

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 27, 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:

Commissioner Julie Wuerfel gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Rayonte Bell 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:

11 PRESENT: Rayonte Bell, Jim Curran, Teri Sue Freehling, Robert Harrison, Jon Hinkelman, Michael Majerek, Alex Ott, Chokwe Pitchford, David Vollrath, Julie Wuerfel and R. McKinley Elliott.

1 ABSENT: Mamie Yarbrough.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 20, 2023 MEETING:

Commissioner Pitchford moved and supported by Commissioner Vollrath, to approve the BOC regular meeting minutes of April 20, 2023. Motion carried and no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

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

- A resolution from Ontonagon County Board of Commissioners, affirming support of all constitutional rights including, but not limited to, the right of the people to bear arms and to adequately fund mental health services, received on April 24, 2023.
- A resolution from Alcona County Board of Commissioners, supporting the revised school code – House Bill 4284, received on April 24, 2023.
- A letter of support from Benton Harbor City Mayor Marcus Muhammad for the Community Violence Intervention Prevention Initiative, received on April 25, 2023.
- A resolution from Livingston County Board of Commissioners, in support of the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the Michigan Constitution, received on April 26, 2023.
- An email from Bette Pierman, Benton Harbor, to support the Berrien County Health Department's pursuit of the grant from the Department of Justice, received on April 27, 2023.
- An email from Gail Hartline, Oronoko Township, in support of the grant and protecting our kids, received on April 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:

Melissa Clapper, St. Joseph Charter Township, supports Resolution #P2304193.

Dr. Larry Feldman, Lakeside, supports Resolution #P2304193.

Rick Briand, Niles Charter Township, opposes Resolution #P2304193.

Victory Woodall, Lincoln Charter Township, reading on behalf of Deb Frank opposing Resolution #P2304193.

Ashley White, Lincoln Charter Township, opposes Resolution #P2304193.

Michael Hoyh, Benton Harbor City, supports Resolution #P2304193.

Robyn Graffenius, Lincoln Charter Township, opposes Resolution #P2304193.

Theresa Briand, Niles City, spoke about Resolution #P2304193 and she wants to make sure the community is involved with this grant program process.

AGENDA AMENDMENT:

Commissioner Freehling moved and seconded by Commissioner Vollrath, to remove Closed Session regarding the quarterly litigation update from the Agenda and to move it to May 11, 2023.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Freehling moved and supported by Commissioner Pitchford, to pull Resolution #P2304193 from the Consent Calendar, and to approve today's Consent Calendar:

<u>Resolution(s) #</u>	<u>Description</u>
F2304028	Weekly Bills & Road Payables
B2304075	Weekly Requisitions
P2303143	Approve revisions to Travel Request & Expense Policy ADM-6050
P2304191	Accept SPARK grant Silver Beach County Park playground replacement
P2304194	Approve agreement with King Media for Dirt on Weed campaign
F2304195	Approve maintenance agreement for printer/copier purchase

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

Resolution #P2304193 - Apply Community Based Violence Prevention Initiative Grant program

Commissioner Pitchford moved and supported by Commissioner Bell, to approve Resolution #P2304193.

Discussion was held.

Amend Resolution #P2304193

Commissioner Bell moved and supported by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the amended Resolution #P2304193 to change the last paragraph to read:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners approve subject to final review and approval prior to submission of the application.

Discussion was held.

Commissioner Bell and Commissioner Majerek withdrew the amendatory language.

Table Resolution #P2304193

Commissioner Bell moved and supported by Commissioner Ott, to table Resolution #P2304193.

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

7 YEAS: Harrison, Majerek, Ott, Pitchford, Bell, Curran and Elliott.

4 NAYS: Hinkelman, Vollrath, Wuerfel and Freehling.

Motion carried.

ADDED RESOLUTION(S): None.

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

Committees:

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

COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):

Chairperson Elliott asked to skip the Commissioner Reports due to other scheduled meetings being held later today.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: None.

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):

Becky Payne, Lakeside, spoke about the low employee salaries and the Salary Study.

Matt Kirkus, New Buffalo, spoke about smart technology.

Adolf Pelzer, Hagar Township, spoke about violence.

Rick Briand, Niles Charter Township, liked that Resolution #P2304193 was tabled and he spoke about violence.

Michael Hoyh, Benton Harbor City, spoke about violence in Benton Harbor.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Pitchford stated he is amending his Conflict of Interest Waiver form because he is the Executive Director of a non-profit that will be bringing in a significant amount of grants into Berrien County.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Chairperson Elliott announced the following:

- May 4, 2023 – BOC Night Meeting at New Buffalo Township Hall – 6:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 P.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.