presented and authorize the Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Roelofs stated he attended the Domestic Violence Task Force meeting, and the Area Agency on Aging of Northern Michigan meeting. Benzie Central School vs Frankfort-Elberta Area School Salute to Services football game will be on September 8, 2023, at Benzie Central High School at 7:00 p.m.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report. In addition, under Economic Development report, there have been some concerns about people that are part of the consortium, regarding the broadband initiative, as to what their role is. There is a meeting being set up between Eclipse and Cherry Capital to sort things out among themselves. This is a closed meeting.

Comm Cunningham provided a written report.

Comm Nye provided a written report.

Comm Markey attended the Homestead Township meeting, Centra Wellness Network Board meeting, Dispatch Advisory Board meeting, LTP/LEPC meeting, Benzie Senior Resources meeting, and Centra Wellness Network Community Services Relations meeting.

Comm Warsecke provided a written report.

Comm Sauer provided a written report. In addition, he attended the Ironman meeting, Blaine Township, and Joyfield Township meeting.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Katie Zeits

Working on setting up a meeting with Scott Clark from Mercury Wireless. The new website is published, contact her office if you have any issues. Opioid RFP has been published and we are waiting for proposals to come in. Only one bid was received for the Point Betsie Shoreline

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Restoration Project. They are not moving forward with that project right now. They are hopeful to republish an RFP in 2024 for possible construction in 2025.

STUDY SESSION - None

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS -None

NEW BUSINESS -None

PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

- Crystal Lake Elevation
- Little Platte Lake Elevation
- Benzie Transportation Authority June 2023 Income Statement
- Betsie Valley Trail News Release
- Betsie Valley Trail July 5, 2023, minutes
- Sleeping Bear Gateway Council July 30, 2023, letter.
- Parks and Recreation Commission July 24, 2023. Action Items
- Benzie Leelanau Health Department June 28, 2023, minutes
- Letter from DHHS regarding Child Care Fund.
- Ontonagon County Resolution 2023-11 Sanitary Code

11:29 a.m. Public Comment

Rebecca Hubers spoke regarding the function of the Domestic Violence Taskforce and how it works.

Annie Browning, Village of Beulah, stated she is hearing great things. The Village of Beulah is working and planning for the future. Struggling to get an estimate for someone to clear the storm water pond.

11:31 a.m. Public Comment closed

Proceeded directly into the Study Session meeting.

Bob Roelofs, Chair

Tammy Bowers, Benzie County Clerk

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1. Approve the agenda as presented.
2. Approve the regular session minutes of July 11, 2023, as amended.
3. Approve payment of the bills from July 7, 2023, through August 3, 2023, in the amount of \$985,680.70, as presented.
4. Approve the 2023/2024 Benefits Renewal with the recommendations as presented and authorize the County Administrator's Office to sign the benefits provider agreements.
5. To opt out of Public Act 152.

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6. Authorize the Chair of the Board of Commissioners and the Emergency Management Coordinator to sign on behalf of Benzie County the 2024 EMPG Work Agreement with the Michigan State Police – Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division.
7. Approve the 2022-23 budget amendment in the amount of \$500 recognizing the budget use of fund balance and disbursement of interest for the Library Fund.
Increase:

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Increase:

721-000-957.00	Misc – Disburse Interest	\$500.00
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8. Waive the EMS bill, not to exceed \$1,500, due to financial hardship, and adopt the Benzie County EMS Financial Hardship Policy and Procedure as presented.
9. 2010 Van Kam snowmobile trailer be declared surplus and the proceeds from the MIBid Internet Auction system be deposited into the EMS ALS refunds and rebates.
10. 2006 Ski-Doo Bombardier Legend be declared surplus and authorized for sale on the MIBid Internet Auction system, with proceeds to be deposited into the equipment replacement fund.
11. Schedule a public hearing regarding the fiscal year 2023/2024 budget on August 22, 2023.
12. Approve the Secondary Road Patrol Agreement and Accident Prevention Program Grant Application as presented and authorize the Chair to sign.

Art Jeannot
Commissioner Report
August 8, 2023

- **7/11 – Platte Township**
 - Most of the people in attendance wanted to discuss the current staffing at the West Benzie Joint Planning Committee (WBJPC). There was opposition to the hiring of an assistant zoning administrator.
- **7/17 – Northern MI Counties Association**
 - We discussed dues for 2023-2024. The invoice will go directly to the Administrator's office.
 - MAC discussed legislative issues regarding state wide oversight on septic systems, revenue sharing, OMA potential rule changes and property tax exemptions for military veterans. All these issues are still unresolved.
 - An overview regarding the use of opioid dollars was presented. I believe Katie had already seen this presentation.
- **7/21 – Economic Development Corporation/Brownfield Authority**
 - We received an update on the True North development in Honor. They continue to work through health Department issues regarding ground water.
 - A potential brown field project was presented regarding housing in Thompsonville to be developed by AJ and Janelle Zirkel.
 - Terry Vandercook (NWNW CEO) gave us an update of his organization. There is an open board position for a member of the Benzie County business community.
 - Diane Tracy gave an update on the potential purchase of the Crystal Lake Elementary School by the Benzie Wellness and Aquatics Center.
 - A special meeting is being set to further discuss the future of the EDC/BRA.
- **8/3 – Lake Township**
 - The topic of a short-term rental ordinance attracted a large audience. No decision has been made to final a new ordinance.
 - Rebecca Hubers gave an update on the safety tower.
 - The Township is exploring the need to improve on the launch/land area for kayaks and canoes at Platte River Point. Due to high and low waters in recent years the site needs maintenance.
- **Other –**
 - July 18th through the 20th I attended the NMCAA State Conference at Crystal Mountain.
 - July 18th, I attended the City of Frankfort's regularly scheduled meeting to listen to Rebecca Hubers presentation regarding the public safety tower.
 - July 24th Benzie County Chamber Advocacy Council



8 Aug 23 Board of Commission

Commissioner Cunningham, District 3

kcunningham@benzieco.net

231.822.4067

Attended/Presented

- 18 July Point Betsie Light House, First Annual Movie Night, 150 attended.
- PBLH, 1 Aug letter from Richard Taylor/Shoreline Protection System Committee, only one bid came in for, various reasons were cited; COVID, contractors backlogged, issuance of permits, the PBLH Shoreline Protection System project. The SPSCCommittee recommended that RFP in early spring 2024, allowinf for most of the summer to secure the rest of the funding and initiate construction in the spring of 2025.
- Frankfort City Council and Crystal Lk Twp, Frankfort discussed change of emergency tower location, to be placed by the Fire Dept/80 feet tall. Fibre is needed for the tower, an additional fibre team will be scheduled in Aug(if all goes well), this will not compromise the counties commitment to provide for unserved/underserved residents. Affordable housing, two homes available for qualified buyers, price, \$205, estimated value \$250K.
- CLTwp verbally offered 100K of ARPA Funds to the tower installation and fibre.
- 21 July Attended EDC meeting, 4 Aug , a meeting set for Cherryland CC and Eclipse to define partnership for broadband/fibre.
- 24 July Benzie Chamber Advocacy and Awareness meeting. DTE said they broadening the energy portfolio to include renewables/alternatives as a goal as directed by the governor.
- Lisa Leedy, Lisa@bxtvc.com, an advocate for non-profits, can help with grants and more.
- 25 July BoC CANCELLED
- 26 July HSCB (Health Services Coalition Benzie) CANCELLED
- Community**
- 11 July Grow Benzie partnering with United Way to hire a 10 hour weekly Early Childhood Coordinator, contact Josh Stoltz, 231.882.951. I sent grant writer contact to Grow Benzie. Coordinator hired: Sue Campana.
- 19 July Business Accelerator meeting. Investigating available properties.
- Attended "Grow It Wild", presentation, Mill House, Benzonia.

Rhonda Nye
District IV – Benzonia Township
Commissioner Report
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July 12 – Benzonia Township

- Approved right-of-way agreement with Cherry Capital for broadband expansion.
- August 12 Clean Up Day hours changed from 7am-11am to 7am-10am.
- Board discussed desire to have Headlee addressed; the Township has rolled back from 1.2 mils to .7688 mils.
- New grant writer has submitted two grants to benefit fire department and is working on a third.

July 13 – Centra Wellness Board

- Northern Michigan Regional Entity report noted that a letter from the State expressed displeasure with the lack of Community Stabilization Buildings in Northern Michigan or in the UP. Response was if the State builds these units they will be used; until then our rural care method will be used.
- SUD Board update focused on the effort to educate members on the program funding process with an emphasis on making sure services aren't duplicated.
- Opioid dollars discussed, perhaps a program to make Vivitrol shots a condition of release from jail?

July 13 & 19 – Area 31 Sewer Feasibility Study

- Meeting held to review invoices paid and status of study.
- Wade Trim waiting to hear from BLUA with regard to accepting additional waste.
- Draft feasibility study to be provided 30 days after response from BLUA received.

July 18 – Village of Beulah

- Approved change from BCBS to Priority Health.
- Resolution 2023-003 approved to place a Headlee Override on the November ballot resetting to 12.5 mils. The increase revenue will be used to offset upgrades required by the sewer system ACO in conjunction with user fees.
- Noted that there are 9 items the ACO required to be completed 2023.
- Beulah Planning Commission created a Village Assessment Survey that was reviewed and edited and approved.

July 26 – Benzie Leelanau District Health Department

- Reported that, for the first time in over 30 years, the State will be in compliance with the 50/50 cost share as required by Public Health Code.
- The State budget passed on June 28th will increase funding for essential local health services by 25 million dollars (an increase from 40 million to 65 million).
- 40% of kindergarteners were screened for oral health.
- New RSV vaccine being offered for older adults.
- Overall environmental health revenues are up 4% due to new well/septic evaluation requirements in Leelanau County.

August 1 – Betsie River Zoning Board of Appeals

- A variance request to expand a legal non-conforming structure with a 651 addition that would result in a total 58% expansion since the date of non-conformance. The standard for expansion of this type is 50%.
- Variance granted with condition that water runoff be diverted away from the river with either gutters or a french drain.

August 2 – Land Bank

- Inventory reviewed
- September 5 court date to quiet title on a trailer in Thompsonville that the Land Bank intends to demo, VIN cannot be found.
- Update given on the three rounds of the Blight Elimination Grant
- Land Bank approved minimum bid to purchase tax foreclosed lots in Thompsonville.

August 7 – Village of Benzonia

- Report will be given at August 8 BOC Meeting.

Tammy Bowers

From: Evan Warsecke
Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2023 6:09 PM
To: Tammy Bowers
Subject: District 6 report - E. Warsecke

Benzie Bus - July 18 -

- On July 14th one of the busses was involved in a crash. No serious injuries but the bus is most likely totaled. They are currently looking for a used bus to replace it.
- 2024 preliminary budget approved.
- ytd ridership is up 23% from 56,309 to 73,227

Solid Waste / recycling - July 19

- Final tire collection is Aug 12th at the road commission.
- Continued discussion on the materials management plan update.

Parks & Rec - July 24th -

- Mich Trust Fund Grant awarded in the amount of \$300,000 the GT Conservancy is matching.
- A resolution of support was presented and voted for a county parks director.
- RFP went out for final engineering and planning documents for the Crystal Lake Access Site.

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Tammy Bowers

From: Gary Sauer
Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2023 9:10 PM
To: Tammy Bowers
Subject: Commissioner report District 7

7-13 & 7-27-2023 Road commission

They did not receive the brown field grant. They are proceeding with asbestos removal. Continue to search for new manager so far 3 resumes hoping for more qualified candidates. Discussed Henry Road, concern over the renaming to Husky Trail without impute from the Road Commission. MDOT giving some roads back to villages without MTF funds to maintain. Have a fix for Brownell Road hill slide the residents have agreed to the fix.

7-23-2023 Village of Elberta

Clerck-Treasurer will be leaving August 8. They have a couple of people to interview next week. Received the first draw on the USDA loan-grant.

7-25-2023 Village of Beulah EGLE grant

Storm water runoff issues. EGLE had 3 representatives present to discuss possibilities also were representatives from DNR, BVTMC, Village of Beulah, Conservation District, and residents. Some recommendations were discussed and they need to explore. May have to consider Village of Benzonia to add to the mix, EGLE was very accommodating to extend time on grant.

7-26-2023 Health Department

State wide septic code continues waiting on decisions from the state legislature. RSV vaccine will probably be available this fall. Smoke still a concern from Canada's fires.

8-1-2023 BVTMC

Approved Northern Mitten event on September 23-2023. Discussed MUNGA event for 9-9 & 9-10 2023 waiting for additional information. Discussed an event for next year June 29 2024, as many as 600 participants possible, from Mesick to Frankfort. This is becoming very popular and expanding our community, have some more to work out. Approved hiring AJ's Excavating to put in drain on trail hopefully this fall.

Will report on the other meeting's if needed.

Gary Sauer

Sent from my iPad