



MARCH 31, 2022
VAN BUREN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSION MONTHLY ACTIVITY

Administration Address
219 E Paw Paw Street - Suite 201, Paw Paw, MI 49079
Website: www.vanburencountymi.gov

Telephone No.
(269) 657-8252

Email: Admin@vanburencountymi.gov

HIGHLIGHTS

- **NOTE:** Broadband mapping begins 4/4/2022. See press release: <https://www.vanburencountymi.gov/749/Broadband-Expansion-Efforts>
- BOC approved streamlining their committee and meeting structure. All BOC meetings will now start at 1:00 p.m. with the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting beginning immediately following. Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. (Subcommittees have been discontinued)
- A new Buildings and Grounds Director was hired. John Small starts his new role on April 4, 2022. He worked for the Village of Paw Paw for over 30 years.
- An increase in wages was approved for Marine Patrol Deputies at \$20.00/hr.
- The following re-appointments were made:
 - Thomas Coles, Carrie Faul, Thomas Palenick and Mike Toth to the Van Buren / Cass Mental Health Authority with terms expiring 3/31/2025.
- A Public Hearing was held, and the BOC approved the submission of a grant for a kayak launch in Hartford, MI.
- Claims in the amount of \$3,010,569.36 were approved.
- Sale of Mattawan property formerly occupied by the Van Buren / Cass District Health Department was approved for \$589,000.
- Several ARPA fund requests were considered. The following were approved:
 - \$480,468.75 for South Haven Area Water / Sewer Authority for Lead Line replacement.
 - \$20,000 for Village of Lawton feasibility study for a water and sewer project.
- Consistent with the county's long-term strategic facilities plan, the purchase of two properties on Kalamazoo Street in Paw Paw was approved.



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DETAILS

1. Broadband Expansion Efforts

As a reminder – DCS Technology will begin field work on April 4, 2022. Residents and business owners may see them driving in their area. Any questions may be submitted to county administration at 269-657-8252. The final report will include parcel level detail and is expected by July 2022.

2. BOC Meetings & Structure:

The BOC approved modifications to their committee structure and meeting schedule. Here is a summary of changes effective 4/12/22:

- Sub-Committee meetings have been eliminated.
- BOC meetings will start at 1:00 p.m., the COW will start immediately after the BOC meeting.
- All agenda items must start at Committee of the Whole (COW) unless it is an emergency / expedited request scenario. Once approved at COW, it will be placed on the BOC agenda 2 weeks later for final approval.
- Emergency / Expedited items will be placed directly on the BOC agenda.

The deadline to submit items for a board meeting is 12:00 p.m. on the Monday that is 8 days before the next board meeting.

COW Agenda Items:

2nd Tuesday of each month:

- Admin Affairs
- Finance
- Veteran Services

4th Tuesday of each month:

- Buildings and Grounds
- Labor and Negotiations
- Public Transit

The following commissioners have been assigned as the liaison for these subject matters:

1. Gail Patterson-Gladney – Admin Affairs
2. Don Hanson – Buildings and Grounds
3. Paul Schincariol – Finance
4. Richard Godfrey – Labor and Negotiations
5. Kurt Doroh – Public Transit
6. Mike Chappell – Veteran Services

3. Board Appointments:

- The board re-appointed Thomas Coles, Carrie Faul, Thomas Palenick, and Mike Toth to the Van Buren / Cass Mental Health Authority board with terms expiring 3/31/2025.



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4. Personnel:

- The board authorized changing a correction officer's position into a sergeant position.
- The prosecutor's office request to bring in a new employee at the 7-year step on the salary range was approved.
- County Administration announced the hiring of John Small as the new Buildings and Grounds Director. The board approved placing Mr. Small at the 2-year step on the salary range.
- The board authorized a reclassification of the administrative services coordinator to be retitled executive assistant and placed on the R25 non-union pay scale (\$40,95.00-\$55,984.50)
- Marine Patrol wages were approved and increased from \$16/hour to \$20/hour.
- The board approved increasing wages for IT positions (except for the IT Director position). All positions moved up two ranges on their identified pay scales.
- Out of state travel requests were approved for the Sheriff's department for accident reconstruction training.

5. Grants

- A public hearing was held and the board authorized submission of a grant for \$296,000 with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for a kayak launch in Hartford. The total cost of the project is \$400,000. Hartford Township will contribute \$52,000 along with the county's contribution of \$52,000. Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is assisting with the grant submission process.
- The board approved a grant extension for the CESF grant through 6/30/2022. The grant is used in the Courts, Prosecutor's Office and Sheriff's Office.
- MDOT resolutions were approved for Public Transit which will allow authorized board members to sign related grant submissions and agreements.

6. Capital Improvement

The board authorized the following capital improvement projects for a total of \$608,206.00:

- Administration Roof Replacement
- Administration HVAC in the Lobby / Atrium
- Administration Security Equipment
- Paw Paw Courthouse Façade Repair and Sealing
- Family Court Hearing Room Remodel
- Jail recreation room divider walls
- Sheriff Office drain replacement
- Sheriff Office furniture

7. Property

The board approved the final sale price of the Mattawan property (formerly occupied by the Van Buren / Cass District Health Department) for \$589,000.

The board approved the purchase of two properties on Kalamazoo Street in Paw Paw for a total of \$473,000. The cost will be offset by a 3-year lease that will generate \$98,958.33. Remaining costs will be covered by the sale of the Mattawan property.



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8. Attorney Expenses

The county approved payment of bills for litigation connected to the New Covert Generating Plant in the amount of \$35,765.00.

9. Claims

The board authorized claims in the amount of \$3,010,569.36.

10. Policies

The board approved the Veterans Services Policy related to Burial Relief Funds.

11. 911 Operations

The board approved 911 dispatch console integration agreement with Michigan Public Safety Communications Systems.

12. ARPA Funds

The board reviewed various fund requests and made the following decisions:

- Court and Sheriff Office File Digitization request for \$680,592 was not approved.
- Maternal Infant Health Program request for \$50,000 was not approved.
- South Haven Area Water and Sewer Authority request for \$480,468.75 was approved.
- Lawton / Porter Utility Expansion Feasibility request for \$20,000 was approved.

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As a reminder, all board meeting agendas and minutes can be found [here](#).