

**MINUTES**  
**Isabella County Board of Commissioners**  
**REGULAR BOARD**  
**HYBRID MEETING (IN-PERSON/ELECTRONIC)**  
**Isabella County Commission on Aging Building**  
**2200 S. Lincoln Rd, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858**  
**February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER** by Chairperson Tobin D. Hope in conference room A/B of the Commission on Aging, 2200 S. Lincoln Rd, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. Hybrid Meeting (In-Person/Electronic).

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** to the United States of America was led by Chairperson Hope.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:** Tobin D. Hope, Chris Embrey, Steve Swaney, Frank Engler, Jerry Jaloszynski, Terry Hutchinson and James Moreno.

**Commissioner Absent:** None.

**Also Present:** Isabella County Deputy Administrator Melissa Franquist, Isabella County/Controller Administrator Nicole F. Frost, via Zoom and Isabella County Clerk Mindé B. Lux were present.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski to amend the agenda and add under new business item B. Insulin Pricing Litigation, MDL No. 3080 and it was seconded by Commissioner Swaney to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Donald Tyler from 210 West High St., spoke against the millage and felt that the jail bond should have been voted on by the people. Mr. Tyler also said at first, the Board of Commissioners stated that it would be taken to the people for a vote during Covid but decided otherwise. The wind turbine could have paid for the community pool project. He wants all out of county inmates to be returned to their own counties. The location of the jail should not be located by the Morey Court and Renaissance School.

Sheila Salmon from Chippewa Township spoke against the solar development that is coming to Isabella County due to it already being in Gratiot County near

her father's property. There is a major land grab by the solar development companies. Farm land is shrinking and estimated land usage of solar development is taking over the current farm land we have. As a board you need to make sound good decisions on the zoning ordinance on farm lands.

Levi Yoder from the Amish community wants to know who is responsible for grading the roads. There are so many pot holes that their bus could not come down a back road so all of the people who were traveling on the bus had to walk down the road for one mile at 1:30 a.m. to get on the bus due to this. The roads need to be graded and the horses are having a very difficult time traveling down the roads. The millage should not be done since you cannot keep the roads graded.

Commissioner Jaloszynski spoke with permission from Chairman Hope to let Levi know that the Isabella County Board of Commissioners is not in charge of the roads. He further explained that the Isabella County Road Commission is in charge of them. He also stated that he is more than willing to bring this to their attention in hopes that they will reach out to him.

Mr. Kimball stated that the Board of Commissioners just built a multi-million dollar road commission building and our roads are crap. The roads are so much better once you get into Mt. Pleasant but the back roads are terrible. Now you want to raise our taxes after building this jail. We should not be housing out of county convicts because they bring in more convicts who want to come and visit these people.

Steve Morgenstern from Nottawa Township is still waiting on a phone call from Terry Hutchinson even though he gave him his number to call he has still to receive a call back. He feels that they think he is dumb and it's ok to play with his tax fund money. The property that was purchased was very over priced on the backs of the tax payers and wants to know when is this going to stop? When are you guys going to start trimming the fat off your own budget. You should not have to tax because you have over spent. The cover-up in Nottawa Township is being pushed off to others and no one wants to help us. You show us what you are going to do for us not what we are going to do for you.

Clyde Pritchard from Rolland Township has lived here for 30 years and the taxes keep rising. There are so many new houses on the tax rolls so why do you need more money? Where is all this money going? Property values go up every year. You keep asking for more money.

Simon Yoder from Rolland Township said that they are concerned about the tax increase and they already think that the taxes are high. It is going to be hard for

the future children to be able to make it in the county. They came in tonight because they want the commission to know they are worried about the tax increase.

Mr. Yoder from Rolland Township has the same concerns Simon Yoder has. They want to practice their faith as they do. They hope they are not a burden on the county. They appreciate everything that they have, but they feel that they are over appraised on their homes and if he made the same amount to build the homes that the appraisals come in at, he would be rich. He wants to know where all the money goes. They are spending more money on taxes than they were 30 years ago. He thanked the board for everything that they do for them.

**PRESENTATIONS AND SPECIAL REPORTS:** None.

**APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** None.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve and place on file the February 6th, 2024 Work Session Meeting Minutes, February 6th, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes, the February 13th, 2024 Finance and Administration Committee Meeting minutes, the February 13th, 2024 Criminal Justice and County Affairs Committee Meeting minutes, and the February 13th, 2024 Human Resources and Public Works Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance and Administration Committee:**

1. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to ratify and place on file the February 2, 2024 Invoice List in the amount of \$570,414.49, the February 9, 2024 Invoice List in the amount of \$1,484,735.68, and the Adjustment List dated February 15, 2024. Commissioner Jaloszynski asked that the (3) checks made out to Lux Family Funeral Home be held until a lease agreement is approved. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.
2. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve the Prime Contract Change Order No. 14 with Clark Construction, in the net additional amount of \$14,564.00, and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Jaloszynski, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.

3. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to approve the Isabella County Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Calendar. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Jaloszynski, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.
4. It was moved by Commissioner Embrey and seconded by Commissioner Jaloszynski to approve the Spence Brothers Proposal for professional construction management services for the Isabella County Administration Building rebuild project. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Jaloszynski, Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None

**Criminal Justice and County Affairs Committee:**

1. It was moved by Commissioner Swaney and seconded by Commissioner Engler to approve the Isabella County Public Defender to fill the position of a misdemeanor level Assistant Public Defender at a higher than starting rate based upon qualifications of the proposed new hire. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Hutchinson, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski and Hope. Nays: None.

**Human Resources and Public Works Committee:**

1. It was moved by Commissioner Moreno and seconded by Commissioner Hutchinson to approve the Engagement Letter with Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC for legal services regarding Lake Levels and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.
2. It was moved by Commissioner Hutchinson and seconded by Commissioner Moreno to Move to approve Resolution #2024-03 to authorize activities related to the Weidman Mill Pond- Lake Level and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.
3. It was moved by Commissioner Moreno and seconded by Commissioner Hutchinson to approve Resolution #2024-04 to authorize activities related to the Stevenson Lake- Lake Level and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS:** None.

**ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER:** None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to approve to consider scheduling a goal setting meeting of the Board of Commissioners for March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. at the Commission on Aging. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.
2. It was moved by Commissioner Swaney and seconded by Commissioner Moreno to consider filing suit to address overcharges that Isabella County may have paid due to an alleged improper pricing scheme associated with high insulin prices and authorize the Board Chairperson to sign the same. Motion carried with Yeas: Commissioners Moreno, Embrey, Swaney, Engler, Jaloszynski, Hutchinson and Hope. Nays: None.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Commissioner Engler reminded everyone that Conservation District tree sale is going on right now until April 5th, 2024 and you can go to [www.isabellaconservationdistrict.org](http://www.isabellaconservationdistrict.org) to place an order. There will be a tire drop off at the Isabella County Fairgrounds on May 18th, 2024 and September 25th, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. There will also be a hazardous waste drop off at the Isabella County Fairgrounds on June 8th, 2024 and September 7th, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Commissioner Embrey spoke to the audience stating that there is new leadership at Isabella County including the County Administrator, Deputy Administrator and Chairman. This group and all the commissioners that sit on this board are totally committed and working towards running the county government efficiently and within the county budget. They felt it was better to take this to the voters and if they want the current services they will vote yes and if they do not want the present services, they will vote no. If the millage does not pass, changes will be made and even if it does pass, they have no intention to come back and ask for another 2.5 mills.

Chairman Hope wanted to address the public and thank everyone who came to the meeting. He also wanted to state that the Amish community is not a burden but yet a benefit to our county as a whole. The complaints about the roads are handled by the road commission as they are their own public body and better addressed by the road commission. The inmates from other areas were mentioned and we have not housed inmates from other counties for quite some time and that was many sheriffs ago. We do house a few from the U.S. Marshalls they usually go to court in Bay City but we make money off that. They are not here very long nor released into the community. The jail conversation started in 2016 with a building feasibility study and the structure showed that it was in failure with electric and plumbing. The jail is something that counties are mandated to do and there are always about 150 some guests. The jail was built in 1958.

Commissioner Moreno wanted the general public to know that the Aquatics Proposal is not a part of the county proposal and that they are two separate proposals.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved by Commissioner Jaloszynski and seconded by Commissioner Embrey to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 P.M. Motion carried.