

Van Buren County Board of Road Commissioners

January 12, 2023 - Regular Meeting

BE IT REMEMBERED: That on the 12th day of January, 2023 at 5:00 PM, E.D.T., the Board of County Road Commissioners for the County of Van Buren met in regular session at the Road Commission Administrative Office in Lawrence, Michigan.

PRESENT:

Road Commissioners Askew, Boze, Burleson, and Nelson
Managing Director Dan Bishop
Highway Engineer Barry Anttila
Operations Director Greg Brucks
Administrative Assistant-Board Secretary Jill Brien

ABSENT:

Commissioner Kinney (Excused)

GUESTS PRESENT:

Kurt Doroh, County Commissioner
Richard Gerdy

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Motion by Boze seconded by Askew to approve the Agenda.

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Boze to approve the Minutes of the December 15, 2022 Regular Meeting and December 19, 2022 Special Session as presented by the Board Secretary.

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1
MOTION CARRIED.

The Chairman opened the meeting to first public comment. Richard Gerdy of 48th Avenue in Hartford Township states he regularly runs on 48th Avenue which was chip sealed some time ago and is "smooth and silent" while the new "experimental chip seal" on 68th Street is "very noisy". Mr. Gerdy wanted it noted that he would not want this "new chip seal" in front of his house and to "be careful about this experiment". The Board thanked him for voicing his concerns.

County Commissioner Doroh advised that the Board of Commissioners has selected Randy Peat as Chairman of the Board, and Paul Schincariol as Vice-Chairman of the Board.

Managing Director Bishop presented Staff Reports as follows:

1. After the blizzard (Christmas) we pushed back the snow as much as possible to keep the snow and resulting melt out of the roads. Many residents have called and complained we "turfed" their yards. We informed them of our purpose and reassured them we would inspect the roadside areas this spring, as we normally do. We also reminded them we have 33 feet from the center of the road as our right of way to operate in.
2. The County Board of Commissioners did approve ARPA funding in the amount of \$1.2 million for the CR388 project in Pine Grove Township. I did inform the Township Supervisor of this commitment.
3. Our PASER Road Rating training starts in February. I plan on keeping my certification intact to use here at the Road Commission.

4. A reminder, the SW Council meeting is Feb 13. If you wish to attend please let Jill know ASAP.
5. Barry attended the Pine Grove Township meeting and answered questions regarding the CR388 project. There were several questions about the removal of trees. Barry explained that since federal funds were involved the trees needed to be removed per federal regulations.

Bishop provided a radio communication update for the Board. The provider, Horizon Broadband, canceled services on Monday to be effective immediately. We are working now to find short-term communication services.

A Voucher update was presented by Managing Director Bishop as follows:

Voucher #2287	\$244,021.22	Payroll
Voucher #2288	\$423,915.65	Accounts Payable
Voucher #2289	\$218,746.00	Payroll
Voucher #2290	\$159,109.07	Accounts Payable
Voucher #2291	\$160,132.12	Accounts Payable

Motion by Boze to approve the Vouchers, as presented.

YES: 4
 NO: 0
 ABSENT: 1
 MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Burleson to ratify the Board appointments made on October 20, 2022 to serve in 2023 as follows: Chairman - Wayne Nelson; Vice-Chairman - W.C. Askew, Sr.; Board Secretary - Jill Brien; Chief Fiscal Officer - Dan Bishop, until such time as he retires; and Board Attorney - Varnum Law.

YES: 4
 NO: 0
 ABSENT: 1
 MOTION CARRIED.

Managing Director Bishop presented a Resolution received from Geneva Township monetarily supporting a mill and pave project on CR384 from 70th Street to CR687 in the amount of \$150,000.00. Consideration of the Township's proposal was postponed until the next regular meeting of the Board on February 2, 2023.

Motion by Boze, seconded by Askew to approve the KATS Contributed Services Agreement (FY2024) and to continue with the current representatives as follows:

Technical Committee: Barry Anttila, Representative; Joel Hoort, Alternate
 Policy Committee: Gregory H. Kinney, Representative; Doug Burleson, Alternate

YES: 4
 NO: 0
 ABSENT: 1
 MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Nelson provided an update for the Board and those present regarding the hiring of the new Managing Director. Once the negotiated Employment Contract has been approved by the Road Commission's attorney and Bret Witkowski's attorney, Mr. Witkowski intends to begin employment on a part-time basis, as available with full time employment to commence on March 6th. The Finance and HR Director, Linnea Rader, will serve as "Acting Managing Director" during the interim period of Bishop's retirement departure and Witkowski's arrival as full time Managing Director. Nelson anticipated that the Employment Contract would be ready for consideration by the Board at its next regular meeting.

Motion by Boze to adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION 2023-01

WHEREAS: Public Act 51 of 1951, as amended, provides that the Michigan Department of Transportation shall jointly, with the Board of County Road Commissioners, ascertain and fix the total mileage of County Primary Roads and the total mileage of County Local Roads in each county of the state which have been taken over as County Primary and County Local Roads; and,

WHEREAS: In complying with the provisions of said Act, the Michigan Department of Transportation has requested that this Board certify the mileage and location of such roads required by said Act to be fixed and ascertained.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of County Road Commissioners of the County of Van Buren, Michigan, does hereby certify that all of the roads on which lengths have been entered along the road bands of the attached township and enlarged section maps are normally open to automobile traffic during the months of May through October, and are under the jurisdiction of the Van Buren County Road Commission as follows:

Township	Sheet Numbers	Township	Sheet Numbers
Pine Grove	80-1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G	Antwerp	80-11, 11B, 11C, 11D, 11E, 11F, 11G, 11H, 11J, 11K, 11L, 11M, 11N, 11P, 11Q, 11R, 11S, 11T, 11U, 11V, 11W, 11X, 11Y, 11Z, 11AA, 11BB, 11CC, 11DD, 11EE, 11FF, 11GG, 11HH, 11JJ, 11KK, 11LL, 11MM, 11NN, 11PP, 11QQ, 11RR, 11SS, 11TT, 11UU, 11VV, 11WW, 11XX, 11YY
Bloomington	80-2, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F	Paw Paw	80-12, 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D, 12E, 12F, 12G, 12H, 12J, 12K, 12L, 12M, 12N, 12P
Columbia	80-3, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F, 3G, 3H	Lawrence	80-13, 13A, 13B, 13C, 13D
Geneva	80-4, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4E, 4F	Hartford	80-14, 14A, 14B, 14C
South Haven	80-5, 5A, 5B, 5C	Porter	80-15, 15A(1-7), 15B(1-2), 15C(1-4), 15D, 15E, 15F
Almena	80-6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D, 6E, 6F, 6G, 6H, 6J, 6K, 6L, 6M, 6N, 6P	Decatur	80-16, 16A,
Waverly	80-7, 7A, 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F, 7G	Hamilton	80-17, 17A
Arlington	80-8, 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D, 8E	Keeler	80-18, 18A, 18B(1-11), 18C(1-5), 18D, 18E, 18F
Bangor	80-9, 9A, 9B, 9C	Urban	South Haven, Almena, Waverly, Antwerp, Paw Paw, Hartford
Covert	80-10, 10A		

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED: That Barry Anttila, Highway Engineer, is hereby authorized to electronically sign the Cover Sheet to digitally submit the certification package to the Michigan Department of Transportation.

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1

RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

Anttila provided discussion for the Board about a request received for a LED traffic sign. These signs are relatively new and while they are compliant with the Michigan Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD) and, therefore, allowed under current Road Commission Policy, they are costly to install and subject to routine maintenance as well as failures/breakdowns. Anttila stressed the importance of using sound engineering judgment should the Board decide to approve the use of LED traffic signs. Review of crash history, uniformity, driver behavior, etc. was discussed, as well as the cost of installation, replacement and maintenance. The Board requested that the matter be brought back to them at a later date for further consideration. Meanwhile, staff will research any possible ongoing studies surrounding LED sign installations.

Commissioner Updates and Reports:

- W.C. Askew, Sr. - Attended Covert Township, discussion regarding 82nd Street and possibility of additional signage. Attended Geneva Township, lots of water on CR384 at 64th Street. 16th Avenue bridge has a “big puddle” on a regular basis. Attended Bangor Township with Barry Anttila. Attended South Haven Township, Township requested he relay “kudos” to Road Commission staff for snow removal over the Christmas holiday.
- Rick Boze - Attended Keeler Township on the 3rd, relayed “kudos” for snow removal operations over the Christmas holiday. Attended Commissioner training on the 6th. Shared information from training with the Board. Discussion about possibly changing the Board’s Rules regarding “seconds” for motions made. Attended Hamilton Township on the 10th.
- Doug Burleson - Attended Pine Grove on the 4th with Barry Anttila.
- Wayne Nelson - No meetings. Attended New Commissioner training in December. Additional discussion was held regarding Board Rules. Boze and Nelson will work together to bring requested revisions to the Board.

Motion by Boze to recess the Regular Meeting to open a Regular Meeting of the Board of Public Works at 6:13 PM.

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1
MOTION CARRIED.

The Regular Meeting was reconvened at 6:21 PM with Members present as follows: Askew, Boze, Burleson, Nelson.

The Chairman opened the meeting to second public comment. None was received.

Motion by Boze to adjourn the Call of the Chair at 6:22 PM.

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1
MOTION CARRIED.

Board Secretary

Board Chairman