



# MINUTES

## Board of Commissioners

### Meeting

**8:00 AM - Tuesday, November 5, 2024**

H.H. Purdy Building Board Room, 125 W. Lincoln Street, Caro, MI 48723

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Commissioner Vaughan called the Special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Tuscola, Michigan, held at the H.H. Purdy Building Board Room, 125 W. Lincoln Street, Caro, MI 48723, on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, to order at 8:00 AM local time.

Prayer - Commissioner Koch

Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Lutz

Roll Call - Deputy Clerk Katherine Robinson

Commissioners Present In-Person: Thomas Young, Thomas Bardwell, Kim Vaughan, Bill Lutz, Matthew Koch (excused at 10:29 AM)

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present In-Person: Clerk Jodi Fetting, Eean Lee, Clayette Zechmeister, Steve Anderson, Mike Miller, Mark Reene, Erica Walle, Debbie Babich, Treasurer Ashley Bennett, Jon Ramiez, Katherine Robinson, Larry Zapfe, Honorable Judge Gierhart, Sheila Long, Cody Horton, Drain Commissioner Robert Mantey, Dara Hood, Register Marianne Brandt

Also Present Virtual: Tracy Violet, Mary Drier, Mark Haney, James LeValley, Renee Francisco, Amanda Ertman, Bonnie Fackler, Cody Horton, Estee Bitzer, Ashley Gaudett, Kristina Phillips, Judy Cockerill, Jodi Barrons, F/Lt Brian McComb, Register Marianne Brandt, Shannon Beach, Sheriff Glen Skrent, Barry Lapp, Tanya Pisha, Cindy Hughes, Angie House, Stacey Wilcox, Tim Green, Brandon Bertram, Robert Baxter, LaVonne Pettinger, Debbie Englehardt, Shelly Lutz, Tom McLane, Clerk Jodi Fetting, Kristy Sutherland, Maryanne Eagle

At 8:02 a.m., there were a total of 8 participants attending the meeting virtually.

#### **Adoption of Agenda**

1. Adoption of Agenda -

2024-M-285

Motion by Thomas Young, seconded by Bill Lutz to adopt the agenda as presented.  
Motion Carried.

## **Brief Public Comment Period for Agenda Items Only**

- Clerk Jodi Fetting explained the voting results thus far. This Presidential election has been more successful than any other. In Tuscola County there have been 7,721 votes from the 9-days of early voting. Out of the 43,964 Tuscola County voters, 36% of them have already voted between Absentee and Early Voting.
- A couple spoke regarding their interest in the church on Burnside Street.

## **New Business**

1. 2025 Budget Discussion - Mosquito Abatement -  
Larry Zapfe, Mosquito Abatement Director, explained his request for new software that would log truck routes. This would be in 2 phases. The first would be in the spring for the office software and 6 tablets for trucks. The second phase would happen in 2026 with 8 more tablets for the remaining trucks. This would give Mosquito Abatement a total of 14 tablets. This software would provide them with maps, alerts, work guides and records of all information needed when fogging. The cost for this is available in their budget.
2. 2025 Budget Discussion - Courts -  
Sheila Long, Court Administrator, explained there is a need for a Law Clerk position. This position was combined with the Friend of the Court Deputy at one time, but the Courts are planning to separate the positions. With the cost-of-living increase and the increased cost of health insurance, there is demand for more money out of pockets for employees. Shelia suggested some benefits to give to Court employees without extra cost could be a 3rd personal day or their Birthday off with pay.
3. 2025 Budget Discussion/Truck Purchase - Drain Commission -  
Dara Hood, Deputy Drain Commissioner, explained that the purchase of the new truck is because of safety reasons. The current truck does not have the ability to plug in a flashlight, there is no back up camera and a light bar installed would be helpful. Garber Ford Bay City quoted a trade in value of the current truck at \$15,000.00 which is reflected in the \$40,000.00 price of the new truck. No action was taken at this time on the request.
4. 2025 Budget Discussion - 911 Central Dispatch -  
Jon Ramirez, Dispatch Director, reviewed the highlights of the 2025 annual report. It was discussed that encryption will be mandatory in 2026, without it they will not be able to serve warrant request. The office is improving security cameras and has submitted a request for furniture. 911 Dispatch currently has 2 open positions. The Department has had a decrease in fund balance the last 3 years. Commissioner Bardwell talked about a millage or an increase in call cost to help with revenue.
5. 2025 Budget Discussion - GIS and Treasurer's Office -  
Cody Horton, GIS Director and Ashley Bennett, County Treasurer, requested for the Board to move GIS services from paid to free. Changing the service would lighten staff workload and provide better services to County residents.

6. 2025 Budget Discussion - Prosecutor's Office -  
Mark Reene, County Prosecutor, explained the staffing issues the office is having and requested that they would be able to hire another full-time attorney. The need for the attorney is due to the increase in Court hearings and cases.

Recess at 9:47 a.m.

Reconvened at 9:56 a.m.

7. 2025 Percent of Indirect Cost on Special Millages Tax Revenue -  
Clayette Zechmiester, Interim Chief Accountant, reviewed the 2025 Fiscal Year Proposed Budget as presented with the Agenda. There were 4 funds that exceeded the 5% cap that the Board agreed upon, MSU-Extension, Recycling, Mosquito Abatement and Dispatch. She informed the Board what to look at next year and what to keep an eye on.
8. 2025 Baseline General Fund Budget Primary Guidelines and Assumptions -  
Clayette Zechmeister, Interim Chief Accountant and Debbie Babich, Fiscal/Personnel Analyst, presented the highlights of the report which is in the Agenda packet. The final budget will be presented November 14, 2024, and finalized November 25, 2024, for the Public Meeting December 12, 2024.

Commissioner Koch excused at 10:29 AM

9. Intergovernmental Agreement Between Indianfields Township & Tuscola County Treasurer -  
Ashley Bennett, County Treasurer, explained that with Board approval the office would collect the Winter 2024 taxes for Indianfields Township.

2024-M-286

Motion by Bill Lutz, seconded by Thomas Young to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between Indianfields Township and the Tuscola County Treasurer for the collection of taxes for the 2024 Winter Tax Season which runs between December 1, 2024 and February 8, 2025 and authorize all necessary signatures. Motion Carried.

2024-M-287

Motion by Bill Lutz, seconded by Thomas Young to amend Motion 2024-M-286 to the Intergovernmental Agreement between Indianfields Township and the Tuscola County Treasurer for the collection of taxes for the 2024 Winter Tax Season which runs between December 1, 2024 and February 28, 2025 and authorize all necessary signatures. Motion Carried.

10. Varipro Administration Rate Addendum - January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025 -  
Shelly Lutz, HR Director, explained that it would be a renewal, and the rates are the same.

2024-M-288

Motion by Thomas Bardwell, seconded by Thomas Young to approve the Varipro Rate Addendum Disclosure of Commissions and Fees with Tuscola County for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025 and authorize all necessary signatures. Motion Carried.

11. Senior Citizen Home Delivered Meals Millage -  
Clayette Zechmeister, Interim Chief Accountant, explained that the funds will not be available until the year 2026.
12. Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith Discussion -  
Kim Vaughan, Board Chair, explained that this firm represents townships that have lost their rights to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC). If Tuscola County would like to appeal this, along with the other townships, the paperwork must be filed by November 8, 2024. Shelly Lutz, Human Resources Director, was asked to reach out to this firm and collect more information for the Board before the next meeting.

2024-M-289

Motion by Thomas Bardwell, seconded by Bill Lutz to approve Tuscola County to engage Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC to represent Tuscola County's interests in an appeal of an order issued by the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) regarding Public Act 233 of 2023 (PA233) with a capped hourly rate of \$295.00 and authorize all necessary signatures. Motion Carried.

13. Potential New Accounts for Clerk's Livescan Fees -

2024-M-290

Motion by Bill Lutz, seconded by Thomas Young to approve the establishment of the following new accounts for the Clerk Livescan Fees: General Fund Revenue Account 101-000-628-215 - Livescan Fees with a budget of \$750.00 and Fiduciary Account 701-000-228-162 - Livescan Fees. No budget is needed for this account. Motion Carried.

### **Old Business**

1. Discussion Regarding Potential 2024 - 2026 Audit Firms -  
Clayette Zechmeister, Interim Chief Accountant, explained the benefits of having Maner Costerisan doing the end of the year audits.

2024-M-291

Motion by Thomas Bardwell, seconded by Bill Lutz to approve the three-year Tuscola County audit engagement with Maner Costerisan with the following associated costs: audit year 2024 at \$55,500.00, audit year 2025 at \$58,700.00 and audit year 2026 at \$62,100.00. Also, all necessary signatures are authorized. Motion Carried.

### **Other Business as Necessary**

1. Furniture for the renovated People's State Bank (PSB) building - Clayette Zechmeister, Interim Chief Accountant, explained the need for a clarified motion.

2024-M-292

Motion by Bill Lutz, seconded by Thomas Young that the approved \$142,482.80 for furniture from Advantage Business Systems, LLC in motion 2024-M-186 be approved under the Provision of Government Services (PGS) fund balance in the general fund. Funds to be transferred from the General Fund (101) into the Capital Improvements Fund (483). Expense line item 483-901-975-004 People's (PSB) Building Furniture to be established. All budget amendments and transfers be authorized. Motion Carried.

### **Extended Public Comment**

None

### **Adjournment**

2024-M-293

Motion by Bill Lutz, seconded by Thomas Young to adjourn the meeting at 11:41 a.m. Motion Carried.

Katherine Robinson  
Tuscola County, Deputy Clerk