



May 2024 Board of Commissioners Activity Reports

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Stay up to date with the Board's activity on our [Website](#), or on our [Facebook page](#)!

HIGHLIGHTS FOR MAY 2024

- 1. Community Corrections Advisory Board (CCAB) Appointment** – Appointment of Karla Tankut and Judge Susan Metzger to the Van Buren County Community Corrections Advisory Board to replace Retired Judge David DiStefano and Allegan County Public Defender Chad Catalino. Both appointments are necessary for the board to maintain eligibility for grant funding from the Michigan Department of Corrections Office of Community Corrections. This was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 2. Use of County Property – Warner Vineyards** – Approval for Warner Vineyards to use county property for overflow parking during their summer concert series from May to September 2024, benefiting local businesses. This request was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 3. Consumers Energy Easement, 712 W. North St, Paw Paw MI** – Approval of an easement to Consumers Power for installing electric lines at Paw Paw Public Schools, crossing a portion of county property. This was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 4. DCS - Comcast Subrecipient Agreement** – Authorization for the Board Chair to sign the Comcast Subrecipient Agreement for the MEC ROBIN Grant, which will provide \$317,240 for gap filling in unserved locations using ARPA funds. This request was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 5. Blight Elimination Round 4 Grant Agreement** - Approval of the grant agreement with the State Land Bank Authority for blight elimination funding, including an administration fee for Fishbeck. The request was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 6. Parks Millage** - Adoption of a .10 mill (1/10) tax levy for Van Buren County Parks and Recreation, anticipated to generate approximately \$400,000 annually, to be placed on the winter tax bills. This request was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 7. Van Buren County Community Mental Health (VBCCMH) Board Appointments** – Appointment of Christopher Tapper, Michael Saenz, and Clare Olney to the VBCCMH Board of Directors, meeting Michigan law requirements for governance and oversight of Medicaid funds. This request was approved during the May 14th, 2024, BOC meeting.
- 8. Michigan Materials Management Plan - Interlocal Agreement and SWMPC Contract** – Approval of the interlocal agreement and contract for Materials Management Planning between Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, designating the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission as the Designated Planning Agency. This request was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.

9. **Office of Community Corrections – FY 2025 Grant Submission** - Approval for the submission and acceptance of renewing the FY 2025 Community Corrections Grant. The grant amount is \$186,183, fully supported by grant funding from the Michigan Department of Corrections. This request was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
10. **April 2024 Claims** – During the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting the Board approved of claims in the amount of \$4,174,401.62 for the month of April 2024.
11. **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** - Approval of the 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Plan to ensure the sustainability of county services, funded primarily by ARPA funds. This request was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
12. **Mileage Reimbursement Policy** – Establishment of a structured policy for compensating employees for the use of personal vehicles for work-related purposes. The Board approved the request during the May 28th, 2024, BOC Meeting.
13. **Purchasing Policy Update** – Update to the purchasing policy to include participation in MiDeal, the State of Michigan’s extended purchasing program, enhancing clarity and effectiveness. The Board approved the request during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
14. **Recovery Zone Contract Renewal** – Approval of funding in the amount of \$20,160 to support the Daily Recovery Zone, Inc. for rent, utilities, and communications. This contract will be reviewed annually. This was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
15. **GIS Department Rebranding and Position Reclassification** - Approval to rebrand the GIS Department to the Digital Information Department and reclassify the Land Management Specialist position to Digital Information Specialist. This was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
16. **General Maintenance Carpenter Reclassification** - Approval to reclassify the General Maintenance Carpenter position from an AFSCME R20 to an AFSCME R23 due to increased responsibilities. This was approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.
17. **MDOT Contract Extensions** - Approval of extensions for MDOT Contracts 2017-0136 P9 R2, 2017-0136 P12 R1, 2017-0136 P13 R1, and 2017-0136 P14 R1 for capital funding towards replacement buses and transit facility expansion. These contract extensions were approved during the May 28th, 2024, BOC meeting.

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LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/van-buren-county-government>



Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VanBurenCoMI>



Watch us on our [YouTube page](#). 

All board meeting agendas and minutes can be found on the county website:

<https://www.vanburencountymi.gov/129/Agendas-Minutes>



Hours of Operation:

Monday - Thursday 8am - 5pm
Friday 8am - 2pm

Cass County

Immunizations
1st & 3rd Wednesdays

STI testing & treatment
Thursdays

Dental
Monday - Friday

Van Buren County

Immunizations
Thursdays

STI testing & treatment
Wednesdays

Dental
Monday - Friday

**Newsworthy
visit vbcassdhd.org/news**

No cases of HPAI (Bird Flu) in Van Buren or Cass County as of 6/20/24.

Measles Cases are still at 5 in Michigan.

For more information on the latest with HPAI and Measles visit:

Michigan.gov/birdflu
Michigan.gov/measles

Administration

- At the United Way of Southwest Michigan’s Annual Evening of Gratitude, Health Officer Persky was honored with the United Advocacy Award. The Award recognizes individuals who have taken significant advocacy actions in the last year.
- Van Buren/Cass District Health Department is the proud recipient of Moody on the Market’s “Best Places to Work” Award. In May, VBCDHD was awarded one of southwest Michigan’s top 20 places to work. We are honored and grateful for a team that makes this organization truly one of the best places to work.

Medical Director/Nursing

- On May 3rd, our team attended the Cindo de Mayo event at Covert Schools providing immunization education, immunization records, and public health services along with giving away free toothbrushes and toothpaste
- On May 6, our Immunization Team attended the Senior Veterans Expo offering COVID-19 and flu shots at the Mattawan Lions Club.
- ON May 8, we hosted our annual spring Immunization Registry (MICR) user group meeting for Vaccine For Children (VFC) providers
- Our Hearing and Vision Techs finished up the school year with screenings in schools
- On May 22nd, our Infection Prevention Team conducted an on-site visit at one of our long-term care facilities reviewing infection prevention and control protocols and practices
- Our Nursing Director attended the Annual Nurse Administrators Conference
- We passed our annual Immunization VFC Site Visit (audit) at both Van Buren and Cass County Clinical sites with zero findings.
- At the end of this month, our Children’s Special Health Care Services Coordinator (Nurse) retired after 29 years of service. We are so grateful to Sandy Nicholas for all of her dedication and hard work not only in the program but also as the lead for the Van Buren County Child Death Review Team. She will be missed dearly!
- Amy Malsbary, RN, has taken on the role of CSHCS Coordinator. She has been with the program for over six years and brings great knowledge, experience and enthusiasm.

Community Health

- Awarded a grant from the Van Buren County Great Start Collaborative to install a wellness vending machine in our Lawrence office, offering free hygiene supplies and overdose reversal kits for anyone in the community to access. The team is working on a grant to secure a similar machine for our Dowagiac location.
 - Our team is supporting Van Buren HSCC in the planning of “Van Buren Together: Resource Sharing” event to be held in October.
 - We are working with community organizations in Cover to host a health literacy event at the library in August.
 - Our team has led ongoing collaboration with Bronson Healthcare Group to complete the Promoting Active Communities (PAC) assessment
 - We are actively promoting Senior Project Fresh in the South Haven and Cassopolis area
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Environmental Health

- In the month of May, the department reports:
 - 57 septic permits
 - 33 septic final inspections
 - 68 well permits
 - 43 final well inspections
 - 56 routine restaurant inspections
 - 27 restaurant follow-up inspections
 - 20 temporary food license inspections
 - 11 campground inspections
 - 10 swimming pool inspections
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Dental Clinic & Outreach

- We welcome Dr. Andrew Malsbary, taking on our new Dental Director position and returning Dentist to our back to our team. We are enthusiastic about the future and all the ways that having a leader advocating for dental and providing a unifying vision will make a positive impact on the employee and community experience. Expertise in oral health care and leadership for our dental department is an important part of our overall agency success.
- Dowagiac Dental Clinic
 - served 390 patients in the month of May
 - booked through November 2024 for treatment
 - booked through June 2025 for regular hygiene (cleanings)
- Lawrence Dental Clinic
 - served 487 patients in the month of May
 - booked through March 2025 for treatment
 - booked through September 2025 for regular hygiene (cleanings)



Van Buren Conservation District May 2024 Program Update

Submitted by Emily Hickmott, Executive Director

May kept the Conservation District staff busy much like April did! We continued offering recycling services, held an on-the-farm demonstration and work day, and collected macroinvertebrates from local streams to monitor water quality. Staff will be in Lansing on June 4 visiting our legislators and speaking about conservation district work and environmental focuses.

Big announcement! We were fortunate to receive another EGLE Scrap Tire Recycling grant this year, and in addition to our one-day collection events, we are pleased to announce that we have partnered with local townships to offer three year-round drop-off sites. More details at the end of this update!

Recycling Collections: Details and tire sign-up available at:

<https://vanburencd.org/van-buren-county-recycling-collections/>. Please encourage folks to sign up their tires ahead of time! June and July Collections are:

- Recycle Roundup Collection** | June 15, 2024 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Van Buren Community Mental Health | 801 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079
- Passenger & Semi Tire and Electronics Collection** | June 26, 2024 | 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Keeler Township Hall | 64151 Territorial Rd., Hartford, MI 49057
- Large Tire & Business Tire Collection** | July 15, 2024 | 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM | Van Buren County Buildings & Grounds | 753 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079
- Large Tire & Business Tire Collection** | July 16, 2024 | 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Van Buren County Buildings & Grounds | 753 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079

Program Updates:

- **Ag Conservation/Water Quality Projects** (*Erin Fuller, Colleen Forestieri, Carlie Southland*) - In April, the Ag & Water Quality Team continued a variety of outreach and education activities, including presentations to the Van Buren ISD's Ag & Natural Resources classroom and demonstrations at the Paw Paw Middle School's Salmon in the Classroom release event.
- **SWxSW Corner CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) Team** (*Abbie Bristol, Alex Florian, Jena Johnson*) - The CISMA team spent April wrapping and selling trees, burning Butterfield Drain, and networking with various audiences. April was the final stretch of talking to folks and preparing systems and supplies for the field season.
- **Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)** (*Kyle Mead*) - April wasn't as productive on paper as March was. In April, Verifications that had been scheduled with Josh Appleby, MDARD needed to be canceled due to his response to an Avian Flu outbreak somewhere else in the state. Those verifications were rescheduled for May but will include a new assessment that was done in April. The specialist assisted with Tree Wrapping/Sale as well as the Prescribed burn on the West side of Butterfield Drain.
- **National Association of Conservation Districts (NRCS) Technical Assistance** (*Lucas Hartman, Gabriel Francisco*) - This year, our two conservation technicians helped to plan and conduct a ~30 acre controlled burn on VBCD owned wildlife property "Butterfield Drain". VBCD staff was joined by other conservation districts, and USDA agency partners to help effectively and safely conduct the

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Van Buren Conservation District May 2024 Program Update

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burn. NACD funded staff also contributed time to the VBCD's 75th annual tree seedling sale, helping to accomplish reforestation goals.

- **Outreach** (*Jacob Diljak*) -Our Team completed the VBCD's 75th Annual Tree Sale! 19,400 seedlings were sold or donated - that's equivalent to 125 acres of forest! Collection season has started and we look forward to providing folks with services throughout the warmer months! Van Buren County Food, Farm, & Fun Guides reached Michigan Welcome Centers.
- **Resource Recovery & Recycling** (*Kalli Marshall, Jacob Diljak*) - April was a busy month for the recycling program as reporting for grants were due and collection season officially began. In a single week, Jacob and Kalli visited South Haven for two days of large tire collection events and ended the week in Decatur for the community clean up event. The month concluded with Kalli attending training at the Michigan Recycling Coalition Conference.



VAN BUREN CONSERVATION DISTRICT YEAR-ROUND TIRE DROP-OFF

Free Tire Drop off May – October for Van Buren County Residents at 3 locations!



To use this service please respect the following rules:

 Passenger and semi tires only

 Bring a valid ID

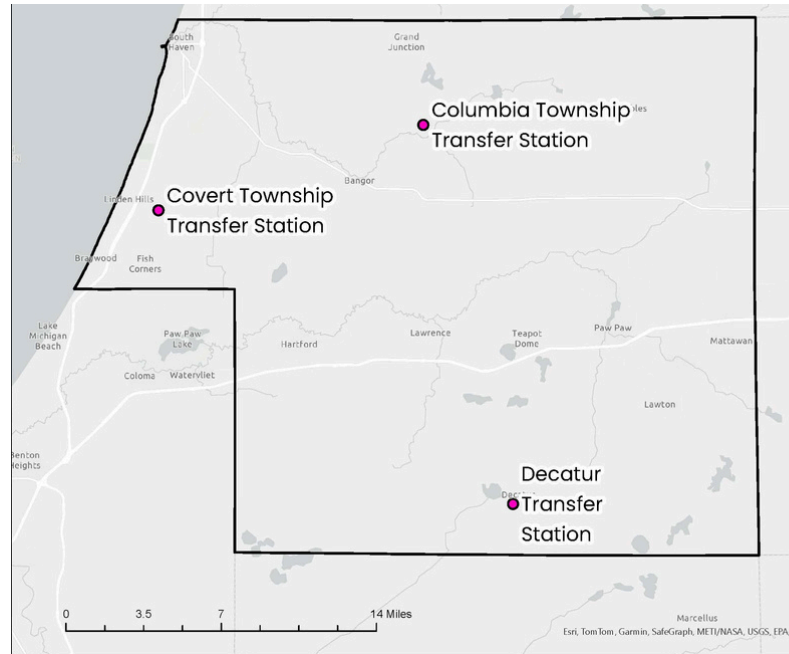
Show you are a Van Buren County Resident or landowner and eligible for the free service

 Businesses cannot drop off tires with this program

 Only 10 tires per resident address accepted per day

Locations:

- Columbia Township Transfer Station | 18868 52 ½ St., Grand Junction | Open 1st Sunday of the month and Saturdays from 9 AM until 5 PM
- Covert Township Transfer Station | 1 ¼ miles west of M-140 Hwy On 34th Ave. | Open Saturdays 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Village of Decatur Transfer Station | 300 W Beers St., Decatur | Hours TBD



Funding for this service is made possible by Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy Scrap Tire Grants.



If you have any questions regarding tire disposal or recycling in general, please call 269-633-9314 or email ResourceRecovery@VanBurenCD.org

Director's Report for May 2024

- We've received Three new buses.
 These 3 were ordered in April 2021.

New bus getting prepped to go on the road!



- Building Addition Update

Approval from Bangor Planning Commission & Bangor City Council in April 2024.

Opinion of Probable Construction cost range from architect -- \$540,000 - \$590,000.

Approval from MDOT for Invitation for Bids (IFB) and MDOT support documents below.

Form 3138 – Method of Procurement Decision Matrix

Form 3142 – Independent Cost Estimate with documentation

Form 3148 – Advertisement and Solicitation

VBPT Project Manual-IFB

Mailed solicitations (Tami) & Advertisements placed online (Architect).

Pre-Bid Meeting held May 8th. Site visit of potential bidders.

Our proposed schedule is as follows:

April 29, 2024: Issue Invitation for Bid

May 8, 2024: 10:00AM Pre-Bid Meeting at Van Buren Public Transit's facility

May 15, 2024: Issue Addendum #1 - Questions & Answers (See website for answers)

May 22, 2024: Issue Addendum #2 - Questions & Answers (See website for answers)

May 29, 2024: 2:00PM Deadline for Submission of Bids and Public Bid Opening

TBD: 3rd Party Contract (MDOT & BOC approval) & additional cost approvals (BOC)

June 17, 2024: Notice of Award (MDOT approval)

July 30, 2024: Execute Contract and Schedule Project Kick-Off Meeting

Project Link on Transit's county website:

<https://www.vanburencountymi.gov/823/Business-Opportunities>

- Annual Safety Refresher Training -- April 12th

Started off with Introductions – Name, position and years of service

Diane Rigozzi, Director of Senior Services was guest speaker

VBCMh Recipient Rights Reps gave required Recipient Rights presentation

Policies reviewed: D&A Policy, Title VI, and ADA Policy

Review of scheduled drop-off and pick-up times for all routes. Reporting requirements.

Parking locations for breaks with buses. Wheelchair securement.





Guest Speaker – Ms. Rigozzi

- Training for Staff

- | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| 1. Rural Transit Manager’s Workshop (RTMW) | Apr. 16-17 | Laurie/Tami |
| Hosted by Michigan Public Transit Assn. (MPTA) & MDOT in Mt. Pleasant. | | |
| 2. Grant Writing Workshop | Apr. 23-24 | Tami |
| Hosted by Clinton Area Transit in St. Johns. | | |
| 3. Procurement Training-Virtual | May 7 | Laurie/Tami |
| 4. Project Wise Training-Virtual | May 13 | Laurie/Tami |
| 5. FTA New DBE Rule for Tier II Recipients-Virtual | May 21 | Tami |
| 6. MDOT 101 Training, Dimondale | May 28-29 | Bob |
| 7. Vehicle Maintenance Seminar, Higgins Lake | June 18-20 | Nick |

- Services/Networking

- | | | | |
|--|----------|-------------|---------|
| Allegan Co. request for Tulip Time bus | 14 rides | Holland | May 4 |
| Senior/Veteran’s Expo | | Mattawan | May 6 |
| SWAN – Southwest Aging Network | | South Haven | May 9 |
| Hartford Fair – DHHS Host | | | May 22 |
| Touch A Truck | | Decatur | May 30 |
| Veterans Expo – American Legion | | South Haven | June 8 |
| Project Connect | | Lawrence | June 14 |



**Patty & Kim
Senior Expo in Mattawan
May 6th**

- Tornado Story – Our MDOT Project Manager emailed transit agencies he serves over in SW MI to ask if we were all safe after the tornado May 7th. Metro in Kalamazoo responded they assisted until midnight with relocating displaced people.

**Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Schlipp**

ROAD COMMISSION TALKING POINTS May 13, 2024

County-wide Road Millage Renewal

Public Information meetings will be held regarding the road millage renewal on **June 20th at 11:00 AM** and at **6:00 PM** at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence. Road Commission staff and officials will host discussions on the proposed renewal, current road conditions, available road funding, and the intent of the millage renewal. Light refreshments will be served.



Bloomington Salt Barn Receives New Shingle Roof

Low bidding contractor, Future Construction (Watervliet, MI), recently completed the new shingle roof at the Road Commission's Bloomington Garage Salt Dome. The job was particularly difficult given the pitch of the roof; however, Future Construction's professional crew did an amazing job completing the re-shingle job in less than a week!

Summer Hours

Beginning on Monday, April 29, 2024, the Van Buren County Road Commission began working four 10-hour days, Monday through Thursday from 6:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The Road Commission will be closed on Fridays through September 28, 2024.

If there is a road-related emergency outside these hours of operation, such as a stop sign down or a tree across the road, residents should contact Van Buren County Central Dispatch at (269) 657-3101 or dial 911. Central Dispatch will contact the Road Commission's Emergency Duty Superintendent. **This is standard procedure for all after-hour emergencies.**

Road Millage Materials

The **Cities and Villages**, as well as the **Road Commission** and the **Townships** all benefit from the county-wide road millage. The citizens of Van Buren County have supported this road millage since 1978 when it was first approved! The VBCRC needs the help of the agencies benefitting from the millage to assist in educating the public about the importance of the millage and to encourage their local constituents to **VOTE ON AUGUST 6, 2024**. If any agency would like brochures, flyers, or other information about the millage please contact the VBCRC at 269-674-8011, or vbrc@vbrc.org.

Sealcoat Operations

Sealcoat Operations are scheduled to begin on June 3rd. Obviously the weather at this time of the year can either help or hinder the scheduling of these operations. Therefore, the date is a moving target that is weather dependent!

Road Commission Purchases New Roadside Mowers

Two new John Deere roadside mowing tractors arrived last week just in time for this year's mowing operations. The purchases were made from AIS Equipment through the State of Michigan's extended purchasing program, MiDeal. The VBCRC intends to bring all roadside mowing in-house beginning in this year (EXCEPT BLUE STAR HIGHWAY) so as to allow the Road Commission more control over the timing of operations, as well as for consistency in operations.

