

BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of August 25, 2022

Roll Call Present: Jim Curran, Chairperson
Jim Martin
David Vollrath, Vice Chair
Julie Wuerfel

Scheduled: Brian Dissette, County Administrator
Mac Elliott, BOC Chair
Mark Heyliger and Kevin Stack, Road Department
Paul Jancha Jr., Public Defender
Mary Spiegel and Pam Hoekwater, Legal Aid

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:26 am.

Legal Aid Update

The majority of what Legal Aid does is in Civil Court – house foreclosure, divorce, denied public benefits. They are expanding their assistance with those that are seeking expungement, those where it is affecting their ability to gain housing or employment. They have gained some public/private partnerships and the attorneys at Whirlpool are a great example of that. They are also assisting with expungement work. They continue to have an internship program which helps with case work. They have closed 3% more cases in 2021 than in 2020. This means helping veterans, seniors, abuse survivors, and more.

Public Defender Update

Paul Jancha, Jr. told the committee that they are on budget for the 3rd qtr. of 2022. Their FY23 grant was approved and a resolution will be forthcoming to accept that. There has been some staff turnover since his last report, however their social workers are fully staffed and the hiring process is underway for a legal assistant and an investigator. With the large number of indigent services across the state that are hiring attorneys, finding good attorneys is a little bit of a challenge. There has been an increase in caseload but they are responding and handling it well.

Road Department

Mark Heyliger and Kevin Stack came in with Dan Fette to update the committee on the Whirlpool trail project, a project that the Admin Committee went and looked at previously. The Road Department is applying for the permit on behalf of Whirlpool to MDOT as required by them. Corporate Counsel is working on the maintenance agreement language. There was a brief discussion about a proposed round about being placed at the Napier Ave. Miami Road intersection. Napier Avenue bridge will return to (4) lanes for a while until mid-October where the remainder of the repair will be completed.

Q & A – Dissette & Elliott

Resolutions will be coming forward for the final purchase of the AEP building agreement and the permit for the tower at the Buchanan property.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Wuerfel, supported by Martin, to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2022 meeting. Motion Carried.

Resolutions

The following Resolution was signed by the Committee:

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annette Christie
Secretary