



March 27, 2023
10:00 AM – Mason County
West Shore Community College

I. **CALL TO ORDER – 10:05 AM** by Chairperson Jennifer Hodges

II. **ROLL CALL QUORUM: Yes**

Commissioners Present:

Lake County: Clyde Welford
Muskegon County: Kim Cyr, Michelle Hazekamp, Jennifer Hodges,
Marcia Hovey-Wright, Bonnie McGlothlin, Roger Morgenstern
Newaygo County: Bryan Kolk, Paul Mellema, James Rynberg
Oceana County: Tim Beggs, Phil Morse
West Shore CC: Wendy Wells
WMSRDC Appointees: James Kelly, Andrea Large, Jonathan Wilson

Commissioners Absent:

Mason County: Ron Bacon, Lewis Squires, Kathy Winczewski
Muskegon County: Rachel Gorman
Muskegon CC: John Selmon

Staff/Guests Present: Erin Kuhn, Amanda Snyder, Syndi Copeland, Stephen Carlson

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A change to the agenda was made to include Resolution 2023-3 under the Chairperson's Report. A motion was made by Commissioner Rynberg and supported by Commissioner McGlothlin to approve the agenda for the March 27, 2023, Commission meeting with the change. Motion carried.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Morse and supported by Commissioner Hovey-Wright to approve the January 23, 2023, Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The Executive Officer's meeting minutes for February 27, 2023, was handed out at today's meeting for information only.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS** - There was no public comment.

VI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – There was no report this month.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Transportation – WMSRDC staff participated in our annual Pre Unified Work Program (UWP) meeting with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHA) on Friday, March 17. This is an official review of the transportation department's activities from the previous/current year and discussion of upcoming activities for the next year. This meeting is also the kickoff to our budget development for the next fiscal year.

Economic Development – WMSRDC is helping to promote two broadband listening sessions within the five-county region which will be hosted by the Michigan Highspeed Internet Office (MIHI). The meetings will be held on April 11 from 4:00-6:00 PM at Muskegon Community College Stevenson Center in Muskegon, and on April 12 from 5:00-7:00 PM at the River Community Center in Baldwin. All are welcome to attend. The MIHI also has a meeting-in-a box tool kit for communities to host their own forum. If you would like to host your own forum, please do this after April 12 so WMSRDC can help. Erin responded to a question regarding the broadband program.

Environment Program – On February 23, WMSRDC worked with the Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership (MLWP) and Muskegon Community College (MCC) to host a community forum and film viewing of The Erie Situation. This was followed by a panel discussion. The Frauenthal in downtown Muskegon made a great setting for the event which drew about 400 individuals.

Local Government Services – WMSRDC staff are looking into hosting two regional forums focused on the topics of cemetery mapping and recreational capacity on inland lakes. Erin asked the board if they thought these forums would be of interest to our communities. Comments indicated these forums would be great ideas. The suggestion to record the forums received great interest.

Other – The Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC) will be hosting a regional forum for asset owners in West Michigan on Wednesday, April 19 from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM at Walker City Hall. The purpose of the forum is to gather feedback regarding the MIC 30-Year Strategy.

The Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) has asked to partner with the MAR regions to provide technical assistance to communities seeking grants from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). WMSRDC is eligible for up to \$160,000 for this work. In addition, MIO has allocated up to \$484,000 to be available for matching funds for potential projects.

VIII. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Amanda presented the February 2023 financials. WMSRSDC is five months into the fiscal year. A couple of projects were finished in the last two months, and our three-year EDA District Planning Grant has begun. Cash is in a great financial position.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hovey-Wright and supported by Commissioner Kelly to approve the February 2023 financials. The financials were unanimously accepted via roll call vote. Motion carried.

A. Resolution 2023-3, Bank Signatories

A motion was made by Commissioner Hovey-Wright and supported by Commissioner Morse to approve Resolution 2023-3, Bank Signatories. Motion carried.

IX. STAFF PRESENTATION – Stephen Carlson

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Input Session

X. NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – WMSRDC PROGRAMS

XII. ROUND TABLE


- Commissioner Cyr – Muskegon County is looking into forming a parks and recreation commission. Solid waste issues need to be resolved.
- Commissioner Hodges – Muskegon Township, along with Reese Puffer and Orchard View Schools, is working on two Safe-Routes-to-School grants. Muskegon Township and Orchard View School are partnering with Oakridge Schools in Egleston Township to try to make a Connect-to-School System. Jennifer thanked Wendy for hosting.
- Commissioner Hovey-Wright – Muskegon County is in the process of hiring a new CEO for Health West Community Mental Health. Muskegon Airport has not had a good experience with the new airline, Southern Express. The cancelation rate has been too high. They are looking into the situation.
- Commissioner Kelly – MSU Extension has an office at West Shore Community College. The Muskegon location for MSU Extension is moving in about three weeks into the new county complex on Marquette Avenue. James drew attention to the agricultural piece of our region – the diversity of Michigan’s agricultural economy is #2 in the country behind California, but we are #1 in terms of regions that have access to a consistent, reliable freshwater system. This should be highlighted significantly in the CEDS.
- Commissioner Large – Community Foundation for Mason County just completed their spring competitive grant round. The committee has recommended over \$100,000 in grants.
- Commissioner Morgenstern – The City of Norton Shores will soon start preparing their FY 24 budget.
- Commissioner Morse – Appreciated the presentation of the CEDS process. Oceana County had three ISP providers that applied for the ROBIN grant.
- Commissioner Welford – The Lake County Board of Commissioners got a new IT guy. The EDA grant will provide for an impact study for the closing of the GEO prison and how it impacted the area. This will show what can be done to make the county more vibrant. Clyde asked about receiving help with grant writing. He also voiced concerns about protecting our freshwater supply.
- Commissioners Wells – West Shore Community College will start a robotics program in the fall of 2023. They will be the only regional training center that will provide modern robotic equipment for training.

- Commissioners Wilson – Introduced himself as a new board member. DTE is replacing new gas mains throughout Muskegon. They are hoping to expand infrastructure to other counties. They continue exploring renewable energy and solar development in places like Mason County.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

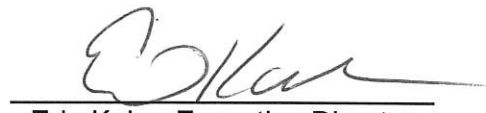
Motion was made by Commissioner Hovey-Wright and supported by Commissioner Cyr to adjourn at 11:46 AM. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: May 22, 2023 – Lake County



Jennifer Hodges, Chairperson
05/22/23

Date



Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
5-22-2023

Date