

BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 28, 2022

Roll Call Present: Jim Curran, Chairperson
Don Meeks Sr.
David Vollrath, Vice Chair
Julie Wuerfel

Absent:

Scheduled: Brian Dissette, County Administrator
Mac Elliott, BOC Chairman
Annette Christie, Administration
Hon. Judge Mayfield, Trial Court
Carrie Smietanka-Haney, Trial Court

Others:

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:16 am.

Trial Court – Hon. Judge Mayfield & Smietanka-Haney

Smietanka-Haney discussed staffing challenges. She did note there is a possible new hire for Juvenile Director that may take place soon. Robert Clark, Attorney Magistrate, will be retiring tomorrow. She discussed alternative schedules and they are currently working with personnel regarding early and late start and end times. It was noted that Resolution P2205261 modifies the separate case manager and therapist positions into one. It is at the same pay scale.

Judge Mayfield stated they have returned to normal operations. She discussed mental health issues and the types of violence happening. They are addressing cases as quickly as possible. She is waiting on a Supreme Court decision on discretion to continue using a mix of Zoom and in person hearings. She noted criminal cases are mainly in person and she hopes to increase in person hearings for both drug and mental health treatment courts as it makes it easier to assess behaviors. There are not currently many felony cases on the backlog. There is a larger backlog of civil cases, but with the majority being done remotely, they are getting through them.

Judge Mayfield discussed setting the tone for people entering the courthouse and the security staff as well as diffusing and deescalating situations.

Q & A – Dissette & Elliott

Dissette discussed the letter explaining the County's perspective on Broadband. There have been two awards – Bainbridge and Oronoko Townships, which will allow them to be fully covered. The BCBIT recommends a slow down on grants until the complete parcel mapping is finished.

Dissette met with Wightman and its outside team regarding Juvenile Center designs and anticipates a written proposal next week. Abonmarche is also working with an outside team to provide a proposal as well. Dissette will tour Ottawa and Muskegon and set up a tour for the entire Board if it would fit our needs.

Elliott verified the consent calendar. Discussions ensued regarding the alternative set up in the Board room. The Committee concurred to reset it back to the original layout.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Meeks, supported by Vollrath, to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2022 meeting. Motion Carried.

Resolutions

The following Resolutions were moved forward to the full Board:

A2204254 – Approval of complement changes to place Animal Control Officers under the umbrella of the Sheriff's Department.

A2205260 – Sign agreement between Avenue Family Network, Inc. and Berrien County to operate the West Michigan Guardianship Program.

A2204271 – Award project to LDV Custom Specialty Vehicles for the mobile incident command vehicle.

A2205272 – Authorize a MSP to conduct a speed study on Harbert Road from Red Arrow Highway to its end at Lake Michigan.

The following Resolution was deferred to the Committee on Committee for introduction to the full Board:

A2205263 – Authorize Trial Court Family Division to submit a grant application for the Racial and Ethnic Disparities Reduction II grant.

County Property Use Requests

The following County Property Use Requests were approved:

Krasl Art Center – Administration Building parking lot from 5:00pm on July 8 through July 10 for the Krasl Art Fair on the Bluff.

The Alex Mandarino Foundation – Area below Courthouse from 6:00am to 11:00am on June 18.

Board Appointments – Christie

The following appointments were recommended by the Committee:

Community Corrections Advisory Board – Debra Panozzo (Citizen) and Ann Hart (Business Community)
911 Advisory Board – Dennis Sexton

Public Comments

Tony Benhart, Sodus Township – Read statement from local engineer regarding the Napier Avenue Bridge. He stated it can be re-decked in 2 months. Discussions ensued regarding decks and pilings.

Melissa Clapper, St. Joseph Charter Township – Thanked the Committee for continuing the Court updates.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

J Arent

Jennifer Arent
Recording Secretary