

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Virtual Organizational Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2021

Staff Present: Treasurer Shelly Weich (Left at 8:43 A.M.)
Executive Assistant to the Administrator Annette Christie
County Administrator Brian Dissette
Chief Deputy Clerk Diane Mensinger
Temporary Chairperson and Clerk Sharon Tyler

BOC Present: Commissioner R. McKinley Elliott
(In-person)

CLERK (TEMPORARY CHAIR) TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Temporary Chairperson Sharon Tyler called the virtual organizational meeting to order at 8:36 A.M. in the Board of Commissioners' (BOC) room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

INVOCATION:

Executive Assistant to the Administrator Annette Christie gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Treasurer Shelly Weich led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

The Temporary Chair instructed the Chief Deputy Clerk Diane Mensinger to take a roll call with the following results:

12 PRESENT: Rayonte Bell (via Zoom from St. Joseph, MI), Jim Curran (via Zoom from Niles Charter Township, MI), R. McKinley Elliott, Teri Freehling (via Zoom from Baroda, MI), Robert Harrison (via Zoom from Lincoln Charter Township, MI), Jon Hinkelman (via Zoom from Watervliet, MI), Michael Majerek (via Zoom from Niles, MI), Don Meeks (via Zoom from Benton Charter Township, MI), Ezra Scott (via Zoom from New Buffalo Township, MI), David Vollrath (via Zoom from Coloma, MI), Julie Wuerfel (via Zoom from Royalton Township, MI) and Mamie Yarbrough (via Zoom from Benton Harbor City, MI).

0 ABSENT.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON (following election, Chair takes over leading the meeting).

Temporary Chairperson Sharon Tyler opened the floor for nominations for Board Chairperson.

Commissioner Curran moved and seconded by Commissioner Yarbrough, to nominate Commissioner Elliott for a two-year term as Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners and to close the nominations for Chairperson of the Board.

The Temporary Chair instructed the Chief Deputy Clerk to take a roll call with the following results:

11 YEAS: Curran, Freehling, Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough and Bell.

1 ABSTAIN: Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

Temporary Chairperson Tyler handed the gavel over to Chairperson Elliott.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON:

Chairperson Elliott opened the floor for nominations for Board Vice-Chairperson.

Commissioner Meeks moved and seconded by Commissioner Curran, to nominate Commissioner Scott for a one year term as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners and to close the nominations for Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

12 YEAS: Freehling, Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell, Curran and Elliott. Motion carried, no nays.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 30, 2020 MEETING:

Commissioner Scott moved and supported by Commissioner Freehling, to approve the BOC virtual regular meeting minutes of December 30, 2020.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

10 YEAS: Harrison, Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Yarbrough, Curran, Freehling and Elliott.
2 ABSTAIN: Wuerfel and Bell.

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

Kim Rodgers, Berrien County Health Department, "At Your Service, News from the Berrien County Health Department," received on January 5, 2021.

CHAIR APPOINTMENTS - Parliamentarian, Sergeant At Arms, Chaplain:

Chairperson Elliott made the following appointments:

- Parliamentarian – Commissioner Freehling
- Sergeant At Arms – Commissioner Curran
- Chaplain – Commissioner Yarbrough

CHAIRPERSON APPOINTS COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS – Administration, Finance, Personnel & Human Services:

Chairperson Elliott made the following appointments:

Administration

Commissioner Curran, Chairperson

Commissioner Majerek
Commissioner Wuerfel
Commissioner Meeks

Finance

Commissioner Yarbrough, Chairperson

Commissioner Freehling
Commissioner Hinkelman
Commissioner Scott

Personnel and Human Services

Commissioner Harrison, Chairperson

Commissioner Vollrath
Commissioner Bell

APPROVAL OF BOARD BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURES:

Commissioner Curran moved and seconded by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the Board of Commissioners' By-Laws and Rules of Procedure adopted on December 19, 2019.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

12 YEAS: Hinkelman, Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell, Curran, Freehling, Harrison and Elliott. Motion carried, no nays.

APPROVAL OF INTERIM CALENDAR FOR 2021 COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS:

Chairperson Elliott presented to the Board a draft of 2021 Commissioners' Committee of the Whole and Board of Commissioners regular meetings. Discussion was held regarding night meetings, location, time and attendance. The Board will keep this option open.

Commissioner Freehling moved, seconded by Commissioner Majerek, to approve the tentative and Interim Calendar for 2021 of the Committee of the Whole and 2021 Regular Board of Commissioners Meetings. The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll resulting as follows:

12 YEAS: Majerek, Meeks, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell, Curran, Freehling, Harrison, Hinkelman and Elliott. Motion carried, no nays.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST WAIVERS DISTRIBUTION:

Chairperson Elliott discussed the Conflict of Interest and the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form. Forms were distributed to the Board with instructions to return to Annette Christie by next Thursday's meeting.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Those speaking during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9B-C):

Eric Lester, St. Joseph Charter Township, thanked the Board for holding virtual meetings.

Adolf Peltzer, Hagar Township, commented "good morning."

Tony Benhart, Sodus Township, congratulated the new officers.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Scott asked the new Commissioners if they had any questions. Commissioner Wuerfel commented that she is interested in serving on the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC). Discussion was held on MAC.

Commissioner Curran thanked Chairperson Elliott for his previous years as Chairperson.

Commissioner Scott reviewed the 2020 year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Chairperson Elliott announced the following:

- Committee meetings will take place following the Organizational meeting:
 - Administration at 10:00 A.M.
 - Finance at 10:45 A.M.
 - Personnel and Human Services 11:30 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 A.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.