



March 25, 2024
10:00 AM – Mason County
Ludington City Council Chambers
400 S. Harrison, Ludington

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

II. **ROLL CALL QUORUM: Yes**

Commissioners Present: CAN BE CHANGED LATER – USE ATTENDANCE SHEET

Lake County:	Clyde Welford
Mason County:	Kathy Winczewski
Muskegon County:	Kim Cyr, Michelle Hazekamp, Jennifer Hodges, Marcia Hovey-Wright, Bonnie McGlothlin, Roger Morgenstern
Newaygo County:	Bryan Kolk
Oceana County:	Tim Beggs, Phil Morse
West Shore CC:	Mark Kinney
WMSRDC Appointees:	James Kelly, Jonathan Wilson

Commissioners Absent:

Mason County	Les Johnson, Lewis Squires
Muskegon County:	Rachel Gorman
Newaygo County:	Paul Mellema, James Rynberg
Muskegon CC:	Beth Dick
WMSRDC Appointees:	Andrea Large

Staff/Guests Present: Erin Kuhn, Amanda Snyder, Jamie Way
Stephen Carlson

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and supported by Commissioner Welford to approve the agenda for March 25, 2024. Motion carried.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgenstern and supported by Commissioner Cyr to approve the January 22, 2024, Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The Executive Officer's meeting minutes for February 26, 2024, is for information only.

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

VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** – There was no report.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Economic Recovery Corps. (ERC) Fellow - Erin introduced Annika Gacnik and stated that a regional kick off meeting will occur tomorrow. Annika introduced herself and gave information regarding her fellowship.

Economic Development – Stephen will be presenting the 5-year CEDS later in our meeting.

Transportation – The Pre-unified Work Program meeting with MDOT and FHWA was held on March 4. It was a positive meeting, and WMSRDC received projected funding allocations for the upcoming fiscal year. This then kicks off our budgeting process. The FY25 budget is due to MDOT in June.

Environmental – WMSRDC is gearing up for the spring construction season. All is going well and moving along smoothly.

Local Government Services – Stephen has completed Lake, Mason, and Oceana's Hazard Mitigation plans. They have been approved by Michigan State Police and FEMA. The plans have been returned for local approval. Mason and Lake have approved their plans, and Oceana will be approving their plan soon.

Material Management Plan – Erin did send the letter to the county administrators. As a result, the administrators asked to meet with Erin on March 15. This was a positive meeting, and they are anticipating all counties to designate WMSRDC as their designated planning agency and prepare a multi county Materials Management Plan. Kathy Winczewski thanked Erin for her persistence and all of the board for supporting the letter to the commissioners.

Roger Morgenstern asked if there is a deadline? Erin stated that each county has until July 6 to submit a Notice of Intent to the State to accept responsibility as the County Authorizing Agency (CAA), determine if they are going to do a single county plan or multi county plan, and document how they reached out to adjacent counties regarding the process. They can also identify their Designated Planning Agency (DPA). Once this is done, each county has 180 days to then name the Material Management Planning committee, officially designate the DPA, and prepare a work program which must be approved through the planning committee, the CAA, and EGLE. After this the actual writing can begin. EGLE has not released the plan guidance and plan format.

The WMSRDC Board directory was distributed.

VIII. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

A. February 2024 Financials

Amanda stated that we are five months into the fiscal year. She also gave information regarding new projects. Amanda is exploring other investment options for the WMSRDC money market.

Roger Morgenstern asked if WMSRDC paid for Annika? No, she will not hit our time or budget at all and is funded through the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). Erin's time with Annika is covered by other programs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Winczewski and supported by Commissioner Kelly to approve the financial statements for February 2024. Motion carried.

B. MERS Defined Benefit Changes

Amanda – WMSRDC is proposing changes to the defined benefit plan for new employees. The plan for current employees will not change. The recommended changes for new employees include removing the early retirement age, increasing the average annual compensation to five years, and removing the cost of living adjustment.

After conversation, a motion was made by Commissioner Welford and supported by Commissioner Wilson to approve the MERS Defined Benefit Changes. A roll call vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

IX. STAFF PRESENTATION – Stephen Carlson, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

X. CEDS Approval

A motion was made by Commissioner McGlothlin and supported by Commissioner Welford to approve the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update. Motion carried.

XI. NEW BUSINESS – WMSRDC has hired Lauryn Blake for Transportation and Clean Air Quality as Robert Johnson found another position. Lauryn is a great asset to WMSRDC.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS – WMSRDC PROGRAMS – There were none.

XIII. ROUND TABLE

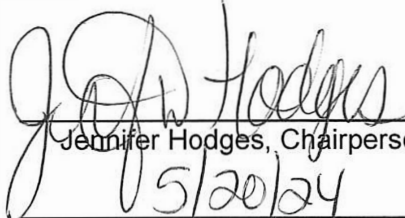
- Tim Beggs – Oceana County has many road projects coming up this spring and summer.
- Kim Cyr – (1) In 2023 Whitmer signed a law about the control for citing renewable energy facilities. In response a group of citizens, Citizens for Local Choice, have a ballot proposal out for signatures. (2) Road budget shortfalls are being discussed at the state level, along with a proposal for a mileage-based user fee to make up for the loss of gas tax revenue. (3) Muskegon Airport is looking for another provider. They currently have six proposals from new companies, and two look good. (4) Kim started a discussion on BEAD funding.
- Marcia Hovey Wright – Marcia gave more details regarding Muskegon Airport. A decision will be made in April on the new service. RFPs are going out for restaurants at the airport. Various repairs are being completed. County wide, the parks commission has a lot going on with finding connectivity for greenways.
- Mark Kinney –Because West Shore College established a hub in Manistee, Hart is looking at placing a hub there as well. Funding needs to be secured to progress, but it is looking good. There would also be job training, childcare, office space, etc.
- Brian Kolk – In Newaygo County, the Sheriff's Department has placed several RX drugs drop off sites, and it is working well. Newaygo partnered with Consumers to take over a 60 unit dock behind the Hardy Dam property and the dragon trail. A parking area and other park space will be created in that area.
- Bonnie McGlothlin – A lot going on in Muskegon Heights. Broadway reconstruction projects will happen in three phases. Muskegon Heights also received streetscape money for the project. Rowan Park is getting funds to revamp that park. The project to replace the old water lines in the city has already started.
- Roger Morgenstern – The City of Norton Shores has designed a three mile non-motorized path which will go from Lake Harbor Park to PJ Hoffmaster State Park. There will be a public meeting at the Norton Shores Library to show the plans. WMSRDC is working with local partners to develop a non-motorized trail plan for the MPO utilizing allocations received in the past that are unspent called, "Previous Obligated and Unspent Funds". To use these funds, WMSRDC needs local matching dollars. The City of Muskegon has pledged \$50,000 match. The City of Norton Shores may pledge a \$10,000 match.

- Phil Morse – Shelby Township Park is almost finished and was funded by public funds and private donations. WMSRDC and Stephen are very involved with several plans for Oceana County, which we so appreciated. Shelby Village is looking for a new administrator.
- Clyde Welford –Clyde saw John Moolenaar in Washington and talked about helping people with city water and well water in rural areas. Regarding safe routes to school, Clyde hit a brick wall and can't get people to talk to him. He saw good progress on the south side of the school, but someone has dropped the ball on the north side of the school. Jennifer Hodges stated that she will send Clyde information regarding the safe routes to school program.
- Jonathan Wilson – A natural gas/pipeline safety brochure with various DTE information was passed out. DTE Foundation announced they are accepting letters of interest regarding a community transformation grant which can be used for greenways grants, etc. Any non-profit needs to apply for or submit a letter of interest.
- Kathy Winczewski– Kathy welcomed all to the City of Ludington. There are several controversial things happening. The City of Ludington had a deer cull and got 33 deer in a city park by a lake and an old railroad depot. Some people are suing the city over the cull, and support for it is very split. Short-term rental is allowed in the city, and this needs to be tweaked. The senior citizen coordinator has started doing bus and cruise tours that have been successful. They revamped the senior center, and then a car drove into it.


XIV. ADJOURNMENT

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

NEXT MEETING: May 20, 2024 – Lake County


 Jennifer Hodges, Chairperson
 5/20/24

 Date


 Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
 5-20-24

 Date