

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Virtual Board Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2021

Staff Present: County Administrator Brian Dissette (via Zoom)
Clerk Sharon Tyler
Executive Assistant to the Administrator Annette Christie
Director of Financial Services Doug James (Arrived at 10:41 A.M.)
Financial Accountant/Analyst Jake Litaker (Arrived at 10:41 A.M.)

BOC Present: Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott
(In-person)

CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott called the virtual regular meeting to order at 10:33 A.M. in the Board of Commissioners' (BOC) room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

INVOCATION:

Commissioner Jim Curran gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Commissioner Jon Hinkelman led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

The Chair instructed the Clerk to take a roll call with the following results:

12 PRESENT: Rayonte Bell (via Zoom in St. Joseph City, MI), Jim Curran (via Zoom in Winter Haven, FL), Teri Sue Freehling (via Zoom in Baroda Township, MI), Robert Harrison (via Zoom in Lincoln Charter Township, MI), Jon Hinkelman (via Zoom in Watervliet, MI), Michael Majerek (via Zoom in Niles, MI), Don Meeks (via Zoom in Benton Charter Township, MI and arrived at 10:49 A.M.), Ezra Scott (via Zoom in New Buffalo Township, MI), David Vollrath (via Zoom in Coloma Charter Township, MI), Julie Wuerfel (via Zoom in Royalton Township, MI), Mamie Yarbrough (via Zoom in Benton Harbor City, MI) and R. McKinley Elliott.

0 ABSENT.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 18, 2021 MEETING:

Commissioner Freehling moved and supported by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the BOC virtual regular meeting minutes of February 18, 2021.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

11 YEAS: Curran, Freehling, Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

County Clerk Sharon Tyler received and distributed to the Board the following communications:

- Cheryl Marie Lynch, New Buffalo Township, an email regarding a closing clause to be added to the virus related resolution for reopening local businesses, received on February 19, 2021.

- Carla Jackson Johnson, Buchanan, an email regarding the Galaxy Roller Rink case and continued restrictions of county businesses, received on February 21, 2021.
- Livingston County Board of Commissioners, a resolution calling upon the Governor and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to retract their SVI social factor based plan and replace it with a scientific medical factor based plan that results in a pro-rata uniform distribution to Michigan's most medically vulnerable population, received on February 23, 2021.
- Kelly Clark, Baroda, an email regarding Governor Whitmer's statement last Thursday, received on February 24, 2021.
- The following communication was announced by Chairperson Elliott during the public comment and was added to the communications for today's meeting: Cheryl Marie, of the Lynch family, New Buffalo Township, an email commenting on Resolutions #B2102151 and #B2102317, whether taken up, tabled, or acted on, received on February 25, 2021.

PRESENTATION(S):

- **Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber – Arthur Havlicek, President & CEO**
Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber President & CEO Arthur Havlicek (via Zoom) spoke as the voice for local businesses and in support of two resolutions today (B2102317 and B2102151). He discussed local restaurants and that the restaurant industry is among those hardest hit as they are still currently restricted to 25% capacity and limited hours of operation. He discussed the epidemic and how it's been affecting small businesses. He spoke about the positive things that are happening. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Meeks arrived at 10:49 A.M.

COMMITTEE REPORT(S):

The Finance Committee presented their Committee Report. Discussion was held on bids and bid openings. The Finance Committee members voted on the following motion:

Finance Committee Motion: Commissioner Scott moved and supported by Commissioner Freehling, to retract the motion during the Finance Committee meeting on bid 2021-007 and to extend action on the bid until March 4, 2021.

4 YEAS: Scott, Hinkelman, Freehling and Yarbrough. Motion carried, no nays.

Parent Committee minutes are available at www.berriencounty.org.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS - Public comments at this portion of the meeting must be related to resolutions listed on today's agenda only. Those speaking through the You Tube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village. The public should refer to the resolution # that they are commenting on as a part of their comments:

- Cheryl Marie, of the Lynch family, New Buffalo Township, an email commenting on Resolutions #B2102151 and #B2102317, whether taken up, tabled, or acted on, received on February 25, 2021. Chairperson Elliott stated this will be added to the communications for today.
- Eric Lester, St. Joseph Charter Township, commented that the resolution needs to encourage the usage of face masks appropriately. Chairperson Elliott responded that this is included in the resolution.
- Peter Colovos, Hagar Township, thanked Arthur Havlicek for speaking today.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Wuerfel requested that Resolution #B2102151 - BOC Communication for Governor, be pulled from today's consent Calendar and presented separately.

Chairperson Elliott requested Resolution #B2102151 be pulled from the Consent Calendar and Added Resolution #A2102172 be included on the Consent Calendar.

Commissioner Curran moved and supported by Commissioner Scott, to pull Resolution #B2102151 from the Consent Calendar and Added Resolution #A2102172 be included on the Consent Calendar, and to approve today's Consent Calendar as presented:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
F2102020	Weekly Bills
B2102067	Weekly Requisitions
F2102170	CDBG Grant COVID Funds
A2102171	Service Contract for 911 Equipment
B2102317	Honorary Resolution – Restaurant Week
A2102172	Traffic Control Order

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

12 YEAS: Freehling, Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell, Curran and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

Resolution #B2102151 - BOC Communication for Governor:

Commissioner Wuerfel moved and supported by Commissioner Freehling, to approve Resolution #B2102151 - BOC Communication for Governor as presented:

Discussion was held.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

12 YEAS: Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell, Curran, Freehling and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

ADDED RESOLUTION(S):

Resolution #A2102172 - Traffic Control Order

Resolution #A2102172 was moved to the Consent Calendar.

COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):

The Commissioners presented their outside Commissioners' Reports.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: None.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Those speaking through the You Tube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village:

Adolf Peltzer, Hagar Township, commented on the COVID-19 vaccines and face masks.

Eric Lester, St. Joseph Charter Township, thanked the BOC on the resolution including face masks.

Cheryl Marie, of the Lynch family, New Buffalo Township, commented on the two resolutions, her email and the resolution she provided to the BOC.

Tony Benhart, Sodus Township, commented on the Road Department.

Adam Blematl, Lincoln Charter Township, commented that the Public Comment section only allows so many characters and that Berrien County is censoring comments. Chairperson Elliott responded YouTube is censoring not Berrien County. Also, he commented on Road Department Director Jason Latham.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Freehling reminded the public of the deadline of March 26th for taking the broadband survey.

Discussion was held about appointing a sub-committee to review the needs of assistance in regards to COVID-19.

Clerk Tyler was recognized by Chairperson Elliott to speak and she asked the Board if they would like her to email the Resolution #B2102151 to the Michigan Association of County Clerks and to our local clerks. There was consensus of yes from the BOC.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Commissioner Yarbrough announced the Land Bank Authority will be meeting today at 2:00 P.M.

Chairperson Elliott announced the following:

- Personnel and Human Services Committee meeting to be held virtually next Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 8:00 A.M.
- Finance Committee meeting to be held virtually next Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 9:00 A.M.
- BOC Meeting will be held virtually next Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 10:30 A.M.
- Wednesday, March 3, 2021 a COVID-19 Briefing will be held at 11:00 A.M. (this is not a public meeting).

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 P.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.