

Van Buren County Board of Road Commissioners

May 3, 2023 - Regular Meeting

BE IT REMEMBERED: That on the 3rd day of May, 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, Kinney and Nelson
Managing Director Bret Witkowski
Highway Engineer Barry Anttila
Finance and Human Resources Director Linnea Rader
Operations Director Greg Brucks

ABSENT:

None

GUESTS PRESENT:

Mike Chappell, County Commissioner
Kurt Doroh, County Commissioner

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

Motion by Boze seconded by Askew to appoint Linnea Rader Secretary Pro Tem for the purpose of recording and preparing the minutes of the May 3, 2023 regular meeting.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Boze to approve the Agenda.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Askew to approve the Minutes of the April 13, 2023 Regular Meeting as presented by the Board Secretary Pro Tem.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

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

Staff Reports:

Finance and HR Director Rader:

- Handed out month-end (April) budget to the Board.
- Provided Board with an update on research of options for computers/tablets for Board meetings.
- 2022 Audit is underway. Act 51 attestation page will be on June agenda.
- 2022 Annual Report is drafted, once audit is complete it will be ready for distribution.
- Summer seasonal staff interviews took place the week of April 24.
- The final report from Michigan State Police (MSP) is still not complete for the March 3 crash that killed Rene Rangel. Staff checks in regularly with MSP and the Prosecutor's Office for updates.
- Staff is working on additional opportunities for public education and outreach regarding work zone safety.
- Staff had first aid, CPR, and trenching safety training on April 28, 2023.

Operations Director Brucks:

- Pothole patching on primary and local roads countywide
- Gravel road grading countywide.
- Boom Mowing in Pine Grove Township and Decatur Township.
- Intersection sweeping in Keeler Township and Pine Grove Township, moving into Hamilton Township and Almena Township.
- De-berming in Antwerp Township.
- Shoulder maintenance in Arlington, Columbia, and South Haven Townships.
- Washout repairs countywide.

Highway Engineer Anttila:

- Paving on Burgess Road in Decatur Township has been delayed due to weather. Hoping to pave tomorrow, May 4, 2023.
- Paving on CR380 from CR665 to Columbia Township line, Bloomingdale Township on May 5th and 6th, pending weather.
- 30th Street from CR653 to M43, Almena Township, contractor will be back on-site in about six weeks so as to allow the site to dry up in order for work to continue.
- The CR 687 project from CR 342 to 90th Avenue began Monday.

Managing Director Witkowski:

- Asked the Board for feedback regarding his weekly update to them and the frequency of his communications with the Board.
- Has been meeting with local supervisors throughout the county; townships to still meet with are Paw Paw, South Haven, and Waverly.
- The advertisement for the bond has been published and the deadline for a reply is June 5.
- Met with State Rep. Andrews last week with Commissioner Kinney; the meeting went well.
- Senator Peters's office approved and is submitting a VBCRC request for \$631,000 for the Red Arrow project; great work by Barry and his staff to get this project put together quickly.
- The asset management plan will be approved at the state's next meeting on June 5, 2023.
- Presented information about the option to consider solar power for the Administration building and the new Bangor facility. Currently a federal program provides 30% of the cost of installation back.
- Presented the revised administrative facility estimate and drawings.
- Bid openings for the new Bangor facility are due on May 10 at 11 am.
- I am meeting with MDOT regional leaders on May 10 at 1 pm.
- Linnea and I are working on vehicle and equipment replacement schedules utilizing information from other counties as a template. This will help VBCRC plan for funding and replacement of equipment.
- We will provide each commissioner with talking points if they want to use them or make copies of for your meetings with your townships.
- Working with local fire departments and the areas they serve around the new Bangor facility to upgrade the well at the new Bangor facility to allow for a filling station for fire department apparatus.

The board provided consensus regarding their satisfaction with the frequency and content of communications from Managing Director Witkowski to the Board.

The board provided consensus for staff to move forward with letting bids for solar options at the Administrative building and new Bangor facility.

The board provided consensus to work with local fire departments and their serviced areas to right-size the Bangor facility well to enable a filling station for fire department apparatus at the new Bangor site. The board also provided consensus to allow the Managing Director the ability to use his judgement to negotiate a cost sharing agreement with the interested parties for the added cost of the up sized well.

Motion by Boze to approve a special request for per diem for Commissioner Kinney's attendance at the meeting with State Representative Andrews.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion regarding the requirement to bring special requests for per diem to a Board vote versus allowing the Managing Director to approve. Staff will research and provide an update at the June board meeting.

Motion by Boze, seconded by Askew to approve the Vouchers totaling \$1,310,281.70:

Voucher #2305	\$565,838.13	Accounts Payable
Voucher #2306	\$164,119.18	Payroll
Voucher #2307	\$420,708.17	Accounts Payable
Voucher #2308	\$159,616.22	Payroll

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Boze to award the bids for heavy maintenance on 80th Avenue in Porter Township (\$412,591.00) and 16th Avenue in Geneva Township (\$306,715.00) to the as-read low bidding contractor, Michigan Paving and Materials, in the best interest of the Van Buren County Road Commission, pending approval by Porter and Geneva Townships.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Moved by Boze to authorize the signature of MDOT Form 2044, Engineering Reimbursement by the Chairman and two Members of the Board.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Boze and seconded by Burleson to adopt Resolution 2023-13, as presented.

RESOLUTION 2023-13

WHEREAS: On April 6, 2023 Kristina Longcore, Safety Coordinator-Assistant to Operations Department, graduated from the Michigan Public Service Institute (MPSI); and,

WHEREAS: MPSI is a three-year training program which provides instruction designed expressly for city and county public works supervisors, managers, and directors focusing on service excellence in Public Works, communication skills, effectiveness in service delivery, critical issues, conducting effective meetings, managing negativity, developing local government's image, and creating action plans.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Road Commissioners of Van Buren County hereby recognizes and honors Kristina Longcore for her dedication to Public Works through professional development and the enhancement of individual growth.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board wishes Kristina Longcore continued success in her position at the Van Buren County Road Commission.

YES: 5
NO: 0
RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

Commissioner Updates and Reports:

- W.C. Askew, Sr., No report.
- Rick Boze, Attended Hartford and Lawrence regular meetings on 4/13.
- Doug Burleson, No report.
- Greg Kinney, Attended Decatur Township's regular meeting on 4/13. Attended KATS Policy meeting on 4/26. Met with Representative Andrews at the Road Commission office on 4/18.
- Wayne Nelson, Attended Almena Township's regular meeting on 4/19. Met with the Porter Township Supervisor with Managing Director Witkowski on 5/3. Met with the Village of Lawton with Managing Director Witkowski on 5/2.

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

County Commissioner Chappell provided feedback on the building plans for Bangor and the Administrative facility. He also provided his knowledge about well sizing for the Bangor facility.

County Commissioner Doroh shared information about grant opportunities available through the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.

Managing Director Witkowski provided an update regarding road millage proposals on the 5/2 ballot. All road millage proposals passed by an impressive percentage.

Motion by Kinney to adjourn the Call of the Chair at 6:06 PM.

YES: 5
NO: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Board Secretary

Board Chairman