

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

August 17, 2023

Vice-Chair Laylin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers on Thursday, August 17, 2023. Commissioner Howie offered the Invocation. Chair Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Circuit Court File Room Supervisor/Deputy Clerk & Register of Deeds Emily Bogue called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, James Lawrence, Joyce Locke, Jeremiah Jones, Mary Howie, Samuel Barrera, Roseann Marchetti and RJ Lee.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Matthew Newton, Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow and Deputy Finance Director James Tito.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Locke moved, seconded by Commissioner Barrera, to approve the August 17, 2023, Cass County Committee of the Whole Agenda. Motion to approve the agenda carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Barrera moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the July 20, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

PRESENTATIONS

Treasurer Hope Anderson relayed the Annual Report of foreclosure funds from year 2021 to the Board of Commissioners.

Matt Costello from the Wayne State University Center for Behavioral Health and Justice was present to recognize the county's Medical Assisted Treatment Program. He thanked Chief Judge Carol Bealor for her vision in bringing the grant funded program to fruition in Cass County. He then presented Sheriff Behnke, Judge Bealor, Woodlands Substance Use Director Bob Weber, Captain Jon Schoup and the Board of Commissioners with certificates of recognition for their work in making the program a success.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioners Marchetti and Jones shared Committee Reports.

DISTRICT REPORTS

Commissioners Locke, Marchetti, Jones, Howie, Lawrence and Lee provided District Reports.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Director Jennifer Rentfrow offered the Finance Report.

VETERAN'S REPORT

Veteran's Services Officer Karee Krause shared the Veteran's Report.

COUNTY PARTNERS

Conservation District Director Jake Young read a letter from the Conservation District Board of Directors that was sent to County Administrator Newton and the Board of Commissioners requesting \$125,000 in funding for FY 2024 in order to keep the SESC Program sustainable.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Judge Bealor, Prosecutor Fitz, Sheriff Behnke and Drain Commissioner Van Belle provided updates and spoke regarding the FY 24 budget.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Appointments

- i. Appointment of Samuel Barrera to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 7/31/2026.
- ii. Appointment of Tyler Augst to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 7/31/2026.
- iii. Reappointment of Dan Stutsman to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 7/31/2026.
- iv. Appointment of Christy Olson to the Historical Commission for an unexpired term ending 7/1/2025.
- v. Appointment of Mike Danielson to the Solid Waste Planning Committee as Solid Waste Industry Representative for a term expiring 6/1/2025.

The appointments will move forward to the next regular board meeting for approval.

B. MDARD Rural Readiness Grant – Housing Study

Sarah Snoeyink from Market Van Buren requested commissioners to sign as a co-applicant on a letter of intent for an MDARD Rural Readiness Grant due by August 31, 2023. If approved, the state would invite Market Van Buren and the county to continue the application process September 25, 2023, with applications due November 2, 2023. The \$50,000 award would provide a target market analysis for housing. The study would examine the gap between supply and demand. It would also analyze what type of housing communities need. Additionally, the grant would allow for the development of an action plan. Ms. Snoeyink explained that signing the letter of intent did not obligate the county financially.

Treasurer Hope Anderson asked Ms. Snoeyink if the housing study conducted within the last five years but not utilized could be tied into this grant, if funded.

Vice-Chair Laylin declared a five-minute recess.

C. Audit Services RFP

Administrator Newton explained the county received three bids for audit services with current audit firm Yeo and Yeo offering the lowest quote.

Commissioners agreed to move the item to the next regular board meeting.

D. National Preparedness Month

Administrator Newton asked commissioners to approve a resolution in support of National Preparedness Month (September).

Commissioners agreed to place Item D. on the next regular board meeting agenda.

E. Market Van Buren Economic Development Agreement

Administrator Newton explained that the county began a pilot program with Market Van Buren to provide economic development services that was set to expire on September 30, 2023. Market Van Buren proposed a three-year agreement with an annual cost of \$115,000 the first year and 2% increases each October. The three-year agreement included a rebranding of Market Van Buren with a name to-be-determined within twelve months as well as a minimum of five board seats, with two seats reserved for county commissioners.

Discussion followed regarding the length of the contract, the termination clause, multi-year planning for Market Van Buren and their employees as well as appropriate reporting to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioners agreed to move Item E. to the next regular board meeting.

F. Recission of R-229-22

Resolution R-229-22 authorized the county administrator to approve step level hiring across the full pay scale. Commissioners agreed to rescind R-229-22 which would allow the administrator to approve step level hiring at the midpoint of paygrades.

Commissioners agreed to move item F to the next regular board meeting agenda.

G. FY 24 Budget and General Appropriations Act Resolution

County Administrator Newton explained that the budgetary numbers supplied in the resolution came from the administrator recommended budget. Numbers could be adjusted if need be.

Vice-Chair Laylin requested a workshop to discuss the budget. Commissioners agreed to hold a special board meeting as well as a budget workshop at 5:15 p.m. on Thursday, August 24, 2023.

H. SWMBH Intergovernmental Contract

Board members agreed to move Item H. to the next regular board meeting.

I. FY 23 Budget amendments

Finance Director Rentfrow answered questions regarding adjustments.

Board members agreed to move Item I. to the next regular board meeting agenda.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners Lawrence, Barrera and Laylin offered comments or announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Vice-Chair Ryan Laylin

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register