

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**April 21, 2022**

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2022, in Commissioner Chambers. Due to COVID-19 concerns, public participation was offered via Zoom.

Chair Dyes called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Jones provided the Invocation. Commissioner Marchetti led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, Annie File, Skip Dyes, Roseann Marchetti, Robert Benjamin, Mike Grice and Jeremiah Jones.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy County Administrator Matthew Newton, Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow, Deputy Finance Director Becky Moore and Clerk/Register Monica McMichael.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

Visitors present introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Scott McGraw introduced himself as a candidate for the Office of State Representative in the 36th District (old 59th District).

Mason Township resident Charlie Arnold expressed support for the proposed ORV Ordinance.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice Chair Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the April 21, 2022, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda with the addition of M-94-22. Discussion followed. Motion to approve the amended agenda carried by voice vote.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ORV ORDINANCE**

Chair Dyes opened the public hearing for the ORV Ordinance.

Ontwa Township resident Norm Krupp spoke in support of the ordinance. He informed the board that he was President of the Edwardsburg Snowmobile Club. The club was willing to promote safety and guidance for ORVs if the ordinance was approved.

Chair Dyes instructed Commissioner Laylin to read the ordinance. Chair Dyes then offered Charlie Arnold and Norm Krupp additional time to speak after the ordinance was read.

LaGrange Township resident Kent Clark stated he provided written communication to the board with information from neighboring St. Joseph and Van Buren Counties. Both counties had ordinances; however, they reported no issues with ORVs. He added that 61 counties in Michigan had ordinances with none requiring a permit. Currently, the State charged \$26 for an ORV license and \$10 for a trail permit.

Norm Krupp spoke again and questioned the proposed \$75 fee. Riders purchase gasoline and pay taxes already. Bicyclists use the roads and pay nothing.

Mason Township resident Charlie Arnold echoed Mr. Krupp's information regarding the 61 counties with ordinances who do not charge permit fees.

Mason Township resident Lisa Winslow spoke in support of the ordinance. She did not agree, however, with the permit fee. She also suggested the ordinance state that rear and side mirrors be required.

Larry Beesbore of Silver Creek Township stated his support of the ordinance. He would like to use an ORV to haul materials for his horses and to deliver fuel to his boat on Magician Lake. He added that \$75 for an annual permit was too much.

Silver Creek Township resident Terry Ausra asked commissioners to consider the negative affects of the ordinance. He and other local farmers were concerned about ORVs driving through fields as they allowed easier access than larger vehicles.

Silver Creek Township resident Gregory Martin suggested the county implement fines for ORVs that damage private property. He went on to state his support of the ordinance but added the registration fee was too high.

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice Chair Grice, to close the hearing. Motion carried by voice vote. The public hearing ended at 5:40 p.m.

### **RECOGNITIONS**

None.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Equalization Director Tami Stewart presented the Annual Equalization Report.

Alan Panter of Yeo & Yeo shared the FY2021 Audit.

A video was shared with Ben Cohen of Rose Street Advisors providing information on the transition from Maxwell Health to Employee Navigator. Questions should be directed to Deputy Administrator Matt Newton.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice Chair Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, that the following items be voted on at one time by roll call vote and be considered as a consent agenda by the Board of Commissioners:

(M-78-22) A motion to approve Claims dated April 8, 2022.

(M-79-22) A motion to approve the April 7, 2022 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Laylin, File, Dyes, Marchetti, Benjamin, Grice and Jones.

No (0): None.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Commissioners Marchetti and Jones offered Committee Reports.

### **APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Commissioner Marchetti reported no active openings.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Deputy Administrator Matthew Newton stated that the report was in the board packet.

### **FINANCE REPORT**

The Finance Report was included in the packet.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE**

No report.

## **COUNTY PARTNERS**

None.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATE**

Prosecutor Fitz invited board members to attend the Crime Victim's Ceremony at the Law and Courts flagpole Friday, April 29, 2022, at 12:15 p.m. He also answered a question regarding a veterinarian bill for comfort dog Bella.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **R-80-22**

## **RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE 2022 STATE EQUALIZED VALUE REPORT AS SUBMITTED**

Commissioner File moved, seconded by Commissioner Benjamin, to approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Equalization Department has examined the assessment rolls of the 15 Townships and 2 Cities within Cass County to determine whether the real and personal property in the respective Townships and Cities has been equally and uniformly assessed; and

WHEREAS, based on this examination and studies it conducted, the Equalization Department has prepared and presented to the County Board of Commissioners the attached 2022 Equalization Report; and

WHEREAS, said Equalization Report presents recommended County equalized valuation for each of the 15 Townships and 2 Cities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the recommended County equalized valuations were determined by adding to, or deducting from, the assessed valuations of taxable property in the 15 Townships and 2 Cities within the County, the amount necessary to arrive at the appropriate proportion of true cash value.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cass County Board of Commissioners Accepts and adopts the recommended County equalized valuations presented in the 2022 Equalization Report prepared by the Cass County Equalization Department for a total 2022 Equalized valuation of real and personal property of \$3,635,182,397 with the breakdown of equalization valuation by property classification as follows:

Agricultural Real Property	\$ 552,494,138
Commercial Real Property	\$ 112,563,300
Industrial Real Property	\$ 59,208,600
Residential Real Property	\$ 2,609,214,528
Developmental Real Property	<u>\$ 0</u>
 Total Real Property	 \$ 3,333,480,566
Total Personal Property	<u>\$ 301,701,831</u>
Total Real and Personal Property	\$ 3,635,182,397

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cass County Board Chairperson and the County Clerk of the Board of Commissioners are authorized to sign the report; further, that the County Administrator and the Equalization Director are authorized to represent Cass County at both Preliminary and Final State Equalization sessions, if deemed necessary.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners File, Dyes, Marchetti, Benjamin, Grice, Jones and Laylin.

No (0): None.

Resolution R-80-22 carried by roll call vote.

**M-81-22**

Vice Chair Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Benjamin, to approve the FY2021 Audit. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-82-22**

Commissioner Jones moved, seconded by Vice Chair Grice, to approve Quarterly Budget Adjustments. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-83-22**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to introduce the Cass County ORV Ordinance. Discussion followed. Deputy Administrator Newton agreed to consult legal counsel on the process. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-84-22**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the Sheriff contract with Silver Creek Township. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-85-22**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the revised Commissioner Per Diem & Mileage Policy. Motion carried by voice vote.

**R-86-22**

Commissioner Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the following resolution with a correction to the language:

**RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH PER DIEM & MILEAGE WORKGROUP**

WHEREAS, the Cass County Board of Commissioners is responsible for the oversight and approval of commissioner per diem and mileage reimbursements; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner Per Diem & Mileage Policy requires the establishment of a Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup for the purpose of authorizing and approving commissioner per diem and mileage reimbursements; and

WHEREAS, the Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup will be responsible for reviewing quarterly Per Diem & Mileage Reimbursement Request Forms and the submission of said forms to the Chair for final approval of payment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cass County Board of Commissioners to establish the Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup. The Per Diem Workgroup shall consist of 2 members of the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED those appointed to the Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup shall be on a rotating basis and shall serve two (2) consecutive quarters before new members shall be appointed.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Dyes, Marchetti, Benjamin, Grice, Jones, Laylin and File.

No (0): None.

Resolution R-86-22 carried by roll call vote.

**M-87-22**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to appoint Commissioner Laylin to the Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup for a term ending 09/30/2022. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-88-22**

Commissioner File moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to appoint Commissioner Marchetti to the Per Diem & Mileage Workgroup for a term ending 09/30/2022. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-89-22**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve an expenditure of up to 8,520.00 for the purchase of Surface 4 laptops for use by all Commissioners. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote. Commissioner Benjamin abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest as he was employed by Microsoft.

**M-90-22**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to appoint Louis Csokasy to the Woodlands Board for a three-year term ending 03/31/2025. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-91-22**

Commissioner File moved, seconded by Vice Chair Grice, to appoint Scott Teter to the Woodlands Board for a three-year term ending 03/31/2025. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-92-22**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to appoint Ron McAdam to the Library Board for a four-year term ending 03/31/2026. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-93-22**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to appoint Scott Swanson to the Veteran's Trust Fund Board for a two-year term ending 02/22/2024. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-94-22**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Benjamin, to approve a Tentative Agreement between the Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council, Road Deputies, Detectives, Sheriff, and the Cass County Board of Commissioners and authorize the Chair to sign the final Collective Bargaining Agreement. Discussion followed.

The Chair called for a roll call vote:

Yes (5): Commissioners Laylin, File, Dyes, Marchetti and Benjamin.

No (2): Commissioners Grice and Jones.

Motion M-94-22 carried by roll call vote.

**CLOSED SESSION**

None.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Marchetti informed board members of a fish fry to be held Friday, April 8, 2022, from 4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. at Our Lady of the Lake. She also shared that GIS Director Erika Espeland met with Ontwa Township officials earlier that day.

Commissioner Jones asked anyone with questions or concerns regarding the Veterans Office to contact him.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Skip Dyes

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register