

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Virtual Board Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2021

Staff Present: Equalization Director Warren Parrish (Left the meeting at 10:49 A.M.)
Equalization Deputy Director Katie Bauer (Left the meeting at 10:49 A.M.)
County Administrator Brian Dissette
Sheriff Paul Bailey
Executive Assistant to the Administrator Annette Christie
County Clerk Sharon Tyler

BOC Present: R. McKinley Elliott
(In-person)

CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

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

INVOCATION:

Commissioner Jon Hinkelman gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Commissioner Michael Majerek 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 (via Zoom in St. Joseph City, MI), Jim Curran (via Zoom in Niles Charter Township, MI), Teri Sue Freehling (via Zoom in Baroda Township, MI), Robert Harrison (via Zoom in Lincoln Charter Township, MI), Jon Hinkelman (via Zoom in Watervliet, MI), Michael Majerek (via Zoom in Niles City, MI), Don Meeks (via Zoom in Benton Charter Township, MI), Ezra Scott (via Zoom in New Buffalo Township, MI), David Vollrath (via Zoom in Coloma Charter Township, MI), Julie Wuerfel (via Zoom in Royalton Township, MI), Mamie Yarbrough (via Zoom in Benton Harbor City, MI) and R. McKinley Elliott.

0 ABSENT: None.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 13, 2021 MEETING:

Commissioner Scott moved and supported by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the BOC virtual regular meeting minutes of May 13, 2021.

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

County Clerk Sharon Tyler received and distributed to the Board the following communication(s):

- Menominee County Board of Commissioners, a resolution requesting that the State of Michigan fulfill its statutory obligation with regard to State revenue sharing payments, received on May 13, 2021.
- Dickinson County Board of Commissioners, a resolution in support of the State of Michigan to fulfill its statutory obligations with regard to State revenue sharing payment amounts, received on May 13, 2021.

- Muskegon County Board of Commissioners, a resolution regarding vaccine passports within the boundaries of Muskegon County, received on May 18, 2021.

PRESENTATIONS – Millage Rates Equalization Presentation – Warren Parrish & Board Appointment Process – Annette Christie:

Millage Rates Equalization Presentation – Warren Parrish

Equalization Director Warren Parrish gave a PowerPoint presentation on 2021 Millage Rates and discussed the following:

- 2020 Berrien County Millage Rates:
 - Operating 4.7723
 - 911 0.4500
 - Public Safety 0.3500
 - Senior 0.3000
 - Parks 0.1000
- Proposed 2021 Berrien County Millage Rates:
 - Operating 4.7680
 - 911 0.4495
 - Public Safety 0.3496
 - Senior 0.2997
 - Parks 0.0999
- The proposed 2021 Berrien County Millage Rates have been reduced by a Headlee Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF) 0.9991:

2020 Millage		2021 MRF		2021 Rate
4.7723	X	0.9991	X	4.7680
0.4500	X	0.9991	X	0.4495
0.3500	X	0.9991	X	0.3496
0.3000	X	0.9991	X	0.2997
0.1000	X	0.9991	X	0.0999

- Why?
 - From the State Tax Commission Bulletin:

“The Headlee Millage Reduction Fraction intends that, ignoring additions and losses, any current operating millage must be reduced if it would produce more tax dollars, adjusted for inflation, than it did last year. While this calculation may result in a millage reduction fraction that is less than 1.0000, it cannot exceed 1.0000.”
- What does that mean exactly?
 - If taxable value increases too much from certain sources, then millage rates must be reduced so that the increase doesn't produce more tax dollars than the prior year.
- Taxable Value Can Increase:
 - Inflation.
 - New property construction.
 - Annexed property.
 - Omitted property.
 - Transfers of ownership (uncappings).
 - Exempt property becoming taxable.
- The Headlee Rollback Calculation
- Taking a Closer Look
- What Does this Mean for Berrien County?
 - Cannot prevent a Headlee rollback.
 - Collecting less millage than planned.
 - Collecting more millage than was used in budget projections.
 - Increased revenue from 2020.

- 2.96% Taxable Value Increase.
- Reductions are permanent.
 - Sets a new “baseline” rate going forward.

Discussion was held.

Board Appointment Process – Annette Christie

Executive Assistant to the Administrator Annette Christie discussed the history, policy and the Board appointment process. Discussion was held.

BOARD APPOINTMENT(S) – Administration:

Commissioner Curran moved and seconded by Commissioner Vollrath, to approve the following Board Appointment recommended by the Administration Committee:

- **Jury Board**

- Re-appoint Virginia Antonson to a 6 year term – term expires April 30, 2027.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

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

Motion carried, no nays.

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

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

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 through the YouTube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village. The public should refer to the resolution # that they are commenting on as a part of their comments: **None.**

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Curran moved and supported by Commissioner Vollrath, to include Added Resolutions #A2105211 and #P2105233 to the Consent Calendar, and to approve today’s Consent Calendar as presented:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
P2105005	Monthly Per Diems
F2105031	Weekly Bills
B2105078	Weekly Requisitions
A2105221	Agreement with Buchanan Township
A2105224	Authorize upgrade for Digital Court records
A2105225	2021 Slow No Wake Grant Agreement
F2105226	Berrien Bus / RESA Contract
F2105229	Annual Millage Rates Declaration Equalization
A2105231	Speed Study Three Oaks Township
A2105211	Agreement with Chikaming Township
P2105233	Michigan Health Endowment Fund Acceptance

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

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

Motion carried, no nays.

ADDED RESOLUTION(S):

The following resolutions were moved to the Consent Calendar:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
A2105211	Agreement with Chikaming Township
P2105233	Michigan Health Endowment Fund Acceptance

COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):

The Commissioners presented their outside Commissioners' Reports.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Administrator Dissette gave his Administrator's Report.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Those speaking through the YouTube chat during public comments shall identify themselves by name (including last name) and city, township, or village:

Tony Benhart, Sodus Township, commented about Board Appointments.

Adolf Pelzer, Hagar Township, commented on the BOC meetings on YouTube and suggested that if the County is considering expanding, they may want to consider the vacant Benton Harbor school buildings.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Scott commented about getting back to in-person BOC meetings. Administrator Dissette addressed the comment and stated we are watching closely for the new rules from Governor Whitmer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS – All meetings being held virtually:

Chairperson Elliott announced the following:

- Board of Commissioners meeting will be held at 10:30 A.M., Thursday, May 27, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 A.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.