



May 22, 2023
10:00 AM – Lake County
Lake-Osceola State Bank

I. CALL TO ORDER – 10:00 AM by Chairperson Jennifer Hodges

II. ROLL CALL QUORUM: Yes

Commissioners Present:

Lake County: Clyde Welford
Mason County: Ron Bacon, Lewis Squires, Kathy Winczewski
Muskegon County: Kim Cyr, Jennifer Hodges, Marcia Hovey-Wright
Newaygo County: Bryan Kolk, James Rynberg
Oceana County: Tim Beggs, Phil Morse
West Shore CC: Wendy Wells
WMSRDC Appointees: James Kelly, Andrea Large

Commissioners Absent:

Muskegon County: Bonnie McGlothin, Rachel Gorman, Michelle Hazekamp,
Roger Morgenstern
Newaygo County: Paul Mellema
Muskegon CC: John Selmon
WMSRDC Appointees: Jonathan Wilson

Staff/Guests Present: Erin Kuhn, Amanda Snyder, Syndi Copeland,
Joel Fitzpatrick, Robert Johnson

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Rynberg and supported by Commissioner Kolk to approve the agenda for May 22, 2023. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Hovey-Wright and supported by Commissioner Cyr to approve the March 27, 2023, Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The Executive Officer's meeting minutes for April 24, 2023, is 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 – The Unified Work Program (UWP) was approved at the Transportation Policy

Committee meeting last week. The UWP now moves forward to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) for final approval which we anticipate by September. There has been a lot of conversation about electric vehicle charging stations.

Economic Development – WMSRDC still awaits word from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) on funding for Lake County’s grant application. Erin was presented last week with a new opportunity from several funding sources at the federal level including EDA and the International Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). Funds have been put together to place 65 economic development fellows to help move the needle on economic initiatives within regions. Erin has contacted Marty Gerencer and Clarence Rudat to discuss the Agricultural Technologies and Regional Food Systems Initiative. Both are very interested in applying for this funding. The application is due by the end of June.

Environment Program – Erin reported that a very large tree planting grant has been announced through the U.S. Forest Service. WMSRDC plans to apply. There are no matching requirements for communities designated as disadvantaged according to the funder. WMSRDC is working with those communities to include in the grant application. Staff awaits the release of at least three funding opportunities from NOAA with plans to apply.

Local Government Services – WMSRDC continues to receive more interest in cemetery mapping from communities within the region. We plan to host a regional forum focused on cemetery mapping this fall. Erin will be reaching out to local governments within the region regarding technical assistance for those interested in applying for federal grants through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. This technical assistance is made possible through funding to WMSRDC from the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO). The Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC) is gearing up to do another round of the Asset Management Champions Program in August.

The PA 115 legislation went into effect this March. One of the many updates in the legislation requires each county to develop a Materials Management Plan (formally named Solid Waste Management Plan) and offers incentives for regional plans. In the past, WMSRDC has served as the Designated Planning Agency (DPA) for our five counties. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is hosting monthly virtual meetings regarding the new PA 115 requirements. Erin is participating in those meetings.

VIII. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

A motion was made by Commissioner Rynberg and supported by Commissioner Morse to approve the April 2023 financials. After a roll call vote, the motion carried.

Amanda presented the April 2023 financials. Everything is in order, and cash is in a great position. Erin and Amanda continue to work on the FY24 budget.

IX. STAFF PRESENTATION – Joel Fitzpatrick and Robert Johnson Transportation Program

X. NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – WMSRDC PROGRAMS

XII. ROUND TABLE

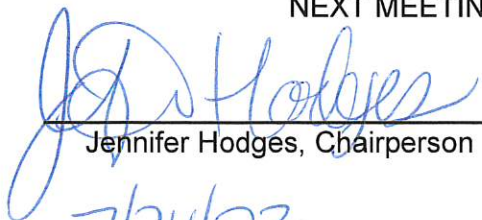
- Commissioner Bacon – Mason County has started the search for a new administrator. The current administrator is retiring in February 2024. They continue to discuss broadband.

- Commissioner Beggs – The Stony Creek/Marshfield Dam project is on hold. It is still promising to move forward with construction next year.
- Commissioner Cyr – White River Township has a potential solar project which would use about 1,700 acres. The residents are pushing back intensely, including legal action.
- Commissioner Hovey-Wright – Muskegon County hired a new administrator for Health West and also established rules. The County staff and Health West are working together in each department, so things are more consistent. Muskegon Airport is having trouble with their airline due to cancellations. The FAA has been notified that this is not working.
- Commissioner Kelly – Ag Business Institute has been working with EGLE for about three years on funding for a position related to large water withdrawal to support West Michigan.
- Commissioner Kolk – Newaygo County is working through ARPA funds and invested in county needs. Two of the economic development projects include (1) a partnership with Fremont Community Foundation on working level housing and (2) a partnership with Promised Zone to help fund more college education and industrial training without fees to the students. In the news is a Mastodon which was uncovered in Newaygo County. This will be unveiled in an exhibit at the Grand Rapids Public Museum.
- Commissioner Large – Ludington’s 150th birthday is being celebrated this summer with lots of Love Ludington celebrations. June 9-11 is Love Ludington weekend.
- Commissioner Morse – Electric Forest and the circus are coming to town. There is a new housing development going up in Shelby Township with approximately 80 homes. The new elementary school for Shelby schools is going up right across the street. Farmers are concerned about the H2A increase which is being discussed at the federal level up to \$17/hour. This will impact everything.
- Commissioner Rynberg – The City of Fremont continues to work with a potential housing project. The National Baby Food Festival will be the 3rd week of July.
- Commissioner Squires – Mason County hired a new emergency manager, Heath Scarbrough. A decision has been made to eliminate the Council on Aging, with each senior living center taking on responsibility for their own well-being under the direction of the county board. A lot of economic development is happening on the corridor of US-10 between Scottville and Ludington.
- Commissioner Welford – Blessing of the Bikes was this past weekend. Clyde recommended skywalks on the main street of Baldwin for safe crossing.
- Commissioner Wells – Westshore is gearing up for summer programs for children.
- Commissioner Winczewski – Downtown Ludington has a couple buildings which will be revamped. The City of Ludington is increasing water and sewer rates. There is a controversial issue in the Forest Hills suburb regarding stop signs. The city is looking at possible pay-for-parking at Stern Park.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT


Motion was made by Commissioner Cyr and supported by Commissioner Bacon to adjourn at 11:19 AM. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: July 24, 2023 – Oceana County



 Jennifer Hodges, Chairperson
 7/24/23

 Date



 Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
 7-24-23

 Date