

MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 6, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners held an Organizational Meeting in the City of Monroe on Tuesday, January 6, 2026. Monroe County Clerk, Annamarie Osment, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

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

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

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Annamarie Osment led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. OPENING PRAYER

Deputy Clerk, Grace Miles led the Opening Prayer

V. ELECTION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CHAIRPERSON

A. Election of Chairperson:

Clerk Annamarie Osment opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson.

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

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

Motion by Commissioner Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to elect Commissioner David Vensel as Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners with a term ending December 31, 2026.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

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

Chairman Vensel thanked his colleagues for their confidence in him and stated he will continue to do the work to the best of his ability.

VI. ELECTION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS VICE-CHAIRPERSON

A. Election of Vice-Chairperson:

Chairman Vensel asked for nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

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

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

Motion by Commissioner Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to elect Commissioner Brian Lamour as Vice-Chairman of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners with a term ending December 31, 2026.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to approve the January 6, 2026 Organizational Agenda as presented.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (12/16/2025 Regular Meeting)

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to approve the minutes as presented for the December 16, 2025 Regular Meeting and waive the reading thereof.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Vensel Stated Ms. Gabis is the attorney for the Independent Investigation and she is going to provide some clarifying comments.

1. Sarah Gabis: Stated the agenda item for the closed session should be to discuss a confidential attorney client communication pursuant to MCL 15.268(1)(h). Ms. Gabis also discussed the funding regarding this investigation and stated the independent investigator has been paid in full for the work they have done. What needs to be paid still is the work that was done by herself. Ms. Gabis explained there will be more as well but she can not do that work until it is authorized.

Discussion was held.

2. Dale Biniecki: Reiterates his previous statements that he would respect and abide by the legal decisions on this matter. However, the timing of legal decision is one thing he cannot force. One must ask how long will the constituents of District two (2) go with zero representation on this board. Stated many Commissioners on this Board earned similar majority margins as himself. Explained he has been rightfully elected, certified, sworn in, and have allowed every election law and process with utmost regard.
3. Sarah Gabis: Shared a clarifying comment that the work she has done for the County was authorized. The expenditure of that work being authorized is a budget question.

Chairman Vensel asked for Mr. Goldsmith's legal opinion regarding the Closed Session and only have 5 members in attendance.

Mr. Goldsmith explained in order to go into closed session to discuss a written attorney opinion, it requires a supermajority vote of 6 votes. Stated the Closed Session cannot occur tonight and recommended the board not hear Ms. Gabis' letter in open session. Advised the board to wait for the opportunity to allow her to explain it in Closed Session.

Discussion was held.

Chairman Vensel explained the next item will be the Special Tribute for the Bears. Explained he worked at Jefferson for fifteen (15) years and can't explain the pride he has in having the team come here to recognize their achievements.

Commissioner Heinzerling read the Jefferson Bears Special Tribute into the record and presented the Special Tribute to the coach and team.

X. CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session to discuss Investigation Findings

This agenda item could not be executed due to Commissioner attendance.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Payment of Accounts Payable Current Claim Report

1. Payment of the 01/07/2026 Accounts Payable Current Claims Report in the amount of \$1,308,886.03

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to approve the 01/07/2026 Accounts Payable Current Claims Report in the amount of \$1,308,886.03.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

2. Payment of Non-Claims

- a. Check Register dated 12/26/2025 in the amount of \$ 94,041.77
- b. Check Register dated 01/02/2026 in the amount of \$667,854.33

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, 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		Dawn Asper	
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour		Greg Moore, Jr.	
David Vensel			David Swartout	

Motion carried.

B. Board Action:

1. Presentation on 2025 Farm Bureau Policy & Updates by Mr. Doug Darling, Monroe County Farm Bureau.

Mr. Doug Darling presented the Board with two handouts and read them into the record. The first handout being a resolution they are trying to get passed and the other handout being the Road Commission's response to their concerns. Mr. Darling explained his concerns with the rural road designs, tile drainage, and the use of roadside ditches for agricultural water discharge.

Discussion was held.

2. Letter dated December 17, 2025 from Ms. Jamie Dean, Health Director requesting approval to apply for a Public Health Capacity Building Mini-Grant from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services in the amount of \$10,000.00 with no matching funds required.

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Lievens to approve the application for a Public Health Capacity Building Mini-Grant from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services in the amount of \$10,000.00 with no matching funds required.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

3. Letter dated December 30, 2025 from Ms. Crystal Comer, Fiscal Manager requesting the Board accept and acknowledge the Monroe County Opportunity Program Community Development Block Grant Program Income Funding in the amount of \$72,784.00 with no matching funds required.

Michael Bosanac, Administrator/CFO advised the Chairman ask for any public comment on this matter. Mr. Bosanac explained the resolution on the second page includes information relating to a public hearing. The legal advisor and himself believe allowing public comment on the application would be sufficient and for the public's benefit. Mr. Bosanac further explained what this item is.

Chairman Vensel asked for any comments from the public regarding this item.

Darla Meyers asked if this is an on-going grant.

Mr. Bosanac explained it is periodic and based upon the Community Development Block Grant Program. Explained this is simply recognizing what the MCOP has advised us they're in receipt of since the County is their fiduciary.

Motion by Commissioner Hoffman, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to accept and acknowledge the Monroe County Opportunity Program Community Development Block Grant Program Income Funding in the amount of \$72,784.00 with no matching funds required.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

- Letter dated December 29, 2025 from Ms. Annamarie Osment, County Clerk requesting approval to submit the Rediscovering Our Revolutionary Tradition Records Preservation grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for up to \$750,000.00 with no requirement to match funds.

Annamarie Osment explained that the first courthouse fire took place in 1897 so there are some records missing. However, County Clerk has birth records that go back to 1874, death records that go back to 1867, and marriage records that go back as far as 1818. Ms. Osment explained some of these are in poor condition. By doing this restoration project and digitizing, these records can be preserved in perpetuity.

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to approve the submission of the Rediscovering Our Revolutionary Tradition Records Preservation grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for up to \$750,000.00 with no requirement to match funds.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

- Letter dated December 16, 2025 from Mr. Jesse Stanford, County Treasurer, submitting the County Treasurer bond for 2026.

Motion by Commissioner Hoffman, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling to accept the communication and place on file, along with the blanket fidelity bond from County Treasurer for 2026.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried.

6. Letter dated December 17, 2025 from Mr. Michael Woolford, Equalization Director, submitting the 2025 Monroe County Equalization Study.

Click [HERE](#) for the completed 2025 Equalization Study

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

Discussion was held.

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lamour, supported by Commissioner Heinzerling 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		Dawn Asper	
J. Henry Lievens	Brian Lamour		Greg Moore, Jr.	
David Vensel			David Swartout	

Motion carried.

7. Establish Date to submit proposed changes to the Board of Commissioner's Bylaws

Commissioner Lievens modified the date to submit proposed changes to the Board of Commissioner's Bylaws to March 15, 2026.

Discussion was held.

Motion by Commissioner Lievens, supported by Commissioner Hoffman to establish 03/15/2026 as the date to provide any suggested amendments to the Board's Bylaws to Legal Counsel.

Roll call by Deputy Clerk as follows:

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

Motion carried

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT—

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 16, 2025 meeting:
 - a. Special Tribute recognizing Jefferson Bears Varsity Football Team for an outstanding season.

Commissioner Heinzerling presented this tribute to the Jefferson Bears earlier in the meeting.

- b. Special Tribute recognizing Monroe County Opportunity Program for a 5-star rating on the STAR Assessment Report.

Commissioner Swartout presented this tribute to the Monroe County Opportunity Program prior to this meeting.

XI. MEMBERS TIME

Commissioner Moore — Excused.

Commissioner Swartout — Excused.

Vice-Chairman Lamour — Thanked the Chairman for his congratulations and congratulated the Chairman as well. Stated he is very happy and appreciates the confidence in himself to be the Vice-Chairman. Explained he is very disappointed in his other colleagues that were absent tonight. This meeting was scheduled for over a year and there are three people absent. Stated he can only attribute that to not wanting to see what's on the investigation. Explained this investigation's purpose was to exonerate or to incriminate and if there is nothing to hide, there's nothing to fear, so don't be an obstructionist to it. Stated it is frustrating to the board and to the audience that the board cannot move forward with this investigation due to attendance. Stated he wants to move forward with it and get it done and over with. Explained the board is not serving their constituents well right now and all of them have a part in it. Suggested finishing this at the next meeting. Congratulated the Jefferson football team and stated he cannot praise them enough for having such a great turnaround this year and he is very proud of them.

Commissioner Asper — Excused.

Commissioner Heinzerling — Passed.

Commissioner Hoffman — Echoed what Commissioner Lamour said and stated the good will prevail and the evil will fail. Explained this is almost a money game now of who has the most money so who can take this the furthest. Stated the person that got us into this should just walk out instead of running this county through such a mess. We should not have to put up with this aggravation that started out as a lie.

Commissioner Lievens — Congratulated leadership and acknowledged shouldering the burden onto Brian Lamour who accepted the nomination without protest. Expressed his likewise frustration with what is obviously a coordinated and deliberate avoidance of an important meeting to put all this nonsense behind us. Now the board is kicking the can again at the taxpayer expense. Stated these Commissioners should be absent and not excused. Stated if there is nothing to hide, let's get it done. Explained he missed the days when they conducted county business, acknowledged teams, passed the bills and were devoted to public service.

This nonsense has to come to the end. Stated if the board is not able to execute the closed session, the County is protected by governmental immunity if it comes to the point of releasing the information in open session. Hoping for a properly attended business like meeting next time they get together.

Chairman Vensel — Thanked his colleagues for their confidence in him and for another opportunity to lead the board in this coming year. Stated he will do his absolute best and congratulated Vice-Chairman Lamour. Thanked Commissioner Lievens for all of his help with the most complicated year of being Chairman. Congratulated Jefferson football team and stated that it is a high quality school with high quality students and staff members. Explained seeing Gene Gennoe brings back great memories of the kind of people that lead Jefferson high school so thank you for brining that award to our meeting commissioner Heinzerling. Stated rest assured, this investigation will come to a completion and we will find out what we need to in order to move this County forward.

- XII. ADJOURNMENT—Chairman Vensel adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m. with no further business to conduct.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grace Miles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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