

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

July 2, 2020

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, July 2, 2020 in the Commission Chambers.

Chair Marchetti called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner File provided the Invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Visitors introduced themselves.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Terry Ausra, Annie File, Skip Dyes, Mike Grice, Roseann Marchetti and E. Clark Cobb.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Robert Benjamin.

STAFF PRESENT: County Administrator Jeff Carmen and Clerk/Register Monica McMichael.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda Items Only)

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Ausra, to approve the July 2, 2020 Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda with the addition of motion M-89-20 under New Business. Motion carried by voice vote.

PRESENTATION

Commissioner Dyes presented the following proclamation:

**PROCLAMATION OF RECOMMITMENT TO FULL
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

WHEREAS on July 26, 1990, President George H. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities. This legislation established a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers and changing perceptions, increasing full participation in community life. However, the full promise of the ADA will only be reached if public entities remain committed in their efforts to fully implement the ADA; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that disability is a natural part of the human condition. A disability is simply a characteristic of a person and doesn't exist until someone encounters a barrier; and

WHEREAS, ON THE 30TH anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, in collaborations with Disability Network Southwest Michigan, we celebrate and recognize the progress that has been made by reaffirming the principles of equality and inclusion and recommitting our efforts to reach full ADA compliance.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Cass County Board of Commissioners does hereby reaffirm our commitment to work toward full accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.

Kevin Klute accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Disability Network Southwest Michigan Board of Directors.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chair Dyes moved, seconded by Commissioner Ausra, that the following items be voted on at one time by roll call vote and be considered as a consent agenda by the Board of Commissioners:

(M-86-20) A motion to approve Claims dated June 26, 2020.

(M-87-20) A motion to approve the June 18, 2020 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (6): Commissioners File, Grice, Cobb, Marchetti, Ausra and Dyes.

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Benjamin.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

County Administrator Jeff Carmen provided the Administrator's Report.

SHERIFF BEHNKE PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

Sheriff Behnke provided an update on the Sheriff's Office (see attachment).

ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATE

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael provided an update on the Clerk/Register's Office.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

COVID-19 Update: Chair Marchetti informed commissioners there were 134 COVID cases and 5 deaths in Cass County.

NEW BUSINESS

R-88-20

Commissioner Cobb moved, seconded by Commissioner File, to approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, on April 6, 2020 via Resolution R51 The Cass County Board of Commissioners imposed a Hiring Freeze due to COVID and funding uncertainties; and

WHEREAS, County Parks and Law Enforcement, specifically, rely on Seasonal and Part time employees to respond to seasonal and fluctuating positions when needed.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Cass County Board of Commissioners does hereby authorize the Sheriff and the Parks Director to fill these seasonal and part time positions as had existed prior to April 6, 2020. And further, that this authorization does expire October 1, 2020.

Discussion followed.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (5): Commissioners Cobb, Marchetti, Ausra, Dyes and File.

No (1): Commissioner Grice.

Absent (1): Commissioner Benjamin.

Resolution R-88-20 carried by roll call vote.

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

Chair Marchetti informed the board that the appointments committee had a lengthy meeting that resulted in staggering terms for the Woodlands Board. The committee also worked on the Solid Waste Consortium and Historical Commission Boards.

M-89-20

Commissioner Dyes moved, seconded by Commissioner File, to appoint Nathan Robinson to the Historical Commission for a three-year term ending July 31, 2023. Motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron McAdam informed the board that the Historical Commission planned to resume tours of the Newton House in August. The tours would take place the first Sunday of each month from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Jean Schultz stated that she was happy to see the County Building clock working and the retaining wall fixed after returning to town.

Sheriff Behnke reminded everyone that alcohol and fireworks did not mix. He asked everyone to be careful and to stay safe.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners Cobb and Dyes offered comments.

Chair Marchetti recognized the following Cass County residents:

Justin Kimbrell is a Mason Township resident and Justin's recent honor is he has been selected as one of Michiana's 40 under 40, for 2020. 40 under 40 is a program of the South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce and to be chosen, one has to be less than 40 years of age and meet certain criteria, and one of those criteria is "A passion for Community and giving back because of that passion. Justin is the treasurer of the Edwardsburg Foundation Board helping out with a number of the Board's many projects including Drive 4 Your School.

Also selected for 40 under 40 is Cass County District Library Director, Barbara Gordon. Notable for her efforts to bring library services to rural areas of the County, Barbara also has a goal of every child in the district possessing a library card.

Our next honoree is Clerk Register Monica McMichael who recently was asked to testify before the Senate elections Committee regarding the unsolicited statewide mailing of absentee ballots by the Secretary of State. One of only a handful of clerks asked to testify, Monica's written testimony was read during the hour and a half session.

The fourth honoree is Chief Judge Sue Dobrich, who received the Champion of Justice Award. The award is given to practicing lawyers and judges of integrity and adherence to the highest principles and traditions of the legal profession, superior professional competence and extraordinary professional accomplishment that benefits the nation, state or local community in which the lawyer or judge live. Just last week, Judge Dobrich also was part of a panel on problem solving courts led by Chief Justice Bridget McCormick

Congratulations to all and thank you for representing Cass County.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Ausra moved, seconded by Commissioner Grice, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Roseann Marchetti, Chairperson

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register