

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2023

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

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

INVOCATION:

Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson, Second Baptist Church, gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Teri Sue Freehling 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, Jim Curran, Teri Sue Freehling, Robert Harrison, Jon Hinkelman, Michael Majerek, Alex Ott, Chokwe Pitchford, David Vollrath, Julie Wuerfel, Mamie Yarbrough and R. McKinley Elliott.

0 ABSENT.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2023 MEETING:

Commissioner Harrison moved and supported by Commissioner Pitchford, to approve the BOC regular meeting minutes of January 26, 2023. Motion carried and no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

County Clerk Sharon Tyler received and distributed to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) the following communication:

- Alicia Thomas, an invitation by the South Bend Chocolate Company, inviting you to the celebration of the Indiana Dinosaur Museum, on February 17, 2023 at the South Bend International Airport, received on January 27, 2023.

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 during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9 B-C). The public should refer to the resolution # that they are commenting on as a part of their comments: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Bell moved and supported by Commissioner Pitchford, to include Resolution #A2302141 from the Added Resolution(s) to the Consent Calendar; pull Honorary Resolutions #B2302136 and #B2302137 from the Consent Calendar to be presented separately; and to approve today's Consent Calendar:

<u>Resolution(s) #</u>	<u>Description</u>
F2302017	Weekly Bills & Road Payables
B2302064	Weekly Requisitions
A2302126	Approve contract for Consulting Services
A2302133	Approve police services agreement Buchanan Township
A2302134	Approve Act 51 Map Certification
F2302135	Approve Berrien County 5-Year Master Plan

A2302141

Approve Jail Generator Replacement Project

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

Honorary Resolution #B2302136

Commissioner Freehling read the following Honorary Resolution #B2302136:

WHEREAS, *Sheri Kesterke is a lifelong resident of the Village of Berrien Springs and graduated from Berrien Springs High School; and*

WHEREAS, *she became the Clerk of the Village in 2001 and has served in that role since that time; and*

WHEREAS, *during her 21 years as Clerk she has served under six Village Presidents and has helped to guide the Village with professionalism, integrity, and honesty; and*

WHEREAS, *highlights of her career include being named Village Clerk of the Year in 2010, achieving Master Municipal Clerk certification in 2011, and being name Notary of the Year in 2012; and*

WHEREAS, *Ms. Kesterke's leadership and commitment for the Village of Berrien Springs echoes the mission of Berrien County by improving the quality of life for present and future generations; and*

WHEREAS, *she retired at the end of 2022.*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED *that this Berrien County Board of Commissioners formally recognizes Sheri Kesterke for her years of dedicated service for her community and wishes her a happy, healthy retirement.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED *that Ms. Kesterke's life, actions, and contributions reflect most favorably upon herself, her family, the Village of Berrien Springs, the County of Berrien, the State of Michigan, and United States of America.*

***Respectfully submitted,
BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS***

Motion

Commissioner Freehling moved and supported by Commissioner Wuerfel, to approve Honorary Resolution #B2302136, recognizing Sheri Kesterke, the former Berrien Springs Clerk, who retired at the end of 2022, for her years of dedicated service.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

RESOLUTION PRESENTATION – Commissioner Mamie Yarbrough:

Honorary Resolution #B2302137

Commissioner Yarbrough read the following Honorary Resolution #B2302137:

WHEREAS, on December 23, 2022, the entire County of Berrien experienced a blizzard of historic magnitude that brought wind chill values to dangerous levels, made travel extremely hazardous or impossible in some areas, and tested the limits of our utility infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, during that weather event, the City of Benton Harbor experienced a city wide power outage; and

WHEREAS, the City of Benton Harbor Public Safety Department and Mayor Marcus Muhammad, asked for assistance to provide a warm place for residents of River Terrace Apartments, with approximately hundreds in need; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson and the Second Baptist Church at 600 Donald Adkins Drive answered the call for assistance by opening their doors within an hour of being notified; and

WHEREAS, from 8:00 p.m. on the 23rd until about 4:00 a.m. Christmas Eve, Pastor Robinson provided warmth, comfort, and meals to the approximately 35 people who were able to be transported to the Church until power was restored; and

WHEREAS, Mother Teresa said, "Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action and that action is service"; and

WHEREAS, the actions of Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson and the Church during that winter storm event are the epitome of community service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that this Berrien County Board of Commissioners formally honors Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson and the congregation of the Second Baptist Church for their acts of kindness and service to assist the residents of the City of Benton Harbor during the December 2022 winter storm and appreciates them opening their Church to take in those in need.

**Respectfully submitted,
BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Motion

Commissioner Yarbrough moved and supported by Commissioner Pitchford, to approve Honorary Resolution #B2302137, recognizing Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson and the congregation of the Second Baptist Church, for their acts of kindness and service to assist the residents of the City of Benton Harbor during the December 2022 winter storm.

Chairperson Elliott introduced Pastor Kenneth Eric Robinson. Chairperson Elliott applauded Pastor Robinson and the congregation of the Second Baptist Church. Pastor Robinson spoke about the Second Baptist Church.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

ADDED RESOLUTION(S):

The following resolution was moved to the Consent Calendar:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
A2302141	Approve Jail Generator Replacement Project

AGENDA AMENDMENT:

Commissioner Vollrath moved and seconded by Commissioner Bell, to add Requisition Review onto the Agenda.

Voice vote. Motion carried, super majority and no nays.

REQUISITION REVIEW - Annette Christie:

Executive Administrative Assistant Annette Christie presented the requisitions to the Board for their review and discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORT(S) –Administration, Finance and Personnel & Human Services Committees:

The Administration, Finance and Personnel & Human Services (PHSC) Committees presented their Committee Reports. Parent Committee minutes are available at www.berriencounty.org. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Curran and Administrator Dissette spoke about 911 Administrator Caitlin Sampsell working on a nationwide push to promote the marketing of the importance of 911 dispatching with a series of videos. Caitlin Sampsell is starring in one of the videos. Unfortunately due to technical difficulty the video was unable to be seen at the BOC meeting.

COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):

The Commissioners presented their outside committee reports. Discussion was held.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Administrator Brian Dissette gave his Administrator's Report. Discussion was held.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS - Those speaking during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9 B-C):

Adolf Pelzer, Hagar Township, spoke about the drinking fountains at the county facilities not working, resolutions on the Agenda and who do you go to in the county to file a complaint.

Shawn Hill, St. Joseph City, spoke about the Coloma Public Schools and a book that was handed out by a teacher to students. He asked the BOC to create an ordinance.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Freehling recommended the following tentative BOC's night meeting dates: May 4, 2023, June 1, 2023, July 13, 2023 and August 3, 2023. Locations for the night meetings are to be determined. Additional night meetings can be added to the schedule.

Motion

Commissioner Pitchford moved and seconded by Commissioner Vollrath, to approve the following night meeting dates with the location to be determined: May 4, 2023, June 1, 2023, July 13, 2023 and August 3, 2023.

Motion carried and no nays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Chairperson Elliott announced on March 9th the BOC will have Commissioner photos taken during the Committee of the Whole time slot.

CLOSED SESSION – Quarterly Pending Litigation Update – Corporate Counsel Thaddeus Hackworth - MCL 15.268 (e) “To consult with its attorney regarding trial and settlement strategy in connection with pending litigation.”

Commissioner Vollrath moved and supported by Commissioner Pitchford, to recess the public meeting and go into Closed Session at 11:25 A.M., to consult with its attorney regarding trial and settlement strategy in connection with pending litigation.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

The Board recessed at 11:25 A.M. to go into Closed Session.

Chairperson Elliott left the meeting at 11:26 A.M.

Vice Chairperson Freehling reconvened to Open Session at 12:14 P.M.

Commissioner Wuerfel moved and seconded by Commissioner Harrison, to approve the Closed Session minutes of January 26, 2023. Motion carried, no nays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Vice Chairperson Freehling announced the BCBIT meeting at 12:30 P.M. in the Otto Grau Conference Room.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 P.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.