

**BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 19, 2022**

**CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott called the regular Board of Commissioners' (BOC) meeting to order at 10:32 A.M. in the BOC's room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

**INVOCATION:**

Commissioner Robert Harrison gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

Commissioner Julie Wuerfel 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, James Martin, Ezra Scott, David Vollrath, Julie Wuerfel, Mamie Yarbrough and R. McKinley Elliott.

0 ABSENT.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 2022 SPECIAL MEETING AND  
APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 2022 REGULAR MEETING:**

Commissioner Curran moved and supported by Commissioner Vollrath, to approve the BOC special and regular meeting minutes of May 12, 2022. Motion carried and no nays. 1 Abstain: Martin (Commissioner James Martin was appointed today as the Commissioner of District #3 at the Special Board meeting held at 8:35 A.M.)

**COMMUNICATION(S):**

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

- Mahlon McMichael, Niles, Michigan, an email regarding property on North Fifth Street, Niles, Michigan, received on May 11, 2022.

**REQUISITION REVIEW - Annette Christie:**

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

**PRESENTATION – James Hettinger - Berrien County Strategic Plan:**

James Hettinger, Urban Development Services, gave a presentation on the Berrien County Strategic Initiative Priorities 2022: A 10 Year Plan to Build Resilience in Berrien County. He discussed the following:

- Introduction
- Impact of COVID-19
- American Rescue Plan (ARPA) and Berrien County Strategic Initiatives
- Strategic Initiatives and a Plan Vision
- Strategic Initiatives and the Recovery Mission
- Strategic Initiatives and the Values of Governance
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
- Prioritizing Strategic Initiatives
- Recommended Funding Strategies
- Summary

Discussion was held.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS 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 and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9B-C). The public should refer to the resolution # that they are commenting on as a part of their comments:**  
None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Commissioner Vollrath moved and supported by Commissioner Scott, to approve today’s Consent Calendar as presented:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
P2205005	Monthly Per Diems
F2205031	Weekly bills & Road payables
B2205078	Weekly requisitions
P2205249	Dirt on Weed King Media Contract Health Department
P2205267	Fair Food Network Double Up Food Bucks
A2205273	2022 Marine Safety Grant Agreement
A2205274	FLOCK Safety Agreement
F2205279	Contract for Foreclosure Process
F2205281	Approve Tax Rates for Equalization
A2205283	Additional approval needed for Blue Ridge Path

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

**ADDED RESOLUTION(S):**

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
B22051169	Honorary Resolution

Chairperson Elliot spoke about Sheriff Forrest "Nick" Jewell and read the following Honorary Resolution #B22051169:

***WHEREAS, Forrest (Nick) Jewell was born on June 23, 1929 in Berrien County; and***

***WHEREAS, he graduated from Benton Harbor High School, attended college, and served two years in the military before beginning a life in law enforcement; and***

***WHEREAS, he worked for 12 years in the Berrien County Sheriff's Office, eight of those years as a command officer, before defeating the incumbent Sheriff and becoming the Berrien County Sheriff on January 1, 1969; and***

***WHEREAS, on the campaign trail, Jewell said that he aimed to open a sub-station on the South end of the County, re-establish the junior deputy program, secure a lie detector for the department, add a Chief to the Detective Division, work to prevent the loss of officers to the private sector, and arrange for extended training for all of his officers; and***

***WHEREAS, Sheriff Jewell accomplished that and then some – adding a narcotics lab, crime lab, bomb squad, and a greatly improved communications system to the department; and***

***WHEREAS, an outstanding law enforcement officer, Sheriff Jewell remained in office until he retired November 1, 1991 after 23 years as Sheriff and 36 years overall in the field; and***

***WHEREAS, beyond the badge, he was a dedicated family man, dedicated to his Church, and dedicated to his community; and***

***WHEREAS**, at the age of 92, the man who will forever be known as Sheriff Jewell, passed away over the weekend, leaving behind a legacy that will live on in his family and the law enforcement community forever.*

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners remembers and honors Sheriff Forrest (Nick) Jewell for being a true asset to the citizens of Berrien County and sends their condolences to his family during their time of grief.*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Sheriff Jewell's life, actions, and contributions reflect most favorably upon himself, his family, the Berrien County Sheriff's Office, the County of Berrien, the State of Michigan, and the United States of America.*

**RESPECTFULLY,  
BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Motion:**

Chairperson Elliott moved and supported by Commissioner Yarbrough, to approve the Honorary Resolution #B22051169.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

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

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

Commissioner Curran welcomed and introduced Ashley Herr the new Animal Control Shelter Manager.

**COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):**

The Commissioners presented their outside committee reports.

Commissioner Scott requested updates on the lead water and the water filter distribution in Benton Harbor from the Health Department.

**ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

Administrator Brian Dissette gave his Administrator's Report.

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

Nancy Mazzucco, Coloma Township, spoke about a state statue regarding road departments in the removal of trees.

Nancy Pedde, Lakeland Spectrum Hospital – United Through Motherhood initiative and spoke about a diaper drive and a community read.

Annie Brown, South Haven, introduced herself as a candidate for State Representative, District 38.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:**

Chairperson Elliott stated the following announcement is on today's Agenda:

- Committee of the Whole – Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 8:35 A.M.
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners – Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 10:30 A.M.
- County facilities closed Monday, May 30, 2022 in observance of Memorial Day.
- Night Meeting – Thursday, June 2, 2022, 6:00 P.M. - Berrien County Youth Faith – Youth Memorial Building @ 9122 U.S. Hwy 31, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 A.M.

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R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

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Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

***Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.***