

THE HONORABLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN RECOMMENDS THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Berrien County Mission Statement reads: *It is the mission of Berrien County Government to provide: Leadership, Cooperation with all Units of Government, Sound Fiscal Management and Planning, Thereby promoting public safety, health, well-being, and prosperity in order to improve the quality of life for present and future generations; and*

WHEREAS, in response to the mission, the Berrien County Board of Commissioners set the operational objectives for 2019-2020 which included the following: Focus on support and improvement of county infrastructure – staff and financial resources will be utilized to pursue all options available to bring high speed internet into unserved and underserved areas of the county; and

WHEREAS, three Commissioners were subsequently appointed to a broadband committee to work on the task of addressing broadband with other stakeholders in Berrien County, with the goal of satisfying this operational objective and in October of 2019 began working with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission on building linkages to expertise in the field with the intention of finding a pathway forward for the county; and

WHEREAS, through the process, it was determined that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) data for Berrien County has significant inaccuracies and one of the first steps needed in establishing an accurate overview of Berrien County in the form of maps that will show that there are large areas of Berrien County without broadband internet, which is currently defined as, a minimum 25 Mbps download speed/3 Mbps upload speed, as was set by the FCC in 2015; and

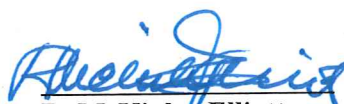
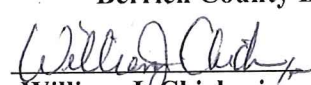
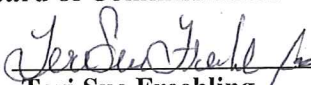


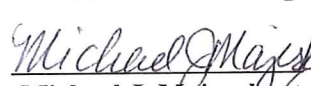
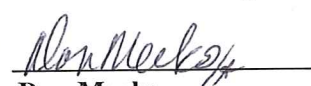
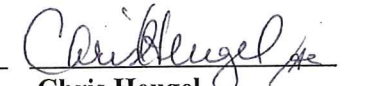
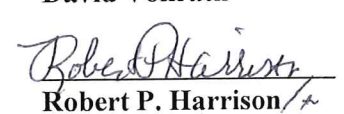
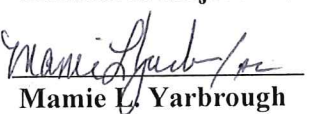

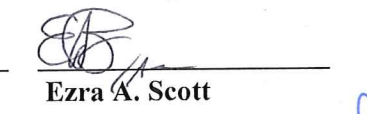
WHEREAS, while there are federal and state grants available to assist with funding broadband infrastructure, the accurate data is imperative to demonstrate the need; and

WHEREAS, Merit Network, Inc., an Ann Arbor, MI based non-profit organization and leader in innovation and collaboration in internet networking and other services for 56 years, has utilized a unique approach of collaborative data collection that will assist Michigan communities in their work toward providing better e-connectivity and has proposed an established process whereby they can effectively collect the accurate data needed to demonstrate the need in Berrien County and has provided a proposal for services in the amount of \$28,500; and

WHEREAS, Merit Network, Inc. is the company that all collaborators and stakeholders recommended due to the great network of networks they have established and the efficiency of the process they have developed, and thus far, they have been a great partner working with Berrien County officials without any expense.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners has recognized the need for high speed internet accessibility for all of its citizens and in its authority as described in the Purchasing Policy ADM-6030, authorizes the County Administrator to execute a letter of engagement with Merit Network, Inc. for the purposes of gaining accurate data on the internet options that are currently in Berrien County.

Berrien County Board of Commissioners

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