

**BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of November 10, 2022**

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

**Absent:**

**Scheduled:** Brian Dissette, County Administrator  
Mac Elliott, BOC Chair  
Carrie Smietanka-Haney, Trial Court  
Gregory Skipper, Juvenile Center  
Kevin Stack, Road Department

**Others:** Marcy Hamilton, SWMPC  
Annette Christie, Administration  
Thaddeus Hackworth, Corporate Counsel

**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 9:13 am.

**Trial Court – Smietanka-Haney**

Smietanka-Haney reviewed Resolution P2211405 that removes one Temporary Deputy Register and adds one Full-Time Deputy Register. The Committee concurred to move the resolution forward to PHSC.

**Juvenile Center – Skipper**

Skipper gave a brief update. They are operating with 16 beds in detention with 11 boys and 3 girls currently housed. They have 11 job openings and have partnered with the Courthouse for recruiting on several social media platforms. They have recently hired 6 people. He discussed their programming called RBT (Rational Behavioral Therapy). Wuerfel asked how it is working with DLR. Skipper stated they had a meeting on Tuesday and will follow up again on November 28<sup>th</sup>. He is impressed with their ability to forecast numbers and needs. He invited the Commissioners to visit at any time.

**Road Department TAP Grant – Stack**

Stack reviewed Resolution A2211414 for the \$900,000 TAP Grant application. He stated the funding must be expended by the end of the State FY23. The high cost of this section is due to 2 bridges – one over railroad tracks and one over the Galien River. Hamilton discussed the project and noted that New Buffalo Township will provide maintenance as part of their parks system. The Pokagon Band offered a cash match, but will not sign a contract until the exact dollar amount is known. Discussions ensued regarding liability. The Committee concurred to move the resolution forward.

**\*ADDED\* Resolution A2211398**

This resolution is to approve the abandonment and discontinuance of a portion of Central Avenue in Watervliet Township. Stack reviewed the map and noted there are 2 documents that needed to be signed. One landowner's signature was inadvertently left off one document. Hackworth stated he did not sign the resolution because of this. He reviewed the process of a road abandonment. In his legal opinion, this omission of a signature is a technical defect. The petition should be sent back for the landowner to sign. If a signature is unable to be obtained, then a public hearing can be held. Discussions ensued. Curran recommended sending the documents back to the petitioner for proper signatures. The Committee concurred.

### **Q & A – Dissette & Elliott**

Dissette expanded on the conversation that began in the Committee of the Whole regarding the difficulty in attracting engineers for the Road Department. He read an email from Abonmarche in which they emphasized their difficulties as well with finding new hires. Countywide, Dissette noted we have 59 current vacancies with 40 of them being full time positions.

Martin asked Elliott to have the budget resolution be pulled from the Consent Calendar and have it voted on separately.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Wuerfel, supported by Martin, to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2022 meeting.  
Motion Carried.

### **Resolutions**

The following Resolutions were signed by the Committee:

A2210366 – Authorize dog license renewal date to coincide with rabies vaccinations.

A2211397 – Adopt changes to County Local Road System Certification due to US 31 completion.

A2211403 – Approve contract with Defense Counsel for legal representation for indigent parents and children.

A2211404 – Approve lease agreement with Fiskars Properties for Public Defender's office.

A2211414 – Authorize application for TAP Grant for non-motorized facility in New Buffalo Township.

**\*Added Resolution A2211413** – Christie reviewed the fuel bids. The resolution rescinds last week's award and allows execution of a contract with Co-Alliance.

### **Public Comment**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

JArent

Jennifer Arent  
Recording Secretary