



# MINUTES

## Public Hearing Meeting

7:00 PM - Tuesday, April 7, 2026

People's Building 171 N. State Street, Caro, MI 48723

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Commissioner Vaughan called the regular meeting of the Public Hearing of the County of Tuscola, Michigan, held at the People's Building 171 N. State Street, Caro, MI 48723, on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, to order at 7:00 PM local time.

Prayer - Commissioner Barrios

Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Koch

Roll Call - Clerk Fetting

Commissioners Present In-Person: Thomas Bardwell, Kim Vaughan, Bill Lutz, Matt Koch

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present In-Person: Clerk Jodi Fetting, Eean Lee, Steve Anderson, Mike Miller, Sheriff Ryan Robinson, Shelly Lutz, Pat Sheridan, Tim Tomlinson, Troy Daily, Marianne Daily, Jason Root, Brent Dankert, Bunny Porter, Dennis Porter, Tom Gilchrist, Pennie Rienas, Russ Rienas, Suzy Rockwell, Lisa Britt, Rick Boylan, Julie Matuzsak, Jeff Fackler, Duane Hornbacher, Bob Catherwood, Isaac White, Amy Prill, Amy Huizar, Randy Heckroth, Russ Spiers, Brandon Putman, Billy Putman, Jen Putman, Blake Putman, Noah Putman, Isabella Putman, Tom McGough, Terry Muntz, Gregg Campbell, Krystal Cole, Jay Tuckey, David Davidson, Karen Varney, Amanda Langmaid, Taylor Langmaid, Ed Hunt, Jill White, Sue Ellen Greenlee, Dan Grimshaw, Brian Schriber, Carmell Pattullo, Laura Boyke-Hawes, Bob Eschenbacher, Karen Smale, Ken Dunton, Nancy Guello, Mark Zmierski, Brianna Krueger, William Heida, Brandon Blatt, Nancy Laskowski, Jim Bowden, Rich Sylvester, Colleen Russel, Chuck Dennis, Malisa Pyles, Rick Pyles, Neil Sweeney, Tavis Osentoski

Also Present Virtual: Bonnie Hergenreder, Dawn Miller, Debbie Babich, Kenny Justice, Laura Kent-Tuckey, Matthew Hewitt, Renae King, Richard Shaver, Rob Wrona, Shari Hadaway, Steve Erickson, Steve Anderson, Tracy Violet, Susan Bates, Stephanie DuSute, Scott Putman, Kim Michalski, Jodi Barrons, Joan Spry, Jeffrey Yorke, Erica Dibble, Drain Commissioner Dara Hood, Bella Putman, Barry Lapp, Alecia Little, Connie Keinath, Cindy Slack, Dale Churchill, Eric Warsinsky, Kim Brinkman, Loren Allison, Mary Drier, Richard Tuckey, Thomas Conley, Amy Campbell, Jamie LeValley, Tom McLane, Tyler Bennett, Julie Gohsman, Kendra Bednarski, James Walker, Treasurer Ashley Bennett, Greg Rynearson, Jodi Vrable, Register Marianne Brandt, Sue Thoma, Tim Romain, Trace Lopez, Thomas Conley, Shelly McGarry, Nickolaus Vassallo, Lerry Dicks, Jeff LeValley, Heidi Downing, Natalie Beyer, Keith Aeder,

Melvin Hessling, Elizabeth Zamora, Carrie Osentoski, Carl Bednarski, Katelyn Garlick, Katie Robinson, Steve Bitterle, John Riley, James Hook, Rebecca Crosby, Chad Tumblin, Wes Guigar

At 7:28 p.m., there were a total of 82 participants attending the meeting virtually.

### **Opening Comments - Board Chair**

1. Commissioner Vaughan welcomed those in attendance stating the meeting is for accountability and checks and balances.

### **Road Commission Discussion**

Public Input -

1. Commissioner Vaughan read letter submitted by Terry Houthoofd, Akron - Mr. Houthoofd was a Road Commissioner when the members were appointed. He is in favor of the Road Commissioners being appointed.
2. Brent Dankert, Koylton Township - Reviewed safety measures that are being implemented at various intersections in Tuscola County. Studies are continuing to review any additional measures or intersections that need to be considered. Distracted driving is a state-wide epidemic.
3. Julie Matuszak, Ellington Township - The recent accident at the intersection of Deckerville and Hurds Corner Road is very sad. The Road Commission Board is implementing safety measures as reviewed by Brent Dankert.
4. Ken Dunton - Offered an apology for comments made at the last public hearing. Wants the Road Commission Board to remain elected.
5. Brandon Putman, Cass City - Would like the matter to be placed on a ballot for the voters to decide. Wants a safer and better Tuscola County.
6. Pat Sheridan - Was a former Road Commissioner when the Board was transitioned from appointed to elected. Participated in road use agreements for wind farms. The current Road Commission Board members represent 4 of the 5 County Commissioner districts.
7. Isaac White, Cass City - Appreciative of actions being taken by the Road Commission Board outlined. In favor of the Road Commission Board being appointed. Distracted driving needs to be addressed.

8. Jeff Fackler, Juniata Township -  
Would like the Road Commission Board to be accountable to someone other than the voters with oversight by the Board of Commissioners.
9. Amy Huizar, Vassar City -  
Stated a detailed plan needs to be presented before placing on a ballot to the voters. Is opposed without a comprehensive plan and proposed ballot language presented.
10. Darcy Guello, Cass City -  
The Road Commission Board answers to the voters and needs to listen to them.
11. Blake Putman, Cass City -  
Elected Officials are accountable for the duties performed. In favor of the Board of Commissioners having oversight of the Road Commission Board.
12. Billy Putman, Cass City -  
The Board of Commissioners attempted to implement improvements at various intersections. In favor of a CFO structure or appointed Road Commission Board.
13. Ken Dunton -  
Spoke about distracted driving.
14. Karen Varney, Wells Township -  
Stated Commissioner Vaughan has wanted to get rid of Road Commission since being elected Commissioner. The Board of Commissioners think they are more qualified to appoint rather than the voters to elect.
15. Neil Sweeney, Ellington -  
Stated rumble strips would be helpful. Law enforcement has protocols that have to be followed. Safety measures implemented at an intersection set precedent for other intersections.
16. Russ Spiers, Ellington Township Supervisor -  
Stated the township is trying to be proactive regarding safety measures at intersections.
17. Dennis Porter, Elmwood Township -  
Addressed intersections for traffic study and to look at police reports for those intersections.
18. Russ Rienas, Novesta Township -  
Drivers are driving too fast down roads. In support of placing the matter on the ballot.
19. Pennie Rienas, Novesta Township -  
In favor of placing the matter on the ballot for the voters to consider.
20. Amanda Langmaid, Cass City -  
As an insurance agent she has helped families in need after accidents. Take to the ballot to let the voters decide.

21. Suzy Rockwell, Ellington Township -  
Has attended Road Commission meetings. In favor of placing the matter on the ballot.

Lost virtual connection at 8:12 p.m.

22. Brianna Krueger, Reese -  
Read a letter on behalf of her stepmom who could not attend that questioned what the plan moving forward would be and for transparency from the Board of Commissioners. Not in favor of placing on the ballot.

Restored virtual connection at 8:15 p.m.

59 virtual attendees at 8:20 p.m.

23. Tim Krueger, Reese -  
Not in favor of the Board of Commissioners to take over the Road Commission. There has not been a plan put forward of what the plan is if the proposal were to pass.
24. Commissioner Vaughan -  
There has been no plan distributed as there has been no decision. Once decided, then a plan will be outlined.
25. Gregg Campbell, Ellington Township -  
Distracted driving is a concern. In favor of rumble strips but stated larger signs or road markings painted on the road will not grab the driver's attention. In favor of placing on the ballot but asks the Board of Commissioners to be up front with the implementation plan.
26. William Heida, Fremont Township -  
In favor of leaving the Road Commissioners as elected. If a person is unsatisfied with the Road Commissioner, then run as a candidate against them. Board of Commissioners do not answer to anyone but the voters also.
27. Brandon Blatt, Fremont Township -  
The previous appointed board was biased. Voter has the opportunity to be a candidate on the ballot to run against a current Road Commissioner or seek a recall.
28. Jim Bowden, Caro -  
In favor of installing rumble strips and traffic lights at high traffic corners.
29. Rich Slyvester, Gilford Township -  
Expressed concern of increased distracted driving. In favor of keeping as elected Road Commissioners.

30. Marianne Daily, Caro -  
Drivers are driving distracted. There should be a safety millage for additional law enforcement placed on the ballot. In favor of having the Road Commissioners be elected.
31. Commissioner Vaughan -  
Appreciates all of those who attended the public hearings to speak to the Board of Commissioners.
32. Dan Grimshaw, Vassar -  
If the proposal were to pass, what would the plan be for the transfer of power. Voters have the option of a recall as that is the option if dissatisfied with elected. Commissioner Vaughan has been opposed to Road Commissioners being elected.
33. Chuck Dennis -  
The former Road Commission liaison did attend Road Commission meetings. Asked how the Board would move forward in running the Road Commission management and current union contracts. In favor of elected Road Commission Board.
34. Commissioner Vaughan -  
Stated a plan would be outlined by August 2026.
35. David Davidson -  
Drivers are distracted and not stopping at intersections. There is no guarantee if the Board of Commissioners were to take over that there would be no more running stop signs. Run for the office and vote the Road Commissioner out.
36. Commissioner Barrios -  
As the current Road Commissioner liaison, does attend the Road Commission meetings when they do not conflict with the Board of Commissioner meetings. There has not been a financial update from the Road Commission provided to the Board of Commissioners. Other counties utilize rumble strips although Tuscola County does not. In favor of placing the matter on the ballot.
37. Commissioner Vaughan -  
Board of Commissioners previously oversaw the Road Commission Board when appointed members. There needs to be checks and balances.
38. Joan Spry, Novesta Township -  
In favor of placing on the ballot.
39. Amy Huizar -  
Addressed steps that would be taken if the Road Commission Board was disbanded and what the steps would be.
40. Commissioner Lutz -  
Jason Root provides help to him when asked and does a good job. Feels all of the Road Commission employees work hard.

41. Commissioner Bardwell -

The Board of Commissioners is the Board of last resort. Steps need to be taken to mitigate future accidents. Relationship needs to be rebuilt between the Road Commission and the Board of Commissioners.

### **Closing Comments - Board Chair**

Commissioner Vaughan thanked all that were in attendance at the public hearing and for the Road Commissioners for attending.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Koch, seconded by Barrios to adjourn the Public Hearing at 9:04 p.m.

Jodi Fetting  
Tuscola County Clerk, MCCO