



January 22, 2024
10:00 AM – Muskegon County
WMSRDC Offices

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

II. ROLL CALL QUORUM: Yes

Commissioners Present:

Lake County:	Clyde Welford
Mason County:	Les Johnson, Lewis Squires, Kathy Winczewski
Muskegon County:	Kim Cyr, Rachel Gorman, Michelle Hazekamp, Jennifer Hodges, Bonnie McGlothlin, Roger Morgenstern
Newaygo County:	Bryan Kolk, Paul Mellema, James Rynberg
Oceana County:	Tim Beggs
Muskegon CC:	Beth Dick
West Shore CC:	Mark Kinney
WMSRDC Appointees:	James Kelly, Andrea Large, Jonathan Wilson

Commissioners Absent:

Muskegon County:	Marcia Hovey-Wright
Oceana County:	Phil Morse

Staff/Guests Present:

Erin Kuhn, Amanda Snyder, Syndi Copeland
Brickley DeLong – Eric VanDop and Jenni Wheeler

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and supported by Commissioner Kolk to approve the agenda for January 22, 2024. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Cyr and supported by Commissioner Winczewski to approve the November 27, 2023, Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The Executive Officer's meeting minutes for December 18, 2023, is for information only.

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

VI. AUDIT REPORT – Brickley DeLong

Commissioner Hodges welcomed the auditors from Brickley DeLong, Eric VanDop and Jenni Wheeler. The audit was sent Friday afternoon by email for the presentation.

The Independent Auditors Report states the opinion of the auditor. This was an outstanding and very clean audit.

Single Audit of Federal Programs is due to the Commission receiving \$750,000 or more in federal funding. Brickley Delong distributed the SAS-114 letter which gives required information to the board stating there were no finds or exceptions in the Single Audit.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dick and supported by Commissioner Welford to approve the FY2023 Audit. A roll call vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

VII. **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** – There was no report this month, but Commissioner Hodges welcomed our new members, Les Johnson, from Mason County and Mark Kinney, from West Shore Community College. Erin asked the board's opinion regarding RSVPs for future board meetings. It was agreed that the meeting notice and packet are sufficient reminders of the meeting. WMSRDC will assume board members will attend unless they specifically say they won't be there.

VIII. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A. Conflict of Interest/Code of Ethics Policy – For Signature

Erin took a moment to thank Amanda for her hard work in keeping our financial records straight and organized to keep our audit clean and expedient.

Economic Development – WMSRDC cannot publicly announce the economic development fellow until early February, but we were awarded a fellow. Annika Gacnik was born and reared in southern California and has degrees in Agricultural Science from UC Berkley and NYU. She has experience in sustainable practices with farmers and food processors. Her fellowship in West Michigan will run from this March through July 2026.

Local Government Services – The draft Hazard Mitigation plans for Lake, Mason, and Oceana counties have been sent to Michigan State Police (MSP) and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) for review. There were minimal changes to Mason and Oceana plans, and WMSRDC should know about the Lake County plan soon. Once these changes are made, they will go out to the County Boards for final approval.

WMSRDC met with the five county administrators last August regarding the State's new requirement to develop Material Management Plans (formerly Solid Waste Management Plans). The administrators requested a proposal from WMSRDC for serving as the county's Designated Planning Agency (DPA), preparing the MMP and a quote. That proposal was sent to the administrators in October 2023. WMSRDC has not received feedback or questions in response to the proposal. Erin recently discovered that the county administrators decided to go out for RFP to hire a contractor to assist with the MMP development. WMSRDC does not respond to RFPs because we are considered a unit of government. Erin noted that the state has highly encouraged counties to work with their regional planning agencies, and WMSRDC has the talent and capacity to do these plans. Erin answered questions regarding the new process. Commissioners asked Erin to send out the proposal WMSRDC submitted to the administrators. Commissioner Morgenstern made a motion and Commissioner Wilson supported, that Erin write a letter on behalf of WMSRDC to be sent to county commissioners from all five counties to advocate for WMSRDC to serve as each county's DPA. Motion carried.

Last year Erin mentioned that the Michigan Infrastructure Office had set aside dollars for technical assistance to help with writing grant applications and to provide matching dollars for federal stimulus bills that have come out. MIO rebranded those funds and is calling it the Michigan Infrastructure Office Technical Assistance Program. The dollars are still available, but communities must apply to MIO to access technical assistance and potential matching dollars

for federal discretionary funds. The first application deadline was January 8, with one application submitted from our region for Muskegon Heights. As new funding opportunities become available, Erin stated she will share with the region.

Other Activities – Under the Michigan Infrastructure Council, there is another round of Champions beginning this January. This is the largest class to date with nearly 140 participants.

IX. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

A. October 2023 Financials – Information only

B. December 2023 Financials

A motion was made by Commissioner Kolk and supported by Commissioner Rynberg to approve the financial statements for December 2023. A roll call vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

X. NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – WMSRDC PROGRAMS - No public attended the meeting.

XII. ROUND TABLE

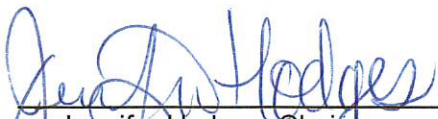
- Kim Cyr – The Parks and Recreation Commission has been established, and they look forward to all they will contribute to Muskegon County.
- Beth Dick – Muskegon Community College enrollment is up from last year. The college just finished a facility master plan RFP and selected a vendor to complete the planning for this project.
- Rachel Gorman – The City of Muskegon welcomed three new ward specific commissioners. In partnership with The Chamber, Muskegon County and other partners, the city is involved in a waterfront development plan for Muskegon Lake. The Smith Group will put together a visual plan for the Muskegon Lake development.
- Michelle Hazekamp – On Thursday a town hall meeting was held for a county-wide ORV ordinance. The general consensus was to leave this to the local municipalities and townships.
- Jennifer Hodges – Muskegon Township is doing a public safety strategic. Jennifer has been appointed as the new district director for MTA's Muskegon, Kent, and Ottawa chapter.
- Marcia Hovey-Wright – The current airline at Muskegon airport, Southern Express, is not meeting the guidelines needed to receive FAA help. Other airlines are being considered.
- Les Johnson – Mason County hired a new deputy administrator on January 2. She will work with Fabian for a year. She then will assume the Administrator role.
- James Kelly – With regard to broadband, MSU is part of an effort with Merit Network (a network of higher education institutions, governmental, nonprofits) which will be launching a Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) project. There will be a 30-day window for consumer input regarding accessibility issues. The results will be sent to the federal government to try for funds to help solve this problem. Erin offered assistance from WMSRDC.
- Mark Kinney – West Shore Community College's enrollment is up about 9%. Currently there is an \$8 million renovation project going on in their recreation center. A decision will be made in the next couple of months regarding the pool.
- Bryan Kolk – Newaygo County teamed up with the Fremont Area Community Foundation to use some ARPA money on a housing project. The second round of grants is coming and will be used for middle income housing projects.

- Andrea Large – Spring grant applications are currently being accepted from nonprofits at the Community Foundation for Mason County. Mason County Housing Alliance has been formed to help with housing issues.
- McGlothin – Muskegon Heights is looking for a new city manager. She is currently looking into the housing commission, roads, and ARPA funds. They are trying to develop a one-year plan for the city manager.
- Paul Mellema – Newaygo County just approved some ARPA funds for a new sheriff pole barn. Their emergency vehicles are scattered all over, so this will make inventory and location of items much easier. Also, since it snowed the trails are open for all outdoor recreation and tourism.
- Roger Morgenstern – Anthony Chandler has been appointed as the new City of Norton Shores Administrator.
- James Rynberg – The City of Fremont has been in discussion with a group from Grand Rapids about a potential housing unit on a seven-acre plot. They are currently working on an acceptable square footage of property per house. They are also in discussion with developers regarding a storage unit in their industrial park.
- Lewis Squires – Lewis wished everyone a happy and healthy new year and encouraged prayer for more peace. The new deputy administrator, Katelynn Szczyпка, will be a great addition to the county. Lewis highly complimented Fabian's 30+ years of accomplishments. Mason County will be addressing county zoning concerning solar. The broadband issue has not been completely resolved. Five million dollars have been allocated for affordable housing.
- Clyde Welford – Clyde stated that a roundabout will be constructed in Baldwin at US-10 North. A stop light will be put up on the other end of town (M-37 and U.S.10 East). However, this will not happen for some time. They are hoping to get a sidewalk all the way down the main avenue.
- Jonathan Wilson – Due to the cold temps, natural gas is in high demand. Please remind constituents that DTE has ways to help cover these costs if they are having difficulty. DTE is addressing solar across the state.
- Kathy Winczewski – The City of Ludington adopted their 2024 budget. There is a controversial issue to do a deer call as an experiment because coyotes are coming into the city. Kathy asked other Commissioner if letters are read aloud during their meetings. The majority noted that correspondence is only read aloud if requested.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and supported by Commissioner Hazekamp to adjourn at 11:27 AM. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: March 25, 2024 – Mason County



 Jennifer Hodges, Chairperson
 03/25/2024

 Date



 Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
 3-25-2024

 Date