

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

MAY 16, 2024

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Regular Session of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners convened at 7:01pm, Thursday, May 16, 2024, in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, County Building, Marshall, MI.

Chair Vette called the meeting to order and requested the Deputy Clerk call the roll.

Present: Comrs. Kathy-Sue Vette, Steve Frisbie, Derek King, Tommy Miller, Rochelle Hatcher, Diane Thompson, and Monique French.

Staff Present: Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, Assistant County Administrator Brad Wilcox, Corporation Counsel Kate Ambrose, HR/Labor Relations Director Kim Archambault, Communications Director Lucy Hough, and Assistant Deputy Clerk to the Board Nicole Stevens.

2. Moment of Silence/Invocation

Chair Vette called a Moment of Silence with thoughts of the Roberts family.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Comr. King led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Res.063-2024

"Moved by Comr. Thompson, second by Comr. French to approve the agenda of the May 16, 2024, Regular Session of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners, as presented."

On a **VOICE VOTE**, Motion **CARRIED**.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of the May 2, 2024, Board of Commissioners' Regular Meeting*

Minutes of the May 2, 2024, Board of Commissioners' Regular Meeting.

Res.064-2023

"Moved by Comr. Miller, second by Comr. Thompson to approve the Minutes of the May 2, 2024, Board of Commissioners' Regular Meeting, as presented."

On a **VOICE VOTE**, Motion **CARRIED**.

6. Citizens' Time

Steve Shrock, Clarendon Township Supervisor, expressed concern about the proposed bonds to be issued for Newton Township, stating that he believed the resolution needed more study before passing.

Carl Galigugh of Lee Township stated that a third of the County will be covered with solar panels, adding that he encouraged discussions between engineers and the Road Department related to the impact of such solar panels.

Scott Frederick, Sheridan Township Trustee, commented regarding the proposed bond issuance for road improvements. Mr. Frederick stated that he was told that the County didn't have the money to match a similar road improvement project within Sheridan Township, and so he was disappointed to hear that the County is able to provide the match for Newton Township.

Autumn Smith of Battle Creek said that County will be violating state statute with the passage of the resolution authorizing the issuance of bonds. Smith added that she believed that the County Board has already selected have the replacement District 3 commissioner, who she believes has been endorsed and chosen by Commissioner Steve Frisbie.

Bob Overley, Supervisor for Tekonsha Township, stated that the Newton Township bond issuance shouldn't be funded by Calhoun County.

Rusty Smith, Sheraton Township Trustee, stated that Sheraton Township is vehemently opposed to the Newton Township bond.

Rebrecca Seabring of Fredonia Township played audio to the Board regarding solar panels and their connection with China. Ms. Seabring also commented regarding potential hazards of Solar Panels.

Barry Wayne Adams of Marshall commented regarding corporate fascism, his views about the Marshall Ford Blue Oval project and the solar panel developments. Adams added that the recent denial of school bond proposals prove that people are fed up.

7. Elected/Appointed County Officials' Comments

Calhoun County Judge Michael Jaconette thanked Commissioner Kathy-Sue Vette for her years of service and expressed his appreciation.

8. Special Order of Business

A. *Resolution Regarding 2024 Opioid Settlement Funds RFP Process*

Res.065-2024

“Moved Comr. Hatcher, second by Comr. French to approve the Resolution regarding 2024 Opioid Settlement Funds RFP Process, as presented.”

On a **VOICE VOTE**, Motion **CARRIED**.

9. Consent Agenda

A. Petitions, Communications, Reports

1. Financial Statements for Information Only: April 2024

B. Resolutions

1. 2024 Native American Heritage Fund Administrative Services Agreement

2. 2024 FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board Administrative Services Agreement

3. Calhoun County 2024 Summer and Winter Property Tax Resolution

4. Hammond Farms Compost Facility Siting

5. CCRD Traffic Control Order - C Drive N & 13 Mile Rd.

6. CCRD Traffic Control Order - 29 Mile Rd. & L Dr. N

Res.066-2024

“Moved by Comr. Thompson, seconded by Comr. Miller to approve the Consent Agenda of the May 16, 2024, Board of Commissioner’s Regular Session, as presented.”

On a **VOICE VOTE**, Motion **CARRIED**.

10. Special Committee/Workshop/Board Reports

Comr. French thanked the board for allowing her the opportunity to serve on the Summit Pointe Board.

11. Unfinished and Old Business

There was none.

12. New Business and County Administrator's Report

A. Administrator/Controller's Report

County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott thanked Chair Vette for her years of service.

B. New Business

1. *Notice of Intent and Authorization to Issue Capital Improvement Bonds and Refunding Bonds*

County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott highlighted the provisions within the proposed Bond Authorizing and Notice of Intent Resolutions, noting that County Administration is proposing a potential refinancing of 2014 and 2017 bonds as long as interest rates are low enough at the time of issuance to create sufficient savings to warrant the transaction. Scott added that the Resolutions would also provide financing for needed capital improvements not to exceed to \$5M, including generators, roofs, and elevators, among other items.

Ms. Scott noted that the County typically issues Capital Improvement Bonds in amounts over time so that the County does not need to ask voters for increased taxes to pay the debt services.

Scott stated that the final item within the Authorizing Resolutions is for the County to issue new bonds on behalf of Newton Township, not to exceed 4.4M plus bond issuance costs, to provide the Township's 50% match toward local road improvements over the next three years. Scott emphasized that this bond sale would not impact the County's or Road Department's budget at all, since the Township would be covering 100% of the debt payments over the life of the bonds, using their newly voted road millage.

Scott noted next steps for the proposed bond issuance, including a required Notice of Intent published in local newspapers for 45 days.

Scott added that the County has been willing to work with Sheridan Township on a local road improvement plan and that following several financing conversations, the Township requested that the conversations were paused due to funding uncertainty at the township level, particularly related to increased revenues from solar developments that were in progress.

Comr. Miller stated that he requested a copy of the agreement with Newton Township for the local road improvements and did not receive the agreement. He added that Eckford Township residents have been driving on gravel roads and so he was not supportive of the Newton Township local road improvement plans.

Motion by Comr. Miller, Second by Comr. Hatcher, to table this item until the County has a policy for ensuring such road improvements were equal for every township.

Comr. Thompson asked if there was a way for the County to approve the 2024 local road projects that weren't initially approved for funding this year.

Kelli Scott noted that the 2024 local road projects were selected according to Policy 509 in the same manner since the policy was updated, and that the County even added \$1.5M to its Road Department budget to maximize the number of projects that could be selected. Scott also clarified that the proposed issuance of bonds for the Newton Township project does not have

any effect on this year's local road projects in other townships.

Comr. Hatcher noted that she seconded the motion to table this item because she wonders if there could be better communication with townships.

Comr. King reiterated that for Newton Township, the County is not taking on the debt, and instead simply helping the township secure better bond rates.

Comr. Frisbie reiterated that the County is treating the townships equally, and that they each just need to produce a plan. He indicated support for this agenda item because it is a comprehensive plan that Newton Township will pay back.

Comr. French asked that the financial advisors come up and speak to the plan. Bobby Bendzinski, from Bendzinski & Co., Municipal Financial Advisors, addressed the Board with assurance that the bond issuance has been deemed legal by Miller Canfield, the County's Bond Legal Counsel, and that this type of financing on behalf of townships is very prevalent across the state of Michigan.

Res.067-2024

"Moved Comr. Miller, second by Comr. Hatcher to table the Notice of Intent and Authorization to Issue capital Improvement Bonds and Refunding Bonds until the County has a policy to ensure all townships are afforded equal opportunities, as presented."

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes - 2, Comrs. Miller and Hatcher.

No - 5, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, French, and Thompson.

Motion **FAILED**.

"Moved Comr. French, second by Comr. King to approve the Notice of Intent and Authorization to Issue capital Improvement Bonds and Refunding Bonds, as presented."

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 6, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

No - 1, Comr. Miller

Motion **CARRIED**.

2. CCRD Bid Award--S Drive S. Bridge Construction

Ms. Scott noted that this bridge construction would be 100% covered by the NHBP Tribe through their designated federal road funding, and that this item was to select the contractor for the bridge replacement.

Interim Road Department Director, Kristine Parsons added the County is matching another project in Athens Township with federal funds in exchange for this S Drive S. bridge funding that the Tribe is providing.

Res.068-2024

“Moved Comr. Frisbie, second by Comr. Hatcher to approve the Calhoun County Road Department Bid Award -- S Drive S. Bridge Construction, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

3. *Community Development Grant Application--EGLE Recycling Infrastructure*

Administrator/Controller Scott stated that this application would provide funding to move recycling to a new site and it would allow the County to hold recycling events in one place.

Community Development Assistant Director, Doug Ferrall said the benefit would be to allow for accepting electronics and other items at all times instead of only twice a year at designated collection event. Ferrall added that the facility would have a drive-through drop off that would make it easier.

Comr. French asked if the County is looking to expand other recycling opportunities using new additional dedicated funding at the state level. Ferrall replied that his department is always looking for such new opportunities and funding.

Res.069-2024

“Moved Comr. Thompson, second by Comr. Miler to approve the Community Development Grant Application -- EGLE Recycling Infrastructure, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

4. *Community Development/GIS Staffing Request*

Kelli Scott highlighted the GIS Staffing request, noting that the main initial priority for the position would be to assist the Consolidated Dispatch center and their addressing and mapping needs, and to consolidate the data layers with the County's GIS layers.

Comr. Frisbie said that they discussed the importance of boosting GIS efforts at the recent CCCDA board meeting, and encouraged county leadership to also review addressing policies and procedures, especially those related to address changes.

Ms. Scott replied that County Administration and the Road Department are working with Corporation Counsel to review and update the County's Addressing Ordinance.

Res.070-2024

“Moved Comr. King, second by Comr. Hatcher to approve the Community Development/GIS Staffing Request, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

5. *New Policies--#376 Pregnant and Nursing Parent Policy; #377 Infant at Work Policy*

Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott noted that the two new policies would help comply with new state legislation and also provide a new benefit to employees that get approvals from their department heads to bring infants up to 6 months to work with them.

Comr. French asked whether the nursing time was during currently existing break times, or additional break times. Scott replied that the policies do not entitle employees to additional free time during working hours.

Res.071-2024

“Moved Comr. Hatcher, second by Comr. French to approve New Policies - - #376 Pregnant and Nursing Parent Policy; #377 Infant at Work Policy, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

6. *Senior Services Grant Application--2024 Thome Foundation*

Ms. Scott noted that Senior Services is requesting grant funds to address food insecurity within older adults, and that the grant was in the amount of \$300,000 with no required match.

Res.072-2024

“Moved Comr. Thompson, second by Comr. Hatcher to approve the Senior Services Grant Application - - 2024 Thome Foundation, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

7. *Health Department Staffing Request: Disease Intervention Specialist*

Administrator/Controller Scott stated that the Health Department is asking to reclassify an existing position into a new Disease Intervention Specialist due to the changed job duties.

Eric Pessell, Health Officer, noted that the County is seeing an increase in HIV and STI rates.

Res.073-2024

“Moved Comr. King, second by Comr. Hatcher to approve the Health Department Staffing Request: Disease Intervention Specialist, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

13. Citizens' Time

Ms. Seabring of Fredonia Township said that the County violated policy 509 and repeated her opposition to the solar farms.

Autumn Smith of Battle Creek expressed her support for the disease intervention specialist and spoke about a media article that says the Marshall Ford Blue Oval plant will eventually move to Mexico. Smith also criticized County Commissioners for signing a Non Disclosure Agreement from the Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance (MAEDA).

Doug Damon, Fredonia Township Supervisor, supported Comr. Miller's willingness to stand up for an issue even when others do not.

Carl Galigugh of Lee Township spoke about 3 failed culverts on R drive and asked the County to take the issue seriously.

Steve Shrock, Clarendon Township Supervisor, requested Road Department follow up regarding the status of R Drive.

Barry Wayne Adams of Marshall thanked Comr. Miller for raising issues and informed the Board of the scheduled court case appeal for the Megasite, scheduled for June 6.

Art Kale, Homer Village Manager, thanked Comr. Kathy-Sue Vette for her long years of service, noting that in 2011 he was on the board that appointed Kathy-Sue.

Kelly Isaac of Marshall expressed concerns related to people that signed the NDA, stating that it is hard for her to reconcile that those were signed during the COVID pandemic. Isaac stated that average citizens are starting to lose trust in local officials and would like more transparency.

14. Commissioners' Time

Comr. Miller asked for the contract with Newton Township.

Commissioners thanked Comr. Vette for her years of service.

Comr. Vette presented her resignation letter to Vice Chair Frisbie.

Comr. Vette said being a commissioner was one of the best decisions she's ever made in her life.

15. Claims Payable Listing

A. Claims Payable for April 25, 2024, through May 8, 2024, in the amount of \$3,922,896.13
Res.074-2024

“Moved Comr. Frisbie, second by Comr. Miller to approve the Calhoun County Claims Payable for April 25, 2024, through May 8, 2024, in the amount of \$3,922,896.13, as presented.”

On a **ROLL CALL VOTE**, Yes – 7, Comrs. Vette, Frisbie, King, Miller, Hatcher, Thompson, and French.

Motion **CARRIED**.

16. Announcements

Comr. King noted all commissioners are approachable and that he has never even been approached about signing an NDA.

Comr. Vette thanked her husband and family for their support of her as a county commissioner.

Comr. Frisbie spoke about the process for selecting a new commissioner.

Comr. French shared on June 5th an author will be having conversations about displacement with housing issues at the Washington Heights United Methodist Church.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53p.m. at the call of the Chair.

smc

Susan M. Connolly
Deputy Clerk to the Board of Commissioners