

**THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**September 27, 2022**

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 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 Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer  
Excused: Commissioner Warsecke

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

**Agenda:**

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

**Minutes:**

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Miller, to approve the regular session minutes of September 13, 2022, as amended. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

9:02 a.m. Public Input

Kay Bond, Executive Director of Advocates for Benzie County, spoke regarding housing and healthcare issues in Benzie County. Last meeting you provided \$500,000 to Homestretch which was awesome. Hope you continue to support Frankfort Area Land Trust.

Annie Browning, Benzonia Township, supports Frankfort Area Land Trust in regard to affordable housing.

Jill Marble, Crystal Lake Township, supportive of the Frankfort Area Land Trust and asks that the Board of Commissioners support them.

9:06 a.m. Public Input closed.

**FINANCE**

Bills: Motion by Miller, seconded by Sauer, to approve payment of the bills from September 13, 2022, thru September 26, 2022, in the amount of \$431,951.93, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Michelle Thompson, County Treasurer, reported that the bidders backed out on 2 of the 4 parcels that sold at auction. These parcels will be re-auctioned on Wednesday. The end of the fiscal year is September 30, 2022, and her office is working to get everything in. Auditor's will be here next week for preliminary work for the County.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS:**

Rebecca Hubers, Emergency Manager/911 Director, provided a written report.  
Jesse Zylstra, Solid Waste and Recycling Coordinator provided a written report.

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Dawn Bousamra, Benzie Senior Resources, provided a written report. She gave an update regarding the holiday Christmas bags, 2023 Budget is approved, Personnel Committee is working on the handbook, wrapping up National Senior Center month, need home healthcare aids, health rides partnering with Benzie Bus for medical appointments have increased, and gearing up for fall cleanup and snow removal.

Kyle Mauer, Animal Control, reported that the cat condos are in, but need to get ventilation installed. Looking for a part-time clerk. There are 6 dogs, 25 or 26 cats/kittens and no farm animals.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

Chip Johnston, Centra Wellness agreement for jail services: Chip Johnston was present and provided information regarding the Centra Wellness agreement for jail services.

Motion by Markey, seconded by Miller, to approve the jail service contract, pending legal review, and authorize Chair to sign. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer  
Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Juvenile Detention Center -is it feasible: Katie Zeits and Kristine Bosley reached out to other communities with juvenile detention facilities and investigated the requirements of operating a facility in Benzie County and provided their findings. It is recommended that if the Board of Commissioners desire to investigate this any further that a feasibility study would need to be done, and it would range between \$20,000 to \$100,000 to complete. Without a feasibility study to fully analyze this idea, it is recommended that Benzie County not move forward with the conversion of our jail being turned into a juvenile detention center.

Commissioner Jeannot thanked them for looking into this but does not feel it warrants anymore time. Commissioner Nye, glad that they took the time and looked into this, and considers it closed.

Emergency Management Performance Grant Agreement: Motion by Nye, 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 2022 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) with the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Chair Roelofs attended Area Agency on Aging Special Budget meeting, Agenda Review, and the Benzie Central vs Kingsley Heroes Football game.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report

Comm Miller attended two Crystal Lake Township special meetings, Frankfort City Council meeting, Crystal Lake Township meeting, Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse meeting, and Airport Authority meeting.

Comm Nye attended Agenda Review, EDC meeting, and Benzonia Township meeting.

Comm Markey attended the Northern Michigan Regional Entity Substance Abuse Board meeting,

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EDC Ad Hoc Broadband meeting, Benzie Senior Resource meeting, and Local Planning Team meeting.

Comm Sauer attended Village of Elberta meeting, MACC Conference in Port Huron, Road Commission Budget meeting, Maples meeting, and Benzie Historical Society Annual meeting.

10:15 a.m. Break

10:26 a.m. Reconvene.

### **PRESENTATIONS:**

Habitat for Humanity – presentation and request for funds. Glen Tracy, John Ball, and Bill Merry were present and provided a handout and information regarding the joint housing project with Habitat for Humanity and Graceland. They are requesting \$850,000 from the ARPA funds for infrastructure development of this housing project.

Frankfort Area Land Trust (FALT) – presentation and request for funding. Tim Jones, Doug Taylor, Jay White, Liz Negrau, and Yarrow Brown were present and provided a handout and information regarding their housing project. They are requesting a one-time letter of commitment from the ARPA funds of \$120,000 for the building of four new homes on Grove Place in Frankfort. Motion by Miller, seconded by Nye, to commit up to \$120,000 to the Frankfort Area Community Lake Trust in a collaborative effort to support housing in Benzie County, which assists with the development of four homes, and dedicated ARPA dollars to this project. Roll call. Ayes: Miller and Nye Exc: Warsecke Nays: Jeannot, Markey, Roelofs and Sauer Motion failed.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT** – Katie Zeits, stated that her office is working on ARPA and Capital item list. Working on the MMRMA Questionnaire for our risk and liability insurance. There are some major cleanups to do and there is a good chance you will see a big jump in the renewal this year. The Governor signed the bill regarding funding for Secondary Road Patrol. In the past it was \$10 for every ticket issued, now it will be a percentage out of the liquor tax. There will be changes coming regarding FOIA and OMA. Working on a Benzie County specific orientation package for the Board of Commissioners starting January 1. Need to come up with a policy regarding EMS trucks being dedicated to community events.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Jeannot, to approve items 1 of the September 13, 2022, Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS** - None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS** - None

### **PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE**

- Northwest Education Services letter of September 20, 2022.
- Benzie-Leelanau Board of Health Meeting Agenda for September 28, 2022.

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- Benzie Transportation Authority August 2022 Statement of Activities.

12:14 p.m. Public Input

Annie Browning, Benzonia Township, stated that listening to all the input today and there seems to be a theme. Working on the Master Plan for the Village of Beulah.

Susan Wenzlick, Benzonia, Township, stated that the State is not going to help us out on housing, it will have to be on the local level. Encourages the Board of Commissioners to support these housing projects.

JoAnn Holwerda, City of Frankfort, commented that it looks like Frankfort is dipping into the ARPA funds, but we are shovel ready. Questioned if the Land Trust can come back and ask for the \$120,000 again.

Yarrow Brown, Executive Director for Housing North, wants to thank the Board of Commissioners. You are one of only a few counties in her 10-county area that is actually developing a process regarding housing. We are here as a resource if needed. Hope that you approve a portion of the ARPA funds for all these projects.

Kay Bond, Homestead Township, request that you work on broadband. Yesterday she had no connection.

Jill Marble, wanted to thank you for your consideration on the Frankfort Area Land Trust. They are prepared and ready to go.

12:22 p.m. Public Input closed

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey, to adjourn at 12:23 p.m. Ayes: Ayes: Jeannot, Markey, Miller, Nye, Roelofs, and Sauer Exc: Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried

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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 September 13, 2022, as amended.
3. Approve payment of the bills from September 13, 2022, thru September 26, 2022, in the amount of \$431,951.93, as presented.
4. Approve the jail service contract, pending legal review, and authorize Chair to sign.
5. Authorize the Chair of the Board of Commissioners and the Emergency Management Coordinator to sign on behalf of Benzie County the 2022 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) with the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division.
6. Approve items 1 of the September 13, 2022, Committee of the Whole Consent Calendar.

**Committee of the Whole**

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

1. Authorize a onetime increase of 13.16% for the Chief Deputies for fiscal year 2022/2023, effective October 1, 2022, with the understand a strategy will be developed so it can be applied consistency in future years.
2. Removed
3. Move forward with Memorandum of Agreement with Centra Wellness Network, pending legal and administrative review, authorize Chair to sign.
4. Removed
5. Removed

**Art Jeannot**  
**Commissioner Report**  
**September 27, 2022**

- Participated in 4 meetings on behalf of the County since our September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- **9/15 – Platte Township**
  - Discussed complaints regrading the Building Department. I have put Paul Solem (Township Supervisor) in contact with the department.
  - Concerns were expressed about a pending ballot item that would change how elections are held and the effect on the clerks.
- **9/15 – Northern MI Community Action Agency**
  - No issues.
- **9/16 – EDC/BRA**
  - Discussed the need for a consultant versus a project manager to oversee our broadband efforts. It was decided to hire a project manager who will work locally with ISPs after contracts are negotiated. Our consultant will help draft a job description for this position.
  - Working on identifying grant opportunities for broadband as well as other economic development efforts.
  - The committee continues to follow on the housing efforts in Honor and Beulah. The use of brownfield credits will help these projects. The Honor project is well underway. The delivery of building materials has slowed up the completion of this project.
- **9/16 – EDC Broadband Sub-Committee**
  - We continue to discuss approaches to better the county's negotiating leverage with providers. We have contracted with a well-qualified consultant. This has been helpful and we will benefit from the assistance. Formal relationships with providers are being developed to help fill gaps in underserved and unserved homes and businesses. We have 2 phases. The first phase is to provide access county wide. Secondly, we want to create a competitive environment to help reduce cost.
- **Other**
  - **9/22** – Met with staff from Northwest Community Action Agency and BACN to discuss grant and loan opportunities for Benzie County citizens regrading housing repairs and improvements. This is funded through a CBDG grant and has management oversight from the Benzie Housing Committee.
  - **9/26** – I am the chair for the Northern MI County Association nominating committee. We met to develop a plan to recruit new leadership for 2023-2024.