

BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of July 22, 2021

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

Scheduled: Brian Dissette, County Administrator
Ezra Scott, BOC Vice Chairperson
Annette Christie, Executive Assistant to the Administrator
Sheriff Paul Bailey, Berrien County Sheriff Dept.
Deputy Kelly Laesch, Crime Prevention
Kevin Stack, Road Department Engineering Supervisor
Paul Jancha Jr., Chief Public Defender

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:19 a.m.

Approval of Minutes - July 15, 2021 meeting

Motion by Vollrath, supported by Meeks, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Public Defender Update - Paul Jancha, Jr.

Berrien County has received the formal notice that the FY22 budget submitted to the MIDC was approved in full. Resolutions will follow to accept the grant and to approve the additional positions that were included in the budget. One significant change that will be occurring in the future is the responsibility of verifying indigent classification for clients will now fall on the office of the Public Defender. This task was previously assigned to the Judges. There will be another social worker added to their office as well. This position is well received by the clients and is being utilized. Going forward, when the Public Defender comes to provide updates to the Administration Committee, data regarding the Social Worker references will be included to show the benefit of the service. He said that the new location is working well and does have room for expansion.

Construction Traffic Update and Farmer Safety - Stack/Bailey/Laesch

Kevin Stack updated the Admin Committee on the MDOT Project that is affecting traffic flow of M-139. On today's BOC action agenda, Kevin asked for the Board's approval of a traffic control order that would temporarily order a 4-way stop to be located at the intersection of Linco Road/Hollywood Road (part of the detour off of M-139). Kevin worked with the Sheriff's Office to examine and monitor the intersection after multiple reports of accidents at that intersection. While this was put in place last Friday, it is necessary to officially approve it retroactively. As for the temporary traffic order to change the speed on the detour route to 45 mph, once the construction is over, the Road Department will work

with the Michigan State Police to study the speed limit to see if it may be warranted outside of the detour timeframe. The permanent change would have to go through the MSP.

The farmer safety discussion was a carryover from last week's BOC meeting where Commissioner Hinkelman alerted the BOC to the dangers farmers are facing due to impatient, rude, and obnoxious shared road -vehicle drivers. This was especially bad on the day that the highway was shut down and traffic was rerouted on rural roads during the middle of the day. The Sheriff plans to put out some public service announcements about sharing the road with farmers and their equipment. Deputy Laesch mentioned going out and visiting farming homes to make sure that farm equipment is up to date with all the safety standards. During the Berrien County Youth Fair, Laesch will be pushing that message out as well. The Road Department can assist farmers that are moving large pieces of equipment from one field to another with traffic control. Farmers should contact the Road Department if they are in need of that.

Administrator Update - Brian Dissette/Vice Chairperson Ezra Scott

Administrator Dissette reviewed the USDA grant acceptance resolution A2107288 that needed to be put all the way through the BOC today. Some discussion was held about the linear park and the maintenance.

Resolutions

The following resolutions were presented and approved to move forward:

A2107280

A2107282

A2107287

Public Comment - None

Other Business

The Administration Committee gave concurrence to add permission for the presence of a Blackhawk helicopter at the previously approved "Ride to Remember" event that will be held on Sunday, September 12 and start at the Courthouse parking lot.

The Chairman noted that he approved a Berrien Community Foundation distribution to the Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$15,812.84.

Chairman Curran adjourned the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annette Christie

Executive Assistant to the Administrator