

Van Buren County Board of Road Commissioners

October 3, 2024 - Regular Meeting

BE IT REMEMBERED: That on the 3rd day of October, 2024 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 (Remote), Burleson, Kinney and Nelson
Managing Director Bret Witkowski
Finance and Human Resources Director Linnea Rader
Administrative Assistant-Board Secretary Jill Brien

ABSENT:

Road Commissioner Boze (Excused)

GUESTS PRESENT:

County Commissioner Doroh

Vice-Chair Burleson called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Nelson seconded by Kinney to approve the Agenda.

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

Motion by Kinney seconded by Nelson to approve the Minutes of the September 11, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented by the Board Secretary.

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

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

County Commissioner Doroh provided updates for the Board and those present as follows:

- Paul DeYoung was appointed to the Building Authority.
- Approved the appointment of a materials management company for a three-county coalition to deal with waste and recycling.
- Master Facility Plan update.
- Remodeling project at Van Buren Transit.
- \$1.2 Billion loan to re-start Palisades, pending final approval.

Department Updates were provided as follows:

Finance and HR Department:

Rader provided the following update:

- The Operating Budget through October 1, 2024 is attached.
- Finalizing Road-eo schedule and program details.

Operations Department:

Witkowski provided the Operations Department's update in Brucks' absence:

- At the time of the meeting, we should be right around 87% complete with fog.
- Crews got several pipes in the ground which included being able to re-open 72nd Ave in Lawrence and 53rd St. in Columbia.
- We should be awfully close to being finished with the second round of mowing this week and transition into a third round for the first time in recent history.
- Spot scrapping of gravels, washout repairs and answering of vision complaints continue county wide. With Friday or early next week, will see graders being working around the county in preparation for winter.
- This years brush spray program wrapped up last month.
- Also beginning to switch trucks from summer to winter mode as manpower allows.

Witkowski added that Burrows and Clayton have done a very good job in their respective positions; especially handling the public.

Engineering Department:

Witkowski updated the Board in Anttila's absence as follows:

- CR 388; Guardrail installation started on 10/1/2024 and should be completed by 10/3/2024. Paint hopefully the end of this week and the project should be complete.
- CR 380; Some fence installation taking place on 10/1/2024 and the project is complete besides some minor restoration punch list items.
- Rural Task Force projects will be submitted by Friday of this week. Submitted projects include:
 - CR 671 from 60th Ave to Red Arrow
 - CR 652 from CR 354 to 72nd Ave
 - CR 652 from 72nd Ave to 60th Ave
 - CR 665 from CR 358 to 60th Ave
 - CR 653 from M-40 to I-94 overpass
 - CR 681 from M-51 to CR 352
 - CR 378 from 66th St. to CR 687 north
 - CR 378 from CR 687 north to City of Bangor
 - CR 380 from 76th St. to M-140
 - CR 352 from 60th St. to CR 681
- Paint is continuing across the county.

The Board asked questions regarding the success of federal and state aid submissions through the Rural Task Force, as well the availability of funding which were responded to by Rader.

Managing Director Witkowski:

1. Employee Recognition Day is Friday, October 18th. We will take a group photo before lunch. Invitations have been mailed to the township and county elected officials.
2. Board photos for the entrance and website will be taken **on December 12th**, starting at 4:30 before your board meeting.
3. Southwest Council meeting is November 4th at 10:00 am at the Lake House in Muskegon; please let Jill know if you would like to attend
4. The bathroom remodel at the Western Garage is moving along; they are painting the roof at the Western Garage this week. (The Board reviewed photos of the new roof painting).
5. New signs for the Western Garage and Bloomingdale Garage have been ordered.
6. Plows have been delivered to the participating schools and should be a fun project for the schools.
7. Roadside mowing is moving along. The second cut is almost completed, and a third cut is planned to get the grass low for springtime.
8. We are still waiting for the cell tower company to finalize, which was their request for an updated cell tower agreement.
9. Two new broom trucks are here and out working.

In addition, Witkowski updated the Board as follows:

- Meeting with grant writer to help track grants that are available.
- Press Release reviewed regarding signs in the right of way.
- Update regarding attendance at Southwest Michigan Bridge meeting today where our applications were reviewed. The 40th Street bridge in Waverly Township was moved from #6 on the list to #1 showing the importance of showing up to meetings. Funding still is not guaranteed, but the feedback was very positive.

Review of Vouchers by Witkowski:

Voucher #2379	\$	605,018.95	Accounts Payable
Voucher #2380	\$	176,940.58	Payroll
Voucher #2381	\$	502,631.62	Accounts Payable
TOTAL	\$	1,284,591.15	

Motion by Nelson, seconded by Kinney to approve Vouchers 2379-2381 in the total amount of \$1,284,591.15.

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

Motion by Commissioner Askew and seconded by Commissioner Kinney to adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION 2024-15

WHEREAS: On September 26, 2024 **Melissa Fetkenhier**, Communications/Permit Clerk, graduated from the Michigan Public Service Institute (MPSI); and,

WHEREAS: MPSI is a three-year training program that helps individuals to reach their professional goals and enhance their effectiveness and efficiency on the job; and,

WHEREAS: MSPI courses provide instruction that focus on training in public service, including challenges faced by public service professionals from municipalities of all sizes.

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

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

YES: 4
NO: 0
ABSENT: 1
RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

The proposed Transportation Asset Management Plan (2025-2029) was discussed by Witkowski. The proposed Plan now in front of the Board is the more user-friendly version which will be made available on our website. Motion by Kinney, seconded by Nelson to approve the Transportation Asset Management Plan (2025-2029), as presented.

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

Commissioner Updates and Reports:

W.C. Askew, Sr.

- South Haven Township, no issues.
- Township Supervisors' Meeting on September 26th.

Doug Burleson

- Township Supervisors' Meeting on September 26th.

Greg Kinney

No report.

Wayne Nelson

- Township Supervisors' Meeting on September 26th.
- Almena Township's September meeting.

Motion by Askew, seconded by Nelson to open a Regular Meeting of the Board of Public Works at 5:31 PM.

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

Regular Meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners was reconvened at 5:37 PM with all Members present.

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

Motion by Kinney, seconded by Nelson to adjourn the Call of the Chair at 5:38 PM.

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

Board Secretary

Board Chairman