MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 21, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting in the City of Monroe, on Tuesday, January 21, 2025. Chairman David Vensel 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	Mark Brant
J Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour	David Vensel	
Dawn Asper	Greg Moore, Jr.		

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

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Heinzerling led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. OPENING PRAYER

Deputy Clerk, Grace Drewior led the Opening Prayer.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to approve the January 21, 2025 Regular Meeting Agenda after the amendment of adding the Parks and Rec public hearing under Resolutions, Special Tributes & Presentations and moving the New Business agenda items ahead of the Act 233 Resolution.

Vice-Chairman Lievens also spoke about possibly showing some security footage towards the end of the meeting.

Voice vote taken. Motion carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (01/07/2025 Organizational Meeting Minutes)

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to approve the minutes as presented for the January 7, 2025 Organizational Meeting and then waived the reading thereof.

Voice vote taken. Motion carried.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT—

1. Steve Meyer: Spoke about matters concerning Mark Brant and his name plate. Mr. Meyer also shared his concerns of how quickly the resolution for Act 233 was created versus the legal decision(s) for Mark Brant still being made.

2. Adam Leckler: Shared his concerns for the Resolution for Public Act 233. Mr. Leckler explained some history relating to the Public Act and how Monroe County could make money by not signing this resolution. Mr. Leckler also advised joining Foster Swift.

3. Mark Farris: Informed the board and public that Detroit Edison has unofficially announced they want to build four (4) small reactors in Monroe. Mr. Farris explained what happened in the past with DTE and what the International Industrial Contracting Corporation is doing currently. Mr. Farris shared his concerns with the resolution, stating it was already adopted.

   Commissioner Moore explained that all Resolutions are written that way. He stated nothing was predetermined and if it doesn't get adopted, the board doesn't sign anything. The Resolution has to say it was adopted in case it gets passed.

4. Bill Lavoy: Spoke about Public Act 233 and advised the fiscally responsible people on the Board to think about the possible loss of revenue. Mr. Lavoy also stated personal property rights are very important to people. Mr. Lavoy suggested creating a resolution to ask Mark Brant to resign from his position to show public support.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS, SPECIAL TRIBUTES & PRESENTATION—

1. Monroe County Sewage Disposal System Bonds, Series 2025 in the amount of not to exceed $13,000,000 (Limited Tax General Obligation)

   a. Letter dated November 20, 2024 from Mr. Patrick McGow, Bond Counsel, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. to Michael Bosanac, Administrator/CFO outlining the bond issue and related matters.

   b. Bond authorizing Resolution under Public Act 342 for Monroe County Sewage Disposal System Bonds, Series 2025 (Limited Tax General Obligation) in the amount not to exceed $13,000,000.

   Michael Bosananc, Administrator/CFO and Connor Starrs, Bond Counsel, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. explained the next steps of this process.

   Discussion was held.

   Motion by Commissioner Lamour, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to approve the Bond authorizing Resolution for Monroe County Sewage Disposal System Bonds, Series 2025 (Limited Tax General Obligation) in the amount not to exceed $13,000,000.

   Roll call by Clerk as follows:

AYE			NAY	EXCUSED	ABSTAIN
David Hoffman	David Swartout	David Vensel			

Greg Moore, Jr.	Brian Lamour	Jay Heinzerling			
Dawn Asper	J. Henry Lievens				

Motion carried.

2. Resolution in Support of the Adoption of the Monroe County 2025 Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Five (5) Year Plan.

Chairman Vensel conducted the Public Hearing Prior to Consideration of Adoption of Resolution and Approval of 5 Year Recreation Plan.

Michael Bosananc, Administrator/CFO, presented an outline of the Recreation Plan process and how the County plans to utilize this Master Plan.

Chairman Vensel opened the floor for the public hearing.

Florence Buchanan: Ms. Buchanan, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Panel, stated that the possibilities that could come from this are exciting. She explained the one hundred (100) mile route as well as how other counties have connected their parks and trails and added restrooms to make the bike riding experience better. She asked if this was something Monroe County could do. Stated we have made great strides since 2019 and she is here to serve and assist with this effort.

Jim Gardner: Mr. Gardner commended Lucie Fortin for her work on this. Explains he brought the original RFP. Mr. Gardner spoke about the marketing aspect of the RFP to make Monroe a better place to live. Stated we need to put support behind this, meaning money and people.

Steve Meyer: Mr. Meyer shared concerns about the bicycle paths in the South East Side of Monroe. States there isn't sidewalk and it can be quite dangerous. Asked if Monroe County can help the township make it safer.

Bill Lavoy: Mr. Lavoy stated he supports this. His only question is what the cost of borrowing the money versus using the budget surplus of thirty (30) million is.

Bill Saul: Mr. Saul spoke about some solar farm ideas. Mr. Saul elaborated on some farms that have transitioned to solar energy and the differences. He stated there is a huge revenue coming from solar farms and if we don't start talking positive and making a plan for it, we are going to miss out. Advised the board and public to talk to Adam Leckler about this.

Chairman Vensel reminded the public this is a public hearing for the Parks & Recreation Master Plan but that he appreciates bringing attention to that important issue.

Florence Buchanan: Ms. Buchanan informed the public that the unsafe area a citizen explained earlier is in Monroe Township. Ms. Buchanan explained they have a Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee and he is more than welcome to share his concerns there as well.

[Click here for the 5 Year Master Plan]

Motion by Commissioner Hoffman, supported by Commissioner Lamour to approve the Resolution in Support of the Adoption of the Monroe County 2025 Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Five (5) Year Plan.

Discussion was held. Lucie Fortin explained that if anyone wants to make modifications, they can talk to her and they will make said adjustments together.

Florence Buchanan shared with the board and public that SEMCOG offers safety audits and that we should take advantage of them to keep our community safe.

Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

3. Resolution to Support Local Control and Claim of Appeal Against Michigan Public Service Commission Order

Amended the agenda at the beginning of the meeting to discuss the New Business agenda items concerning Public Act 233 information.

Jason Berry, Community & Planning Engagement Director, explained who was involved in the lawsuit and then elaborated on the handout he made in the packet.

Michael Bosanac, Administrator/CFO, explained where and how Public Act 233 started and what the clean energy law is. Mr. Bosanac elaborated on wind, solar, nuclear, and gas energy as he walked the board through their packet.

Discussion was held.

Motion by Commissioner Asper, supported by Commissioner Moore to approve the Resolution to Support Local Control and Claim of Appeal Against Michigan Public Service Commission Order.

Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

IX. FINANCE MATTERS

1. Payment of the 01/22/2025 Accounts Payable Claims Report in the amount of $1,791,885.88

   Discussion was held regarding MIDC payments.

   Sue Maier, Director of Fiscal Services and Mary Gantzos, Managing Attorney for MIDC, answered questions.

   Motion by Vice-Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to accept the 01/22/2025 Accounts Payable Claims Report for $1,791,885.88 and approve the Claims for the date and amount presented after withholding the check for vendor #750077 to get more information and create a report of the findings for the next board meeting.

   Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

   Motion carried.

2. Letter dated January 15, 2025 from Mr. Michael Bosanac, Administrator/Chief Financial Officer submitting the recommended Budget Calendar for development of the 2026-2027 County of Monroe Annual Line Item Budget.

   Motion by Commissioner Moore, supported by Commissioner Swartout to approve the Budget Calendar for development of the 2026-2027 County of Monroe Annual Line Item Budget.

   Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

   Motion carried.

X. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Non-Claims.
   a. Check Register dated 01/10/2025 in the amount of $520,861.95
   b. Check Register dated 01/17/2025 in the amount of $399,375.40

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

   Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter dated January 14, 2025 from Mr. Jeff McBee, Director, Human Resources, recommending approval of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the County of Monroe, the Monroe County Sheriff, and the Command Officers Association of Michigan with a term expiring December 31, 2027.

   Jeff McBee, Human Resources Director, clarified this agreement is for the Corrections Sergeants in the Command Officers Association of Michigan.

   Motion by Commisioner Swartout, supported by Commissioner Lamour to approve the recommendation and ratify the collective bargaining agreement between the County of Monroe, the Monroe County Sheriff, and the Command Officers Association of Michigan with a term expiring December 31, 2027 and authorize the Chairman to execute the same on behalf of the County.

   Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

XII. PUBLIC HEARINGS —

1. Public Hearing to consider any public comments prior to the adoption of Monroe County 2025 Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Five (5) Year Plan. Public Hearing will be conducted under VIII, Resolutions, Special Tributes and Presentations.

   This was conducted before the related Resolution.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS—

1. Consideration of establishing a budget and process of retaining outside counsel to investigate matters surrounding Mark Brant.

   Discussion was held regarding the guidelines for this process.

   Motion by Vice Chairman Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman, to approve the principle of establishing a budget of $50,000 and having outside counsel come to the next board meeting with the parameters of the investigation.

Roll call by Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS—

1. Information from Thomas Graham, Legal Counsel, regarding Public Act 233 of 2023.

2. Information from Planning and Community Engagement Director and Administrator/Chief Financial Officer regarding Public Act 233 of 2023 and related matters.

   The agenda was amended at the begging of the meeting to move these items before the Resolution concerning Public Act 233.

XV. PUBLIC COMMENT—

1. Steve Meyer: Mr. Meyer asked for clarification on the authorship of the Resolution in support of the Foster Swift lawsuit. My. Meyer asked if it was authored by Foster swift.

   Thomas Graham, Legal Advisor, answered yes to this question and explained he changed a few words without changing the meaning to better suit Monroe.

2. Adam Leckler: Mr. Leckler explained there is a lot of money we are missing out on. We are always either going to be producing power or buying it. Mr. Leckler reminded everyone of land owner rights and how it keeps money local and provides jobs.

3. Mark Farris: Mr. Farris informed the board that Ann Arbor is looking at dumping Detroit Edison as their power provider, they are looking at municipal power, which will be solar energy. Mr. Farris also spoke about the Palisades Nuclear Plant being revived and how much it is going to cost as well as why it closed.

4. Bill Lavoy: Mr. Lavoy thanked the commissioners for fixing the monitors so the public can see their faces. He also thanked Mr. Bosanac for the description of the power plant before the vote on the resolution. Mr. Lavoy explained there are nine (9) commissioners and only eight (8) voted but if Mark Brant had a vote, this motion could have been defeated. Elaborated this is one example of how Mark Brant not being here can affect the votes.

5. Jim Gardner: Speaking as a resident of Monroe County, Mr. Gardner spoke about the Resolution for solar energy. He explained the Board tried to take

authority over something they have no authority over. Thanked the Commissioners for all that they do.

XVI. ANNOUNCEMENTS—

1. Copies of any Tributes or Certificates issued since the January 7, 2025 meeting: None

XVII. MEMBERS TIME –

Commissioner Moore – Informed the public that DTE petitioned the state taxing authority so the locals had no say. He explained he doesn't understand why someone would want to go to the state level to change something when they can go to the local level and it would be much easier.

Commissioner Swartout – Passed.

Commissioner Lamour – Asked Michael Bosanac if it was possible to send our agendas to all the other municipalities in Monroe County and ask for theirs in return. Commissioner Lamour thinks it would be a good idea for the sake of transparency.

Michael Bosanac, CFO, asked to dive into this deeper with staff and IT to see the possibilities and how to make it efficient as possible.

Commissioner Lamour finished his comment by stating our commissioners had great dialogue tonight and he looks forward to more of that in the future.

Commissioner Heinzerling – Reminded everyone that it is freezing outside so keep an eye on your animals and your neighbor's animals.

Commissioner Asper – Elaborated on how the state legislature took rights from the local level. Told the public to be careful and look at the local rights they currently have, that they are trying to take at the higher level.

Commissioner Hoffman – Stated Commissioner Asper mentioned an Ethics Board and he is curious if they can look at the compensation for this. He also thanked everyone for coming tonight. Finished his comment by telling Commissioner Heinzerling, the cattle, pigs, ducks, and other animals can't all fit inside, but they have straw!

Vice-Chairman Lievens – Stated his wife got mad last time he brought the goat in the house so he passed.

Chairman Vensel – Stated he believes progress is being made. He thanked Commissioner Asper for taking initiative to start moving on an Ethics policy. Chairman Vensel said he appreciated the compliment on the monitors and explained the meeting should be livestreamed and archived and that they are working on this. He also stated he appreciated the respectful dialogue the Board had.

Vice-Chairman Lievens asked if live streaming our meetings is something Jacob

Perry, IT Director, could look into.

Michael Bosanac, Administrator/CFO stated Jacob is working on that with a couple different vendors and technology sources. We will give you an update this week on where it stands.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT - Chairman Vensel adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m. with no further business to discuss.

Respectfully submitted by:

Grace Drewior

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