

THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 24, 2022

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, May 24, 2022 in the Frank Walterhouse 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 and Warsecke
Excused: Commissioner Sauer

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 amended, adding item 10A – COVID Gant from COTW. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

Minutes:

Motion by Nye, seconded by Miller, to approve the regular session minutes of May 10, 2022 as corrected on page 3 Comm Nye's report. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

9:03 a.m. Public Input

Jim Dulzo, 56 Case Road, spoke regarding the broadband survey; thank you to the subcommittee for their work over the past three years; right now cable companies going door to door trying to get more subscriptions – won't talk about speed and price, that is not the approach we should use; Benzie County needs to be sure everyone gets affordable access and speed; we need very strict standards for speed and access; this is really a utility.

Ingemar Johanssen, 13162 Goose Road, reported that where he lives, he has no access to broadband; you need a project manager or nothing will get done unless you have a champion for the project – use someone that is neutral.

Karen Cunningham, 915 Elm Street, thanks the board for serving; she spoke regarding broadband – we need speed, dependability, affordable, be sure it will grow with us; broadband will determine Benzie County's success.

Mike Ross, Moss Road, stated that he has very spotty internet service where he lives, speed really matters; thank you for looking into this.

Marcia Curran, 940 E Crystal Downs Drive, stated that she is encouraged by the comments here today and the importance of broadband is for our community; everyone needs this, it is essential; hope you take the time to develop a smart intelligent plan; thank you for working on this.

Tom Reichart, 1565 Lamerson Lane, stated that he lives on a private road with only a DSL line – we don't want to be left behind here; we need hi-speed fiber for the entire county, not just down the main roads; would like to know the steps MERIT is suggesting – don't keep it secret. Thank you for representing all of us.

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Shawna Leno, 4070 Johnson Road, stated that she relies on the internet for her business; hi-speed broadband is a necessity and needs to be fast, dependable, affordable internet service; quality internet is needed. Please work hard to bring us forward and keep us competitive.

9:23 a.m. Public Comment Closed

FINANCE

Bills: Motion by Miller, seconded by Warsecke, to approve payment of the bills from May 10, 2022 thru May 23, 2022 in the amount of \$245,646.72, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Dawn Bousamra, Benzie Senior Resources, Gathering Place closed today due to well repairs – extra meals sent out and calls were made to them; written report provided; June 12 Golf Outing at Crystal Lake Golf Course 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Kyle Maurer, ACO, started working on the dog walking trail yesterday – about ¼ way through; livestock have all been adopted except three goats; still working to figure out the dog yard, we have options.

Sheriff Rosa reported that they will be kicking off summer with a busy holiday weekend; summer contracts start this weekend too.

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Management/911 Central Dispatch, EM side – email received from Matt Anson from Leelanau County thanking Almira and Inland Fire Departments for going to Gaylord to assist with the tornado event; 911- RFP and on website for expansion of the 911 to lower level of the Sheriff Office.

ACTION ITEMS

Rebecca Hubers, HMEP Agreement FY 21-22: Motion by Markey, seconded by Nye, to approve the FY 2021-2022 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Planning Program Grant Agreement with the State of Michigan, authorizing the chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

2% Grant Application – Benzie Senior Resources: Motion by Markey, seconded by Miller, to approve the 2% Grant Application to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians on behalf of the Benzie Senior Resources as presented, authorizing the Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

Letter of Support – True North Project: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Nye, to approve the Letter of Support for the True North Project to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy as presented, authorizing the Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

Sheriff introduces newest deputy Suzanne Maul.

MERS Sick Buy Out Correction: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Miller, to approve the updated Benzie County Defined Benefit Plan Adoption Agreements for existing divisions as presented and

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authorize the Chair to sign such agreements. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

LOU – Corrections Division: Motion by Miller, seconded by Markey, to approve Letter of Understanding between the County of Benzie and the Police Officers Association of Michigan regarding seniority for employees who transfer back into the position of Corrections Officer and authorizes the Chair to sign such agreement. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

ACO Budget Amendment for VET Services: Motion by Markey, seconded by Miller, to approve the budget amendments up to \$10,000 from the CARES Act Grant Funding for VET services on an as needed basis for the 2021/2022 fiscal year as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

COVID Grant – Jail: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to accept the “County Jail’s COVID-19 Testing Reimbursement” grant from MDHHS in the amount of \$85,500 specifically for reimbursement of jail related expenses as outlined in the grant documentation and authorizes the Chair to sign. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

10:13 a.m. Break

10:20 a.m. Reconvene

MERIT Presentation of Broadband Survey

Program presented by Katie Jensen, Keason Sandermaker, Pierrette Dagg, Alexis Schrubbe and Ben Fineman. Presentation is attached to the Commissioner Packet for this meeting.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Jeannot, to direct the EDC to prepare or suggest a plan to keep this project moving forward. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

12:00 p.m. Break

12:13 p.m. Reconvene

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Roelofs attended and reported on 911, Village of Lake Ann, EMS, Agenda Review Committee

Comm Jeannot provided a written report – attached.

Comm Miller attended and reported on Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse; Frankfort Housing Commission; Frankfort community Land Trust; Frankfort City Council; Crystal Lake Twp meeting was cancelled; Housing Forum.

Comm Nye attended and reported on Workforce Housing meeting; Benzonia Township, Centra Wellness Board meeting; Special Centra Wellness Planning & Finance meeting; EDC.

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Comm Markey attended and reported on Centra Wellness Board meeting; LEPC was cancelled; Benzie Senior Resources.

Comm Warsecke has no report.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Katie Zeits

Katie reported that Laura has left employment with Benzie County; RFP for the dispatch center has gone out; Employee Cook Out June 17; Young Professionals group is being reignited; have sent another email to the townships regarding ARPA funding projects – have only heard from Weldon Twp.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Miller, to approve items 1 - 2 of the May 10, 2021, Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Parks & Rec: Resignation from Tad Peacock received.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

- Kalamazoo resolution to Urge the State of Michigan to Amend the Michigan Auto Insurance Reform Act to Address a Reimbursement Cap for Auto Accident Victims received.
- Crystal Lake and Little Platte Lake lake elevation reports for April 2022 received.
- Tart Trail newsletter received.
- Benzie Bus letter of appreciation addressed to Bill Kennis for his years as the Authority's Executive Director.

12:39 p.m. Public Input – None

Motion by Markey, seconded by Miller, to adjourn at 12:40 p.m. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs and Warsecke Nays: None Exc: Sauer Motion carried.

Bob Roelofs, Chair

Dawn Olney, Benzie County Clerk

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1. Approved the agenda as amended, adding item 10A – COVID Gant from Committee of the Whole.
2. Approved the regular session minutes of May 10, 2022 as corrected on page 3 Comm Nye's report.

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3. Approved payment of the bills in the amount of \$245,646.72, as presented.
4. Approved the FY 2021-2022 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Planning Program Grant Agreement with the State of Michigan, authorizing the chair to sign.
5. Approved the 2% Grant Application to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians on behalf of the Benzie Senior Resources as presented, authorizing the Chair to sign.
6. Approved the Letter of Support for the True North Project to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy as presented, authorizing the Chair to sign.
7. Approved the updated Benzie County Defined Benefit Plan Adoption Agreements for existing divisions as presented and authorize the Chair to sign such agreements.
8. Approved Letter of Understanding between the County of Benzie and the Police Officers Association of Michigan regarding seniority for employees who transfer back into the position of Corrections Officer and authorizes the Chair to sign such agreement.
9. Approved the budget amendments up to \$10,000 from the CARES Act Grant Funding for VET services on an as needed basis for the 2021/2022 fiscal year as presented.
10. Accepted the "County Jail's COVID-19 Testing Reimbursement" grant from MDHHS in the amount of \$85,500 specifically for reimbursement of jail related expenses as outlined in the grant documentation and authorizes the Chair to sign.
11. MERIT Presentation of Broadband Survey
12. Directed the EDC to prepare or suggest a plan to keep the Broadband project moving forward.
13. Approved items 1 - 2 of the May 10, 2021, Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented.

Committee of the Whole

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Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to approve the Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as follows:

1. To split the duties currently assigned to Emergency Management and direct Administration to develop job descriptions and postings.
2. To adopt the Benzie County Sale/Disposal of County Owned Property Policy and authorize the Chair to sign.

**Art Jeannot
Commissioner Report
May 24, 2022**

- Participated in 4 meeting on behalf of the County since our May 10th meeting.
- **5/13 – NMCAA Housing Committee –**
 - Recommended funding for housing projects in Leelanau County. The developer/owners are New Waves Church and Homestretch.
- **5/19 – Platte Township –** Business as usual. We did discuss election day operations.
- **5/18 – NMCAA Meeting –** Housing projects were approved.
- **5/20 – EDC/BRA –**
 - Presentation by Merit regarding broadband survey.
 - Approved work plan for the project in Honor at the “old Bud’s” location for True North LLC or their subsidiary. This included a brownfield grant from the State of Michigan in the amount of approximately \$650k. This will reduce the TIF from local tax dollars from approximately \$839k to \$189k.
 - Agreed to send a letter to Senator VanderWall and Senator Bumstead asking for \$250k to fund EDC activity for the next 3 years.
- **Other –**
 - **5/23 –** I plan to attended a discussion hosted by Yarrow Brown, Executive Director of Housing North regarding housing solutions for Benzie County.