MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 7, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners held an Organizational Meeting in the City of Monroe on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. Monroe County Clerk, Annamarie Osment, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call by Deputy Clerk, Grace Drewior, as follows:

PRESENT			ABSENT
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout	
Brian Lamour	J. Henry Lievens	Greg Moore, Jr.	
Dawn Asper	David Vensel		

A quorum being present, the Board proceeded to conduct business.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Asper led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. OPENING PRAYER

Deputy Clerk, Grace Drewior led the Opening Prayer

V. ELECTION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

A. Election of Chairperson:

Clerk Annamarie Osment opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson.

Commissioner Hoffman nominated Commissioner Vensel for Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Vensel accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Asper nominated Commissioner Moore for Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Moore did not accept the nomination.

No other nominations were offered. Clerk Annamarie Osment closed the nominations for Chairperson.

Motion by Commissioner Heinzerling, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to elect Commissioner David Vensel as Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners with a term ending December 31, 2025.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling		Greg Moore, Jr.		
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour		Dawn Asper		
David Swartout	David Vensel				

Motion carried and Chairman Vensel presided over the meeting from this point forward.

B. Election of Vice-Chairperson:

Chairman Vensel asked for nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

Commissioner Hoffman nominated Commissioner Lievens for Vice-Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Hoffman accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Asper nominated Commissioner Swartout for Vice-Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Swartout accepted the nomination.

No further nominations were offered. Chairman Vensel closed the nominations for Vice-Chairman.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

Commissioner Hoffman voted for Commissioner Lievens
Commissioner Asper voted for Commissioner Swartout
Commissioner Heinzerling voted for Commissioner Lievens
Commissioner Lamour voted for Commissioner Lievens
Commissioner Vensel voted for Commissioner Lievens
Commissioner Swartout voted for Commissioner Swartout
Commissioner Moore voted for Commissioner Swartout
Commissioner Lievens voted for Commissioner Lievens

In a 5-3 vote, Commissioner Lievens was elected Vice-Chairman.

VI. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to approve the January 7, 2025 Organizational Agenda with an amendment Commissioner Moore brought to the Boards attention to correct the date to submit proposed changes to the Board of Commissioner's Bylaws.

Commissioner Lamour also amended the agenda to add an item under New Business for discussion regarding Public Act 233. Commissioner Moore and Vice-Chairman Lievens second this.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (12/17/2024 Regular Meeting)

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to approve the minutes as presented for the December 17, 2024 Regular Meeting and waive the reading thereof.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			

J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Payment of Accounts Payable Current Claim Report

1. Payment of the 01/08/25 Accounts Payable Current Claims Report in the amount of $1,090,970.96.

Motion by Commissioner Hoffman, supported by Commissioner Lamour to confirm the Accounts Payable Current Claims payment as presented on the agenda for the date and amount listed.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

2. Payment of Non-Claims
   a. Check Register dated 12/27/2024 in the amount of $149,523.41
   b. Check Register dated 01/03/2025 in the amount of $338,388.99

Motion by Commissioner Asper, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling, to confirm the non-claims payments as presented on the agenda for the dates and amounts listed.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

B. Establish Date to Submit Proposed Changes to the Bylaws

Discussion commenced that any suggested amendments to the Board's Bylaws should be provided to Legal Counsel and voted on at the second Board meeting in February (02/18/2025).

Motion by Commissioner Heinzerling, supported by Commissioner Asper to provide any suggested amendments to the Board's Bylaws to Legal Counsel and vote at the second Board meeting in February (02/18/2025).

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

C. Board Action:

1. Letter dated December 19, 2024 from Mr. Jesse Stanford, County Treasurer submitting the County Treasurer bond for 2025.

   Motion by Vice-Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Swartout to accept the communication and place it on file along with the blanket fidelity bond from County Treasurer for 2025.

   Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

   Motion carried.

2. Letter dated December 30, 2024 from Mr. Jeff McBee, Director, Human Resources, recommending approval of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the County of Monroe, the 38th Circuit Court- Family Division, and the Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM) with a term expiring December 31, 2026.

   Mr. Jeff McBee answered questions regarding the status of the other collective barraging agreements. Discussion was held.

   Motion by Commissioner Heinzerling, supported by Commissioner Lamour to approve the recommendation and ratify the collective bargaining agreement between the County of Monroe, the 38th Circuit Court- Family Division, and the Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM) with a term expiring December 31, 2026 and authorize the Chairman to execute the same on behalf of the County.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

3. Letter dated January 3, 2025 from Mr. Michael Woolford, Equalization Director, submitting the 2024 Monroe County Equalization Study.

   Click for the completed 2024 Equalization Study.

   Mr. Michael Woolford explained the Study and what was accomplished.

   Motion by Commissioner Hoffman, supported by Vice-Chairman Lievens to accept the communication and place the study on file.

   Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	Jay Heinzerling	David Swartout			
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	Greg Moore, Jr.			
Dawn Asper	David Vensel				

Motion carried.

4. Public Act 233 Discussion.

Commissioner Lamour explained what Public Act 233 was and asked if the Board was aware of what was going on, where they stood on the issue, and if they should join the lawsuit or pass on it.

Discussion was held.

Motion by Commissioner Moore, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to direct counsel and the administrator to look into Public Act 233 as well as the carbon issue Commissioner Asper discussed.

Commissioner Moore withdrew his motion after Michael Bosanac and Tom Graham explained they were aware of it.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT—

1. Steven Meyer: Mr. Meyer expressed his concerns of Mark Brant and the empty seat on the Board. He elaborated on the by laws and explained there were thirty (30) days to fill the vacant seat and inquired when this timer started. Mr. Meyer also spoke about his past commissioner as well as the election and Danielle Hoover's votes.

   Chairman Vensel told Mr. Meyer that he has valid questions and they will seek counsel on it.

2. Dale DeSloover: Mr. DeSloover explained that since Mark Brant got sworn in, his name plate should be visible, and his name should be called for roll call. Mr. DeSloover also spoke about how he believed the computer height is a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

   Vice-Chairman Lievens showed the public the new computers that were ordered that allow them to see the Board members and vice versa.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS—

1. Listing of Board and Commission Meetings publicly posted and on County Website

2. Copies of any Tributes or Certificates issued since the December 17, 2024 meeting: None

XI. MEMBERS TIME

Commissioner Lamour — Thanked the people of Monroe County that put their trust in him to do this job. He also thanked Randy Richardville for his dedication and service to the County. Finally, Commissioner Lamour thanked his family for their support now and in the future. Explains he wants to keep Monroe the gem that it is. States he was born and raised here and he loves this County. Commissioner Lamour finished his comment by stating he is looking forward to servicing for the next four (4) years.

Commissioner Moore — Passed.

Commissioner Swartout — Passed.

Commissioner Heinzerling — Passed.

Commissioner Asper — Explained the reasoning behind not voting in favor of Chairman Vensel. She stated it was not personal in any way. She believes experience in the position and on the Board would have been a better choice. Commissioner Asper elaborated on the events that could have been avoided if there was more experience. Explains that she believes there were conversations happening that not all the Commissioners were aware of when it came to the succession plan vote. States she is going to be supportive and she is hoping Commissioner Vensel is going to be more open and transparent. Commissioner Asper finished her comment by sharing her concerns with the Ad-Hoc Committee.

Commissioner Hoffman— Stated he is going to back Chairman Vensel all the way. Thanked the Road Commission for the great report turned in a few weeks back. Commissioner Hoffman stated he would like to set a budget to get the Mark Brant situation investigated with an outside firm that is unaware of anything. Commissioner Hoffman finished his comment by sharing a safety concern. He explained the building got breached again last night during the Parks & Recreation meeting. He stated he would like this to be discussed at a meeting very soon.

Vice-Chairman Lievens — Thanked the people who supported his nomination of Vice-chair and stated hopefully he can earn the confidence of those who didn't. Explains he takes Commissioner Aspers comments to heart but stated there were multiple email chains where all commissioners were included. States at no time were any Commissioners omitted from the discussion.

Commissioner Moore informed the Board that the email chain Vice-Chairman Lievens is referring to, no one responded to. He explains he was inquiring about a few things but it was a one way communication.

Commissioner Asper stated that the Board is not supposed to deliberate outside of an open meeting.

Chairman Vensel— Thanked the Board for their support, stated he is hopeful to earn the trust of those not originally supportive. Explains that everyone on this Board is a leader. He is hopeful to share the leadership and be transparent. States if anyone believes he is not being transparent, continue to call him out on it. Chairman Vensel finished his comment by stating the Ad-Hoc Committee report was given to the Board to do as we wish, including an independent investigation with independent counsel.

XII. ADJOURNMENT—Chairman Vensel adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m. with no further business to conduct.

Respectfully submitted by:

Grace Drewior

Grace Drewior
Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant
Monroe County Board of Commissioners