

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2022

CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott called the regular Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting to order at 8:36 A.M. in the Board of Commissioners' (BOC) room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

ROLL CALL:

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

11 PRESENT: Rayonte Bell, Jim Curran, Teri Sue Freehling, Robert Harrison, Jon Hinkelman, James Martin, Ezra Scott, David Vollrath, Julie Wuerfel, Mamie Yarbrough and R. McKinley Elliott.

1 ABSENT: Michael Majerek.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2022 MEETING:

Commissioner Freehling moved and seconded by Commissioner Scott, to approve the Committee of the Whole minutes held on July 28, 2022. Motion carried, no nays.

REQUISITION REVIEW - Annette Christie:

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

SCHEDULED DISCUSSION:

- Public Safety Millage Discussion – Sheriff Paul Bailey

Sheriff Paul Bailey and Undersheriff Chuck Heit gave a PowerPoint presentation on a Public Safety Millage and discussed the following:

- What is being asked for?
 - We are asking the voters to approve a .1004 increase to the current .3496 Public Safety Millage.
- What is the average cost per household?
 - The current average taxable value of a residential property in Berrien County is \$96,000. This millage increase would cost the average homeowner \$9.60 annually.
- How much will the millage generate annually?
 - The current .3496 Public Safety Millage generates \$3,102,082 annually.
 - The increase of .1004 would generate an additional \$890,873.
 - The total if approved by the voters would be \$3,992,955.
- How long does the millage last?
 - The current Public Safety Millage expires in 2024 and would be up for a renewal at that time. The proposal would be to ask the voters to repeal the current millage and replace it with a new .4500 millage for five years.
- How will the increased revenues be used?
 - The increased revenues will be used to add four additional deputies to our road patrol. Two of the deputies will be assigned to north patrol and two of the deputies will be assigned to south patrol. The average cost with benefits per deputy is \$110,000. The cost of these four deputies would be \$440,000.

- They have also identified a need for \$50,000 for a Special Team that requires annual training and \$250,000 for OPEB costs. The remainder, \$150,873 would be allocated for capital projects.
- Millage Funds Breakdown
 - Public Safety Millage Enhancement from .3496 to .4500.
 - Using 2022 Taxable Values
 - Millage Enhancement .1004 \$ 890,873.00
 - Deputy -North Patrol \$ (110,000.00)
 - Deputy -North Patrol \$ (110,000.00)
 - Deputy -South Patrol \$ (110,000.00)
 - Deputy -South Patrol \$ (110,000.00)
 - Capital Projects \$ (150,873.00)
 - Special Team Overtime Pay \$ (50,000.00)
 - OPEB -Retiree Healthcare Liability \$ (250,000.00)
 - Balance \$ -
 - Additional Deputies assigned to the Road Patrol will help reduce General Fund overtime.
 - The 2022 estimated average taxable value of a residential property in Berrien County is \$96,000.
 - This millage increase would cost the average homeowner \$9.60 annually.
- Resolution: #C2208329 – Public Safety Millage. Dated for August 11, 2022.

Director of Financial Services Doug James was available to answer questions. Discussion was held.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Administrator Brian Dissette spoke about the next COW meeting. He stated that Dr. Loren Hamel, President of Spectrum/Lakeland, will talk about the Juvenile Center and how it relates to the Spectrum/Lakeland General Hospital. Also, Chris Cooke will be there to discuss a draft policy on trails.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Per the Berrien County Board of Commissioners’ Bylaws, 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):

Melissa Clapper, St. Joseph Charter Township, congratulated County Clerk Sharon Tyler and Chief Deputy Clerk Sheila Reitz on the State Primary Election and all the work they do on the election process.

Administrator Dissette acknowledged Clerk Tyler and Chief Deputy Reitz on the Primary Election.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 A.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.