

THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 9, 2021

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 in the Frank Waltherhouse Board Room, 448 Court Place, Government Center, Beulah, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bob Roelofs.

Present were: Commissioners Jeannot, Markey, Miller, 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 Markey, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Minutes:

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Nye, to approve the regular session minutes of February 23, 2021 as presented. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Markey, seconded by Sauer, to approve the special session minutes of February 26, 2021 as presented. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Nye, seconded by Miller, to approve the special session minutes of March 1, 2021 as presented. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

9:03 a.m. Public Input

Megan Garza, Frankfort, spoke regarding the Maples and the Strategic Plan.

9:08 a.m. Public Input Closed

Chairman Roelofs reads a statement regarding the Strategic Plan:

For the past 5 years the Board of Commissioners have been annually reviewing and updating the County Strategic Plan. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the board did not update the strategic plan in 2020.

It is a primary obligation of the Commissioners to look toward the future. The strategic planning process and plan are how the Commission identifies emerging opportunities and threats against the County. Addressing both opportunities and threats are identified in the Areas of Focus and Goals within the Strategic Plan.

Included in the “draft” 2021 strategic plan update is the goal (action item), “Exploration of all options related to the Maples.”

No long-term decision on the Maples has been made, rather the strategic plan goal is “Explore all option related to the Maples”, which means better understanding the facility and educating the County as to what legal options may or may not be available. County residents currently contribute approximately 1 mill toward the Maples.

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Simply put, the County is doing their due diligence.

PUBLIC HEARING – CDBG LOAN FOR ECLIPSE COMMUNICATIONS

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to open the Public Hearing for Venture North CDBG Loan for Eclipse Communications. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Laura Galbraith, President of Venture North, gave an overview of Venture North and the EDC funds available to businesses; Eclipse is seeking a loan for \$70,000 to be used to purchase equipment and hire two full-time equivalent positions over the course of two years, of which at least 51% of these will be available to low- to moderate-income individuals.

No public comments made.

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey, to close the public hearing. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Markey, to approve resolution 2021-009 authorizing the CDBG Loan Fund Application of Eclipse Communications LLC as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

FINANCE

Bills: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Miller, to approve payment of the bills from February 24, 2021 thru March 9, 2021 in the amount of \$310,245.92, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Michelle Thompson, County Treasurer, also reported to the board that there are 34 parcels remaining in the foreclosure process.

Comm Sauer inquired about the recreational marijuana funds received. Ms. Thompson stated that \$84,000 was received which is \$28,000 per dispensary; these were from taxes and fees.

Comm Jeannot inquired of Jason Barnard, Benzonia Twp Supervisor, if he knew the restrictions on the use of the funds – he stated that as far as he knows, these funds are not restricted to specific use and can be used as you see fit.

Ms. Thompson will research further and let the board know.

ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Kathy Dube, Administrator of the Maples, commented on the privatization of the Maples and gave the board an update; the facility has 78 beds for skilled care and rehab; they are at 79% occupancy at this time; 99% of the residents have been vaccinated and 63% of staff have been vaccinated; the Maples employs 140 full- and part-time employees with an annual payroll of \$5 million. The Maples have been here for 57 years; it is a shining gem in the community.

Comm Sauer thanks Ms. Dube for this update and asks that this board get quarterly updates from Ms. Dube – she agrees.

Comm Warsecke asks if Benzie County residents get priority treatment for admittance; Ms. Dube stated that they cannot discriminate, but she did indicate that if they have one bed left open and a Benzie County resident and a non-county resident needing to come in at the same time, they do try and give preference to the Benzie County resident.

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Lt. Dan Smith, Jail Administrator, requests that a County Commission member be appointed to sit on a committee to approve an RFP for Inmate Phone System – Comm Warsecke appointed to this committee.

Kyle Maurer, ACO, provided his Annual Report provided to the State of Michigan, together with his monthly report.

Comm Nye inquired if the horses have been adopted: he has a verbal request to adopt for one of the horses at this time; a couple of other people are interested in the other horse and he is checking on them at this time.

Rebecca Hubers, Central Dispatch and Emergency Management Director, provided February 2021 update for 911.

ACTION ITEMS

Consulting Agreement with Hiring Solutions LLC: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey, to approve the Consultant Service Agreement with Hiring Solution LLC, with a not to exceed amount of \$16,300 as presented, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Roelofs reported that in addition to the meetings that you all attended, he participated in the CDBG phone conference regarding Eclipse loan; Veterans Affairs – there will be some type of celebration on Memorial Day at 1:00 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial; Rolling Thunder will be holding their memorial ride on July 10 and would like to use the Veterans Memorial at that time.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report (attached) and added that Almira Township is moving forward with one candidate for Fire Chief.

Comm Miller reported that he attended the Human Service Collaborative meeting and talked about a Strategic Plan for Grow Benzie. Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse have concerns about the Ironman and will not be open during the time of that event; they want to open for public tours this year but have concerns and are continuing to look for funds to fix the breakwall. Airport Authority – there are six trees in the flight path which keeps them in non-compliance; they will be changing out the electric meters as a cost savings measure. Frankfort Schools Board meeting they talked about a student-inspired food pantry and how well it is doing; the school has property on M-115 and are having trees cut and will receive \$236,000 for that; they talked about a bond proposal – November 2021 or April 2022.

Comm Nye attended Centra Wellness Planning & Finance and Executive Board meetings and the 928 which has been talked about regarding local funds is getting attention. Land Bank Authority – reviewed the property inventory list and the Thompsonville property eviction has been completed. Village of Beulah – no Easter Egg hunt this year; Music in the Park will happen; adopted a new Sewer Ordinance and an Amended Water Ordinance; still working on the Short-Term Rental Ordinance; settling basin dredging bid was accepted from Arcadia Marine. Village of Benzonia is looking the large DTE box location may be moved; they are pursuing with blight issues in court.

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Comm Markey attended the Northern Michigan Regional Entity SUD committee for orientation. Local Planning Team (LPT) and spoke that they voted to allow the RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) to move forward with a 2% grant application; Ironman 2021 still working on negotiations with the townships; March 16 we will participate in a Rising Waters Northern Exposure statewide exercise. Homestead Township approved a resolution regarding the receiving of protests to Board of Review in writing; approved Trust Fund grant application; approved the 2021-2022 budget. Village of Honor still moving forward with the Home Stretch project.

Comm Warsecke reported that Inland township moved their meeting, so he was not able to attend; the Benzie Schools is still virtual so did not attend; Colfax Township meets tomorrow.

Comm Sauer attended the Road Commission where they talked about Henry Road and they are continuing with tree cutting; the frost laws are in place now. Maples – DHHS employees are still working from home until May; they are allowing visitation of two people per resident; COVID update – the health department has received 300 Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Joyfield and Blaine townships have adopted their budgets; Blaine has adopted a Short-Term Rental policy; Blaine has rejected the Ironman in their township. Betsie Valley Trail will hold bid opening on March 11, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. Village of Thompsonville met in person – they are still talking about Eclipse on the tower; they are doing an RFP for water wells/pipes/lead/copper issues; they passed their budget.

10:07 a.m. Don Smeltzer, Resolution: United Against Insurrection

Mr. Smeltzer, Mark Willette-Green and Marcia Curran all spoke regarding this matter. Mr. Smeltzer urged that board to approve the resolution as presented. No motion made.

10:24 a.m. Closed Session

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to enter closed session as authorized under MCL 15.268(c) of the Open Meetings Act for strategy regarding negotiation of collective bargaining agreement, with Attorney Matt Nordfjord. Closed session to include County Administrator Mitch Deisch and County Clerk Dawn Olney. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

11:01 a.m. Re-enter Open Session

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Mitch Deisch

Provided a written report and also stated that MAC will be holding their conference virtually on April 28 and 29; will be attending a MAC meeting with the other County Administrator's regarding the Federal COVID Subsidy that the counties will be receiving; spoke about the proposed County Administrator's job description.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Comm Jeannot removes item #2.

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to approve items 1, 3, 4 of the February 23, 2021

Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

#2: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Nye, to change the Animal Control Officer to salary and increase salary to \$41,343 (which is wage plus current overtime) and increase by 10% (with no future

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overtime), beginning first pay period after March 9, 2021. Roll call. Ayes: Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Warsecke Nays: Jeannot and Sauer Motion carried.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Centra Wellness: Motion by Sauer, seconded by Nye, to reappoint Donald Tanner and Mary O'Connor to the Manistee Benzie Centra Wellness Board for a 3-year term expiring on March 31, 2024. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Comm Sauer commented that we need to fix the carpet in the entry way of this building; without the COTW being held today, we should talk about this; we need some bids. This was on the capital improvement list.

County Administrator will speak with Rick Morris about getting bids.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

- Parks & Recreation minutes of January 25, 2021 received.
- Otsego County resolution regarding Pandemic received.
- Berrien County resolution regarding COVID 19 mitigation received.
- Livingston County resolution regarding uniform distribution to Michigan's most medically vulnerable population received.
- Iron County resolution regarding Waiving Fees for Licenses/Permits for Small Businesses Servicing the Public received.
- Crawford County resolution regarding Supporting Local Businesses received.

11:23 a.m. Public Input

Rev. Steven B. Thompson, Barb Skurdall, Sue Jennings, Berta Meserve and Barry Hahn all spoke regarding the United Against Insurrection resolution. Mr. Hahn also commented on the professionalism of the board.

11:31 a.m. Public Input Closed

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Miller, to adjourn at 11:33 a.m. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Bob Roelofs, Chair

Dawn Olney, Benzie County Clerk

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1. Approved the agenda as presented.
2. Approved the regular session minutes of February 23, 2021 as presented.
3. Approved the special session minutes of February 26, 2021 as presented.
4. Approved the special session minutes of March 1, 2021 as presented.

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5. Public hearing held for CDBG Loan for Eclipse Communications.
6. Approved resolution 2021-009 authorizing the CDBG Loan Fund Application of Eclipse Communications LLC as presented.
7. Approved payment of the bills in the amount of \$310,245.92, as presented.
8. ion carried.
9. Approved the Consultant Service Agreement with Hiring Solution LLC, with a not to exceed amount of \$16,300 as presented, authorizing the chair to sign.
10. Entered closed session as authorized under MCL 15.268(c) of the Open Meetings Act.
11. Approved items 1, 3, 4 of the February 23, 2021 Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented.
12. Approved #2 from the Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented: to change the Animal Control Officer to salary and increase salary to \$41,343 (which is wage plus current overtime) and increase by 10% (with no future overtime), beginning first pay period after March 9, 2021.
13. Reappointed Donald Tanner and Mary O'Connor to the Manistee Benzie Centra Wellness Board for a 3-year term expiring on March 31, 2024.

Art Jeannot
Commissioner Report
March 9, 2021

- Participated in 5 meetings on behalf of the County since our February 23rd meeting.
- **3/3 Benzie County Chamber** – Organization will focus their brand to business advocacy versus information center. Rick Coates (Executive Director) last day was March 5th.
- **3/3 Benzie County Chamber Special Meeting** – I was asked to participate in a discussion regarding the disposition of the chamber building. Because of revenue cuts that occurred when the Convention and Visitors Bureau merged with the Travers City Tourism Bureau, the chamber needs to look at options to either find a way to cash flow the operation or consider selling the building. Discussions will continue.
- **3/4 Lake Township** – 2021-2022 budget approved. Discussion on a potential national park visitor center in addition to the one located in Empire. Ironman presentation is scheduled for April 1st. An invitation will be extended to other affect municipalities.
- **3/8 Networks Northwest** – Participated in an orientation for new members.
- **3/8 Almira Township** – I will share any relevant information at the BOC meeting.
- **Other –**
 - Generator at Maples tested positive and appears to cover entire building when exterior power is out. Final payment will be made. Disposition of the Building Authority will need to be discussed.
 - I attended my first meeting for the MAC Finance and General Government Committee. My expectation is to get a greater understanding of legislation being discussed in Lansing and how it may affect Benzie County. This meeting generated a good deal of discussion regarding COVID-19 restrictions.

RECEIVED

MAR 05 2021

DAWN OLNEY
BENZIE COUNTY CLERK
BEULAH, MI 49617



448 Court Place • Beulah, MI 49617

Memo To: Board of Commission
From: Mitchell D. Deisch, Administrator
Date: March 2, 2021
Subject: Administrator Update 3-9-21 BOC mtg.

1. **Administrator Office Update** – Deputy Administrator Maridee Cutler has been working with PT staff on ensure that AP is all set after her departure date. In addition, Ms. Cutler will be continuing to work PT to ensure payroll is completed. During this interim period Ms. Cutler is working to train the PT employees and Treasurer Dept. representatives to perform payroll. Ms. Cutler's last day is Friday March 12, 2021.
2. **Deputy County Administrator Job Posting** – Based upon discussions with the BOC at the Friday February 26, 2021 special meeting, I am posting to replace the Deputy County Administrator position. The new position will combine the need for both financial skills and HR skills. The new DCA will also be crossed trained in both AP and payroll. We will be posting the position ad in the TC Record Eagle, BC Record Patriot, Indeed website and some regional HR posting sights. Based upon the BOC conversation on 2-26-21, I have listed the salary range as Depending on Qualifications (DOQ) rather than listing a specific salary range. I will be using a team interview approach that will include Commission representation, Elected Official representation and Non-Elected Department Head representation. Applications will be due on Friday March 26, 2021. More to follow.
3. **Strategic Plan Update** – Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Monday March 1, 2021 for the second time to discuss updating the strategic plan. The emphasis on the second meeting was to look at areas of focus / goals. Administration will be updating the strategic plan in a draft version and will present it to the BOC as soon as possible.
4. **Medical Examiner Update** – The first meeting of the Medical Examiner (ME) subcommittee meet on Monday March 1, 2021. Members of the subcommittee include Prosecuting Attorney Sara Swanson, Sheriff Kyle Rosa, Undersheriff Greg Hubers, EMS Director Tom King, Commissioner Evan Warsecke and retired Forensic Pathologist/citizen Dr. Don Shaffer. Several members were unable to attend the first meeting, thus we spent most of the time talking about the proposals from Mid-Michigan Medical Examiner's Group and the Michigan Institute of Forensic Science and Medicine. In addition, we discussed ways to improve the current Regional Medical Examiner's Office. As for improving the current Regional Medical Examiners the focus was on incorporating Medical Examiner Investigator's (MEI'S) into Benzie County. More to follow.

RECEIVED

MAR 08 2021

DAWN OLNEY
BENZIE COUNTY CLERK
BEULAH, MI 49617