

**THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**April 28, 2020**

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 via teleconferencing in the Frank F. Walterhouse Board Room, 448 Court Place, Government Center, Beulah, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bob Roelofs at 9:00 a.m.

Present were: Commissioners Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Taylor  
Via Teleconference: Commissioners Farrell, Jeannot and Warsecke

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

**Agenda:**

Motion by Taylor, seconded by Nye, to approve the agenda as amended, adding Lisa Peacock following Public Input; 9:45 John Axe and 10:00 Rebecca Hubers. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

**Minutes:**

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Taylor, to approve the regular session minutes of April 14, 2020 as corrected on page 5 under Comm Sauer's report. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Taylor, seconded by Sauer, to approve the closed session minutes of April 14, 2020 as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Taylor Nays: None Abstain: Farrell, Jeannot and Warsecke Motion carried.

9:07 a.m. Public Input – None

Lisa Peacock, Health Officer with the Benzie Leelanau District Health Dept gave an update to the board and public regarding COVID-19. Emergency Order 2020-3 for Control of Epidemic/Pandemic is attached to these minutes.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Management, stated that testing has begun locally, POMH and at the health 10767 Traverse Hwy clinic near Greilickville – you need an appointment and your health care needs to fax the order to them. Insurance providers are waiving costs of the tests; be sure to check for dates and times that the services are available.

Tom King, EMS, reported that they are doing well, call volume is down a little; supplies are good – EOC has been helping out with those. Last year a head gasket blew in one of the ambulances; now the engine misfires; have received three bids; will have Fox Ford in Traverse City perform the work, their bid included the replacement of exhaust manifolds.

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Roelofs, to authorize EMS to proceed with repairs to Alpha 32 with a cost not to exceed \$7,000.00. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

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Kyle Rosa, Undersheriff, reported their call volume is down, however the seriousness of the call has increased with more domestic violence and assault and violence with firearms. Staff has remained healthy and everyone is pulling together; they are bending over backwards to help out.

Comm Sauer stated that on April 18 he had a grass fire at his house and Deputy Weaver was there and did a great job – he is a good worker. Thank you to him.

Kyle Maurer, ACO, stated that their call volume is low – they have 3 dogs and 5 cats at the shelter right now.

Susan Boyd, Finance Manager, reported that the budget cycle will be starting soon, so watch for her emails.

Doug Durand, Benzie Senior Resources, reported that with the partial lifting of the Governor's Executive Orders, they will be starting their lawn chore program on May 12; the only services they are providing right now are home delivered meals, curbside Gathering Place pick-up and in-home care services.

Jesse Zylstra, Recycling Coordinator, presented a written update.

9:45 a.m. John Axe, Bond Counsel, spoke regarding the refunding of the Maple's bond that were issued in 2013; the net savings could be approximately \$510,000 after all costs of issuance and the payoff of the existing bond. This will get us in position to get ready to go in September. This action today would just be authorization to sell. This will be refunded by the County not the Building Authority.

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Sauer, to adopt resolution 2020-012 authorizing the sale of existing Maple's Bond, not to exceed \$5,000,000. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

9:52 a.m. Break

10:01 a.m. Reconvene

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Manager, Shoreline Erosion

Dennis Wiand, ZeroGravity Aerial, LLC

Presentation was made regarding the erosion that has impacted the shores both inland and along Lake Michigan; the consequences of the high-water levels include shoreline erosion, road damage, flooding of boat launches and an increase in wetlands. We have owners that are losing property.

Mr. Wiand presented a YouTube video of his drone coverage along the shore of Lake Michigan.

The video may be watched at: [https://youtu.be/B4C\\_FkwoAek](https://youtu.be/B4C_FkwoAek)

Tom Longanbach, Equalization Director, presented the L-4024 Equalization Report for 2020.

Motion by Nye, seconded by Taylor, adopt the L-4024 Equalization Report as presented, authorizing the Chair and County Clerk to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

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### ACTION ITEMS

Sheriff Patrol Agreement: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Farrell, to approve the Sheriff Patrol Agreement with Benzie County Sheriff and Crystal Beach Cottager's Association as presented authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

MGT: Motion by Farrell, seconded by Nye, to approve the Consulting Services Contract Extension between Benzie County and MGT of America Consulting, LLC for two (2) years 2019-2020 as presented, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

MERS: Motion by Taylor, seconded by Farrell, to adopt the Employer Resolution Establishing Uniform Transfer Provision for the Municipal Employees Retirement System, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Farrell, seconded by Taylor, to adopt the MERS Defined Contribution Plan Adoption Agreement for units #14 and #21 as presented, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

2020-010 COA Millage: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Nye, to adopt resolution 2020-010 authorizing Millage Election for the Commission on Aging Millage Renewal and Restoration Proposal for five (5) years, 2020-2024, as presented, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

2020-011 Jail Millage: Motion by Taylor, seconded by Jeannot, to adopt resolution 2020-011 authorizing Millage Election for the Benzie County Jail Operations Millage Renewal and Restoration Proposal for three (3) years, 2021-2023, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: Farrell (phone) Motion carried.

MERS Purchase Time: Motion by Nye, seconded by Jeannot, to authorize Mitchell D. Deisch to purchase 1 year and 1 month of other governmental service credits for \$17,502 or the actual cost established by MERS and to authorize the Chair to sign the application for additional service credit purchase. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

### COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Comm Roelofs reported that he has not attended and any meetings other than conference call meetings by phone; the grant for Benzie County Veterans Affairs in the amount of \$50,000 has been received and we are moving forward to get some of those dedicated activities in place; they are still waiting to decide on the ~~Veterans Day Memorial service~~ Memorial Day Veterans service.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report and has been participating with Meals on Wheels program with the Senior Services.

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Comm Farrell provided a written report and spoke regarding the Health Department meeting; attended the virtual MAC Keynote Speaker webinar – grateful for the county government partnership; City of Frankfort cancelled their meeting; Health Dept teleconference on April 22 where it was stated that 30-40% of the tests for COVID-19 are false negative results.

Comm Nye provided a written report and attended a LEPC meeting via phone – Rebecca will take care of some reporting from 2019 that the state has not received; attended the Centra Wellness Planning & Finance meeting – it was pretty routine; she has been helping to pack lunches at the Benzie Central High School – they pack between 2,700 – 4,000 lunches per day and need more help in packing.

Comm Taylor reported that the Benzie Senior Resources will be refinancing the loan for the Gathering Place for a lower rate; they received a \$5,000 donation from the Ted Bruce Foundation; they have laid off 3 kitchen assistants. Attended the Local Planning meeting where Chief Lozowski talked about whether or not to have the July 4 fireworks in Frankfort and they are trying to figure out how to work the farmers market. She attended the Road Commission meeting and Homestead Road construction has began and Ole White Drive in Almira Township will begin this week. She has received a call from a very upset taxpayer about the birthday parade that happened off of Marshall Road and wanted to know who is paying for that; working with the Prosecuting Attorney regarding the Snyder property and would need to know that the township and county are on board with this and could get it to be declared a nuisance to stop the cycle of issues at site.

Comm Warsecke says thank you to Bob and Mitch for keeping him informed for the past few weeks; May 15 Inland Township will be holding their Propane Fill-up Sale from 11-7 pm at Beechraft Sawmill and blood drive in honor of Dan Beechraft from 1 – 5 p.m. on the same date. Colfax Township had one meeting.

Comm Sauer reported that he has attended some of the MAC podcasts; lake level is 12 inches higher in March 2020 than in 2019. Attended the School Safety Meeting and reported that there is just too much uncertainty – they do have permission to start school early. Health Department food licensing is due April 30 and they will waive late fees. Road Commission is starting local projects. Maples – Scott Harrison reported that BACN is still giving out food – by appointment. Maples employee morale is down. DHHS is laying off 201 employees state-wide but none in Benzie County.

12:00 p.m. Break

12:07 p.m. Reconvene

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Mitch Deisch**

Mr. Deisch reported that County Commissioner Art Jeannot, County Clerk Dawn Olney and himself have reviewed the 8 Attorney RFP/RFQ and have scored and chosen 4 firms to schedule interviews before this board -- Figura Law; Cummings, McClorey, Davis and Acho; Cohl, Stoker and Toskey; Mika Meyers.

## **FINANCE**

Bills: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Sauer, to approve payment of the bills from April 10, 2020 to April 27, 2020, in the amount of \$569,096.64, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.



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Michelle Thompson, County Treasurer, also reported that the tax collection report will be coming, since she has deemed that to be a non-essential item for now; Foreclosure numbers are at 25 parcels left to pay for the 2017 taxes with due date extended to May 29, 2020 at 5:00 pm; she has no authority to waive late fees on dog licenses.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – None**

### **COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

BTA: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Nye, to reappoint Anne Noah to the Benzie Transportation Authority for a 3-year term to expire on April 30, 2023. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: Jeannot (phone) and Sauer Motion carried.

Interview will be scheduled for Mark Willette-Green for the BTA as well. Commissioners Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke together with Mr. Deisch will conduct the interview via teleconference.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None**

### **NEW BUSINESS – COVID-19**

2020-013: Motion by Farrell, seconded by Jeannot, to adopt resolution 2020-013 to extend 2020-009 through Friday, May 15, 2020. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer, Taylor and Warsecke (phone) Nays: None Motion carried.

Mr. Deisch reported that Rick Morris is working on the three main transaction windows with guards; the estimate is \$300.00 for each 4-foot section – staff asks for entire length of the counter; we also need to consider Equalization, Building Department and probably Animal Control. Each employee is doing a self-screening each day that they come to work. May 12 we will be discussing the re-engagement strategy, also about some type of video meetings.

Hazard Pay Request: Discussions held regarding the request for hazard pay to first responders – EMS, Corrections, Road Patrol, 911 Dispatchers.

Comm Taylor stated that the 80 hours additional sick time was taken care of with the policy adopted by the board at the last meeting.

Chair Roelofs stated that we don't know what you or we are doing – we received a letter from Paul Postal and we thought part of that was taken care of.

Deputy Hubers stated that that portion could be taken out if it is taken care of.

Maridee Cutler stated that the board adopted the Federal Plan as well, which takes care if a family member should become sick as well.

Chair Roelofs – we need to get this on the next meetings agenda to have on paper our side and your side so we all know what questions we are answer and the safety of everyone's family as well; retro to March 31.

Mr. Deisch stated that it would address the 80 hours only.

Comm Warsecke would like it on the next agenda as a proposed resolution.

Mr. Deisch will prepare a memo for the next meeting.

Comm Taylor stated that it should be essential workers, not just hazard pay.

Under Sheriff Rosa said don't lose sight of it.

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Parties are to meet and get questions written down and to all BOC members prior to the May 12, 2020 Board meeting.

### PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

1. Benzie Transportation Authority February and March 2020 financial statements received.
2. Census information received from Kris Steinberg.
3. Delta County resolution regarding Great Lakes Shoreline being Declared a Disaster received.

1:07 p.m. Public Input

James Banasiak (phone) spoke regarding the hazard pay; we feel we have been put in a vulnerable spot – please consider this.

1:39 p.m. Public Input Closed

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Roelofs, to adjourn at 1:40 p.m. Roll call. Ayes: Farrell (phone), Jeannot (phone), Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Taylor Nays: None Exc: Warsecke Motion carried.

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Bob Roelofs, Chair

Dawn Olney, Benzie County Clerk

### INDEX

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2. Approved the regular session minutes of April 14, 2020 as corrected on page 5 under Comm Sauer's report.
3. Approved the closed session minutes of April 14, 2020 as presented.
4. Authorized EMS to proceed with repairs to Alpha 32 with a cost not to exceed \$7,000.00.
5. Adopted resolution 2020-012 authorizing the sale of existing Maple's Bond, not to exceed \$5,000,000.
6. Adopted the L-4024 Equalization Report as presented, authorizing the Chair and County Clerk to sign.
7. Approved the Sheriff Patrol Agreement with Benzie County Sheriff and Crystal Beach Cottager's Association as presented authorizing the chair to sign.
8. Approved the Consulting Services Contract Extension between Benzie County and MGT of America Consulting, LLC for two (2) years 2019-2020 as presented, authorizing the chair to sign.
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11. Adopted resolution 2020-010 authorizing Millage Election for the Commission on Aging Millage Renewal and Restoration Proposal for five (5) years, 2020-2024, as presented, authorizing the chair to sign.
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13. Authorized Mitchell D. Deisch to purchase 1 year and 1 month of other governmental service credits for \$17,502 or the actual cost established by MERS and to authorize the Chair to sign the application for additional service credit purchase.
14. Approved payment of the bills from April 10, 2020 to April 27, 2020, in the amount of \$569,096.64, as presented.
15. Reappointed Anne Noah to the Benzie Transportation Authority for a 3-year term to expire on April 30, 2023.
16. Adopted resolution 2020-013 to extend 2020-009 through Friday, May 15, 2020.

## Public Health Statement

Lisa Peacock

4/27/2020

This week we continue to see progress in our fight against COVID-19 in Michigan. We have traveled a bumpy road together over the past few weeks and I know that it hasn't been easy for anyone. Not for families who have been struggling with multiple stressors including job losses and day care crises, not for teachers educating children online, not for seniors who are lonely and isolated at home, and especially not for anyone who has lost someone they love without the of sharing last moments in person or with the comfort of friends and family at a funeral. It also hasn't been easy for employers or business owners, exhausted public servants including healthcare workers, first responders, public officials or any critical infrastructure workers.

However, we are getting there – as the Governor pointed out today, we are watching the statewide counts of new cases and deaths slowly decline. It was striking to see the graph showing the initial projections from just a few weeks ago which anticipated that we would have 22,000 people needing a hospital bed on this very day and instead there are just a little over 3,000. I will never forget those frightening early days and the estimations of hospital needs greater than the supply of beds, equipment, and staff. I won't forget the local discussions as we anxiously watched the crisis unfold in the metro Detroit area, knowing that it would slowly make its way up north. Where we are compared to where we expected to be is surely reason to be optimistic – we all know that suffering is somewhat easier when there is a purpose – these lives saved ARE the purpose.

The anxiety has begun to lessen and we are looking forward with cautious optimism. While it is important to continue to be diligent with social distancing there are also important plans to be made. We should look forward to the future and to resuming the activities we love so much. However, we must be also be cautious and patient. The data being compiled and analyzed by our Chief Medical Executive, Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, and the researchers who have been working on predictive modeling is being paired with the innovative and collaborative plan for economic re-engagement being developed by the Michigan Economic Recovery Council, a multi-sector group formed with the purpose of advising the Governor through full recovery.

The MERC plan includes consideration of different geographic regions based upon healthcare capacity and infrastructure as well as different types of workplaces that have varying degrees of risk of transmission. Businesses will be assigned a risk score based upon factors such as worker interaction, workplace characteristics, and the type of work done. As the pandemic risk decreases in these regions, business sectors will re-engage beginning with the lowest risk businesses while slowing phasing in those with higher risk profiles as the pandemic phase moves through stabilization and recovery. Several workplace “best practices” were identified that could help to decrease that risk score and create a safer workplace. Those best practices are grouped into categories such as:

- Access control (employee screening, intake procedures, delivery guidelines)
- Social distancing (remote work, restrictions on common areas, meeting and travel restrictions)
- Sanitation/hygiene (cleaning and disinfection, handwashing, ventilation)
- Personal Protective Equipment (cloth face masks, gloves, face shields, gowns)



- Contact tracing/isolation measures (investigation, notification, quarantine, return to work, and shutdown procedures)

It is clear that as expected, the re-engagement plan will happen in phases based on level of pandemic risk which will continue to be carefully monitored to ensure that we don't take steps backward. The three key areas that will continue to be monitored include:

1. Continued success in flattening the curve (decreasing cases, decreasing positivity rate, decreasing deaths)
2. Ability of the healthcare system to safely diagnose and treat patients
3. Ability of the public health system to track disease and contacts and properly isolate and quarantine.

The expanded testing we continue to work on is a key element in allowing us to monitor these areas. This data will allow us to understand when we have a sustained decrease in the number of cases as well as help us to quickly identify positive cases in the future so that continued risk of transmission can be minimized. We don't have all of the answers yet, including the value of testing asymptomatic people and how to fully alleviate the supply chain constraints that have been characteristic of this crisis, However, every day we make progress and learn more and we know that these and other challenges will continue to be overcome.

I feel confident that this re-engagement plan will be implemented with great care in northern Michigan as so many of our employers and businesses have already been taking these steps with diligence. We have had local orders in place for several weeks requiring screening and social distancing measures. The level of compliance with these orders has been extremely encouraging. I know that we have a firm foundation and that we will work together to bring back the vibrant communities we all know and love. We want our business community to know that we are here to help them move through these stages in partnership to assure that they are able to operate with as little risk as possible.

We are close. The stress is great but we will get there. I know it is difficult but I also know that we are strong together. With patience, resolve, and determination, we will overcome this pandemic.

**Art Jeannot**  
**Commissioner Report**  
**April 28, 2020**

- Participated in 3 meetings on behalf of the county since April 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **4/15** Building Authority – Generator project is on hold until the outside contractors can get access to the building.
- **4/16** Northern MI Community Action Agency –
  - Home delivered meals (Meals on Wheels) has seen an increase in numbers in the region since the beginning of the Governor's executive order.
  - Agency has laid off 2 staff.
  - Finding housing for people in need has become a bigger challenge.
- **Other –**
  - As most citizens, I have participated in several conference calls regarding the Governor's executive orders and updates on COVID-19.
  - I have stayed in contact with many of my assigned committees and agencies by phone. The purpose is to share information regarding the current situation (COVID-19) and determine if the BOC needs to act on any issues on the group's behalf.
  - 4/27 – working with Mitch and Dawn on response to the RFP/RFQ for county's general legal counsel.

Commissioner's Report to BOC  
April 28, 2020  
Linda Farrell  
District #3

April 15 – BLDHD weekly update

April – 16 – MAC Virtual Conference Keynote Address with Chief Justice McCormack who spoke on Criminal Justice Reform in Michigan, and Michigan being a leader. 3 task forces from a wide range of stakeholders: Arrest; Pre-trial; and Sentencing and Parole. She is grateful for the County Government partnership. There has been a recommendation from the task forces to disallow suspension of Driver's License for failure to pay unrelated fees.

April 16 – MAC virtual Conference Session - Extraordinary Governance; Session meant for in person small group work, so not as effective as it would have been. Main take-away: Boards should engage in Development Training; The most important thing is to pick a systematic approach, get started, and stick to it.

April 21 – City of Frankfort Council Meeting was cancelled due to the shutdown of City Hall for quarantine until next Monday.

April 22 – BLDHD Board of Health Meeting

- BLDHD is training staff and volunteers for contact tracing should the need ramp up; in good shape
- Testing availability is up – Drive thru testing site on M-72
- Dr. Barbara Conley says we still have a 30-40% false negative with our tests
- People who have had COVID-19 can register to donate plasma to help in the development antibody testing
- Dr. Josh Myerson, our Medical Director, says it important to know that any potential antibody tests are
  - 1.) Reliable – do they produce, and what is the percentage of false negatives?
  - 2.) Sensitive – do they recognize active antibodies?
  - 3.) Specific – are the antibodies COVID- 19 and not some other virus antibodies

At this point there are 70 antibody tests for sale in the US. Only 1 has FDA approval

April 23 – Airport Authority via ZOOM – There is a new member from Frankfort: Eric Perkul. The Airport Authority is eligible to receive CARES Act monies up to \$20,000. There was a discussion about what the funds will be used for. There was continuing discussion about progress on acquiring 2 pieces of adjoining property, which will lead to the obtaining full (not provisional) license.

Rhonda Nye  
District IV – Benzonia Township  
Commissioner Report  
April 14, 2020

\*\*\*all meetings attended via tele-conference

March 19 and 31 - Centra Wellness Executive Committee:

30 Centra Wellness employees have been laid off as a result of the Governor's Orders regarding non-essential workers. Centra Wellness is still open for crisis, Assertive Community Treatment Team, Homebased services, and any service requiring face to face contact; all other services are via telephone or video and clients seem to prefer this new arrangement as attendance is up. Full Board April Meeting Cancelled.

April 2 – Stakeholder Meeting Regarding the Carry-In Boat Launch at the Outlet  
SRP Design submitted preliminary design options for consideration.

April 6 – Village of Benzonia:

Action items included the approval of two loan resolutions, a bond ordinance, and closing documents associated with the USDA Water Project. USDA Loan scheduled to close April 30<sup>th</sup>.

April 7 – Benzie Bus (attended on behalf of Commissioner Warsecke):

Ad Hoc Succession Planning - decided not to proceed with interview process and selection of a new Executive Director. Rather, letter of intent to not renew Bill Kennis's contract was rescinded and a new letter will be drafted with the intent of allowing his existing contract to evergreen.

Essential Worker Compensation – Board approved an increase of hourly worker wages \$4.00 per hour for hours worked and a \$200.00 per week increase of management pay. These increases are retroactive to when the 'stay at home' was ordered on March 24 and will end when management and the Board feel it is prudent.

April 13 – MDOT Preconstruction Meeting

Tree cutting portion of project complete – 70 stumps left to be removed. Project will resume on April 20.