

**THE BENZIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**March 14, 2023**

The Benzie County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, March 14, 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 Jeannot, seconded by Warsecke, to approve the agenda as amended, moving Action Item F to the first order of business under Action Items. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

**Minutes:**

Motion by Nye, seconded by Markey, to approve the regular session minutes of February 28, 2023, as presented. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

9:02 a.m. Public Comment - None

**FINANCE**

Bills: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Sauer, to approve payment of the bills from February 24, 2023, through March 09, 2023, in the amount of \$730,242.85, as presented. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

Sheriff Rosa wanted to thank everyone for their part in 24-hour road patrol. Citizen's support is ~~huge~~ huge. There is a lot of moving parts to make this all come together and positive things are happening. The goal is to have 24-hour road patrol by mid to later summer.

Brianne Lindsay, Equalization Director provided a written report and explained the questions regarding roll books for the townships who request them.

Cory Ellis, 911 Director, read a letter of support regarding the emergency tower, from Jason Torrey, Grand Traverse 911 Director.

Luke Wassink, National Parks Service representative, stated that the National Parks Service is in support of the APRA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

Mike ~~Cedarholm~~ Cederholm, City of Frankfort Fire Chief, stated his support of the ARPA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

Rob Lozowski, Police Chief for the City of Frankfort, stated his support of the ARPA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

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Steve Adams, Benzonia Township Fire Chief, stated his support of the ARPA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

Derek Smith, Almira Township Fire and EMS Assistant Chief, stated his support of the ARPA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

Sheriff Rosa stated his support of the ARPA funds allocation for the emergency tower.

Rebecca Huber, Emergency Manager, was present to answer any questions regarding the emergency tower and it's needs. A site has been identified and secured, with the help of the City of Frankfort and Motorola. Working with Peninsula Fiber Network (PFN) and Cherry Capital Connection regarding the fiber optic and connectivity to the location of the tower.

Chair Roelofs stated that this all started because of Rebecca and her commitment to safety. We all owe her a great debt of thanks for going above and below beyond regarding the emergency tower and getting us to where we are.

## ACTION ITEMS

Consider committing up to \$350,000 ARPA funds to the Emergency Communications Tower:

Motion by Sauer, seconded by Markey to commit up to \$350,000 of funds to the Emergency Communications Tower, with available funds from American Rescue Plan Act funding, and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the tower when appropriate documentation regarding the use of the funds is provided. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Declare security gates surplus and authorized their sale and disposal: Motion by Markey, seconded by Warsecke, to declare the gate system in the Governmental Center surplus, and authorizes their sale and disposal, with sale proceeds to be allocated towards building security upgrades. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider adopting Accounts Payable Policy: Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Markey, to adopt the Accounts Payable Policy to replace the current Accounts Payable Policy. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider committing \$250,000 ARPA funds to Point Betsie Preservation Project: Motion by Nye, seconded by Cunningham, to commit up to \$250,000 to the Point Betsie Preservation Projects, with funds available from American Rescue Plan Act funding, and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the project when appropriate documentation regarding use of funds is provided. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider committing up to 50% match from ARPA funds to pave Henry Road: Matt Skeels was present from the Road Commission. Discussion was held and it was decided that this matter will be adjourned until the March 28, 2023, meeting. Would like more information regarding how much Benzie Central School, Benzonia Township and the Road Commission would be contributing to the paving of Henry Road.

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Consider allocating 30% ARPA funds to Broadband Expansion commitment: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Nye, to allocate up to 30% of its American Rescue Plan Act funding for the Internet for All, Benzie County Broadband Expansion Project and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the project when appropriate documentation regarding use of the funds is provided. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Consider committing up to \$80,000 ARPA funds to Crystal Lake Outlet project: Discussion was held, and it was decided that this matter will be adjourned until the March 28, 2023, meeting. Would like more information regarding the Parks and Recreation Committee request for ARPA fund for Crystal Lake Outlet project, and want other funding is being looked at.

Adopt amended Board Rules and the BOC/COTW meeting dates: Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Sauer, to approve the amended 2023 Calendar year meeting schedule for its meetings, and further adopts amended Board Rules as presented in the March 14, 2023, board packet. Roll call. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, and Sauer Nays: Roelofs and Warsecke Motion carried.

## COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Chair Roelofs attended Veterans Affairs meeting, and Ad Hoc Housing Committee meeting.

Comm Jeannot provided a written report.

Comm Cunningham provided a written report. In addition, she attended the Coffia Coffee event and the Frankfort Elberta School Board meeting.

Comm Nye attended Agenda Review, Centra Wellness Board meeting, Ad Hoc Housing Committee meeting, Benzonia Planning Commission meeting, 2 Sewer Feasibility Study meeting along with the March 7, 2023, presentation at the Mills Community House, Village of Benzonia Meeting, Benzonia Township meeting, and the Benzie Central School Board meeting.

Comm Markey attended the Northern Regional Entity Substance Abuse Oversight meeting, Homestead Township meeting, and Centra Network Board meeting.

Comm Warsecke attended Colfax Township meeting and Inland Township meeting.

Comm Sauer attended the Joyfield Township meeting, Blaine Township meeting, Maples meeting, Ironman update meeting, MAC Ag and Tourism meeting, Road Commission meeting, Traverse City Visitors Bureau meeting, Village of Elberta meeting, and Village of Thompsonville meeting.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT** – Jackie Palfey, Human Resource Manager, reported that the Broadband Robin grant is being submitted today. An appropriation request application has been sent to Senator Peters and Senator Stabenow requesting funding for the emergency tower. Along with State Representative Coffia, Representative Senator Bumstead and Representative Roth as well. In April we will start getting ready for the budget. If any Commissioner is going to the MAC conference, please get with Rose regarding your reservation.

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**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:** It has been requested that the Committee of the Whole meeting for this afternoon be cancelled due to the County Administrators absents today. Motion by Warsecke, seconded by Nye, to cancel the Committee of the Whole meeting today and move the topics to the next meeting. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS** - Jean Bowers resignation from Jury Board.

Motion by Jeannot, seconded by Sauer, to accept with regrets, Jean Bowers resignation from the Benzie County Jury Board. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

Commissioner Jeannot stated that Jean has given many years of service to Benzie County, would like to see a letter of appreciation be sent to her signed by the Chair.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS** - None

## **PRESENTATION OF CORRESPONDENCE**

- Lapeer County Resolution 2023-R01- Honoring MAC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Lapeer County Resolution 2023-R02 – Oppose all Firearms Control Legislation
- Calhoun County Resolution Res.024-2023 – Honoring MAC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Clinton County Resolution 2023-3 – Honoring MAC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Tuscola County Resolution 2023-02 – Honoring MAC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Cheboygan County Resolution 2023-05 – Urge Repair of the Cornwall Creek Flooding Dam
- Leelanau County Resolution 2023-023 – Honoring MAC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

11:00 a.m. Public Comment

Dan Hawkins, Village of Lake Ann President, publicly express his appreciations regarding how all of levels of government are working together. Pleasure to work with you all, and there are good things going on in Benzie County.

Anne Browning, Village of Beulah, stated that she is glad to see the Board of Commissioners are investing in safety. She is on the Village of Beulah Planning Commission and they are working on planning and looking to the future.

11:03 a.m. Public Comment Closed

Motion by Markey, seconded by Sauer, to adjourn at 11:03 a.m. Ayes: Cunningham, Jeannot, Markey, Nye, Roelofs, Sauer and Warsecke Nays: None Motion carried.

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1. Approve the agenda as amended.
2. Approve the regular session minutes of February 28, 2023, as presented.
3. Commit up to \$350,000 of funds to the Emergency Communications Tower, with available funds from American Rescue Plan Act funding, and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the tower when appropriate documentation regarding the use of the funds is provided.
4. Declare the gate system in the Governmental Center surplus, and authorizes their sale and disposal, with sale proceeds to be allocated towards building security upgrades.
5. Adopt the Accounts Payable Operational Policy to replace the current Accounts Payables Policy.
6. Commit up to \$250,000 to the Point Betsie Preservation Projects, with funds available from American Rescue Plan Act funding, and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the project when appropriate documentation regarding use of funds is provided.
7. Allocate up to 30% of its American Rescue Plan Act funding for the Internet for All, Benzie County Broadband Expansion Project and authorizes the Administration to release funds for the project when appropriate documentation regarding use of the funds is provided.
8. Approve the amended 2023 Calendar year meeting schedule for its meetings, and further adopts amended Board Rules as presented in the March 14, 2023, board packet.
9. Cancel the Committee of the Whole meeting today and move the topics to the next meeting.
10. Accept with regrets, Jean Bowers resignation from the Benzie County Jury Board.

**Art Jeannot**  
**Commissioner Report**  
**March 14, 2023**

- Participated in 5 meetings on behalf of the County since our February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- **3/2 – Ad hoc Committee (Housing Committee)**
  - We met to discuss the future of our Housing Committee. As a reminder, this committee was formed in the 1980s for the purpose of allocating CBDG monies to repair homes for those in financial need. After many years of the committee members remaining consistent, the majority of the committee resigned due to health or retirements. The administrative function was contracted out to Northwest MI Community Action Agency several years ago. The ad hoc committee is reviewing the need to continue on with a local housing committee or to consider a different arrangement. This action is consistent with our goal over the past 6 years to review the viability of each of our committees, boards or authorities. More information will be provided as we continue to review this issue.
- **3/2 – Lake Township**
  - There is request to relocate Sutter Rd to improve safety for users of the road. This request is coming from members of Crystal Downs. The members would pay for the relocation.
  - The Township is considering a donation to the Friends of Point Betsie for light house repairs and/or the County for our need for a new tower for public safety.
- **3/3 – MI Association of Counties (Finance and General Governance Committee)**
  - We discussed new regulations for broad band and non-partisan elections locally.
  - A discussion was led by the MI Association of County Clerks regarding new election laws. There was concern expressed about the 9 days of early voting and the logistics related to this regulation.
- **3/13 – Almira Township**
  - I will report any relevant information at our BOC meeting.
- **Other**
  - Attended the presentation on the sewer feasibility study between Benzonia and Beulah. Rhonda facilitated the meeting and I will invite her to give you the details.



BoC 14 Mar 2023

Commissioner Cunningham, District 3

[kcunningham@benzieco.net](mailto:kcunningham@benzieco.net)

231.822.4067

#### Attended/Presented

- 2 Mar**      **Lake Twp Board** Upcoming meetings: 6 Mar, 7pm, Planning Commission, 9 Mar, 7pm, Zoning Board of Appeals, the board anticipates more than usual appeals because of increased property values.
- 7 Mar**      **Kinship Coalition** This group advocates for children who are living with other than their parents because of detrimental home lives. Kinship providers are often relatives or friends. There are 54,000+ documented children who are living in Kinship situations in Michigan, but there are many more, "hidden in plain sight." Benzie and Manistee Counties are coordinating efforts to support these families and children.
- 10 Mar**      **MAC Environmental Regulatory Committee** I will report any information that needs to be shared.
- 13 Mar**      **FEAS** I will report any information that needs to be shared.

#### Community

- 1 Mar**      Met with Paul May about sustainable agriculture.
- 2 Mar**      Introduction to Commissioner Kama Ross, Leelanau County.
- 6 Mar**      volunteered, Garden Theatre.
- 7 Mar**      Attended Betsie Hosick Health and Fitness Center meeting; potential local buyer, who will keep it as a fitness center.  
Drop in visit to CLT
- 8 Mar**      I saw my first robin!
- 13 Mar**      **Coffia coffee**, 1pm at the Red Door in Lake Ann.

#### Correspondence

Shared Government for Tomorrow, govfortomorrow.org, with the superintendent and several board members.

FEAS established a curricula committee, Government for Tomorrow, a 501 C3, Helping to create high school positions in local government.

Emails to Reps Roth and Coffia about sustainable ag. Email to Commissioner Evan Warseke, solid waste.