

BRANCH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUNE SESSION (SECOND DAY)
June 29, 2021

1/ The Board of Commissioners of the County of Branch met, pursuant to adjournment, via video conference call, on Tuesday, June 29, 2021.

Chairman Hazelbaker called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Present: Commissioners Randall Hazelbaker, Jon Houtz, Tim Stoll, Tom Matthew and Leonard Kolcz via video conference call.

Chief Deputy Clerk Christine Ransbottom and Administrator Bud Norman were present in the Boardroom at the Courthouse.

Commissioner Matthew led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to approve the agenda.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Matthew, Houtz, Kolcz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

3/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2021 Board meeting.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment:

Mike Cornelius a resident of Iyopawa Island is concerned with the higher water levels currently and the busy holiday weekend with many boats being on the water. He would like the county to monitor lake levels and issue a no wake when necessary. Drain Commissioner Mike Hard was on the phone and said that the lake levels are 3 1/2 inches above summer levels. The Drain Commissioner has no authority to issue a no wake. Drain Commissioner Hard said he was opening gates and that the water may go down an inch a day, depending on rainfall amounts. Sheriff Pollack stated that Bill 5401 of 2020 approved for DNR, an Emergency Management Coordinator or a County Sheriff to issue a no wake, if requested by the County or Municipality, by a Resolution approved by the Township Board. Administrator Norman is looking into this further and will report back to the Commission.

4/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz seconded by Commissioner Stoll to approve the resolution for the Branch-St. Joseph Area Agency on Aging FY2021-2022 Annual Implementation Plan, as presented.

2021-09
Area Agency on Aging Resolution

WHEREAS, the Branch-St. Joseph Area Agency on Aging (Region IIIC) has been designated as the area agency on aging to serve Branch and St. Joseph Counties since 1996 under the Federal Older Americans Act (Public Law 89-73, and subsequent amendments), and the State Older Michiganians Act (Public Act 180, and subsequent amendments); and

WHEREAS, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency Board of Health has been designated and approved as the Policy Board for Region IIIC; and

WHEREAS, Region IIIC is required to develop an Annual Implementation Plan for fiscal year 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Region IIIC Policy Board has developed, reviewed and accepted the Plan after local discussion and a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Region IIIC Policy Board has taken into consideration the views expressed at the public hearing for the final draft of the Annual Implementation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Region IIIC Policy Board substantiates that this document meets the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency Approval Criteria.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Branch County Board of Commissioners endorses the submission of this final planning document to the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging for final review and approval.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

5/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz seconded by Commissioner Kolcz that approval is given to fill the Deputy Treasurer position at the Non-union level 6 wage of \$13.77 per hour, with new hire benefits effective immediately.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

6/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz seconded by Commissioner Kolcz to allow Elected Officials and Department Heads to fill vacated positions within their offices, without Board approval, following policy #37 guidelines, suspending policy #21.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

7/ Motion by Commissioner Matthew seconded by Commissioner Stoll to approve the Bills and Accounts in the amount of \$738,193.69, Payroll in the amount of \$695,898.01 and Taxes in the amount of \$181,241.21.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

8/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to accept the 2020 Register of Deeds annual report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

9/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Stoll to accept the 2020 Prosecuting Attorney annual report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

10/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to accept the 2020 Probate/Juvenile Court annual report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

11/ Motion by Commissioner Matthew, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to accept the 2020 Road Commission annual report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

12/ Motion by Commissioner Matthew, seconded by Commissioner Kolcz, to accept the Parks Department annual report and place it on file.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes – Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Committee/ Liaison Reports:

Matthew – introduced Rebecca Burns from the Health Department to give an update. She said vaccinations are slow. They will be working on ways to encourage people to get vaccinated. She said the Delta variant is in Branch County and Branch County currently has the highest COVID-19 infection rate in the State.

13/ Motion by Commissioner Houtz, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to go into closed session to discuss collective bargaining.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into closed session at 4:42 pm and returned to open session at 5:07 pm.

A question was asked as to whether the Board can return to in person meetings. Administrator Norman said they have the option of keeping Zoom meetings, meeting in person or adopting a hybrid plan, where each member can choose to attend via Zoom or in person.

14/ Motion by Commissioner Matthew seconded by Commissioner Stoll, to adopt the hybrid plan for Working and Board of Commissioner meetings.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

15/ Motion by Commissioner Kolcz seconded by Commissioner Houtz, to adjourn at 5:12 pm.

Upon roll call vote the results were as follows:

Yes –Stoll, Kolcz, Matthew, Houtz, Hazelbaker – 5

No – 0

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman

Clerk