

## January 2, 2024

The organizational meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Leelanau County was called to order by Secretary to the Board Susan Boyd at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 10550 E. Eckerle Road, Suttons Bay, Michigan. Present: Chair Garth Greenan, Vice Chair Jim Calhoun, Members Robert Joyce, Greg Mikowski and John Popa. Also present: Manager Brendan Mullane, Engineer Craig Brown, Fleet/Facilities Manager Tim Trudell and Finance Manager/Secretary to the Board Susan Boyd. Guests were present. Public invited to attend via GoToMeetings link.

Boyd called for nominations for Chairman.

Motion by Popa, supported by Greenan to nominate Garth Greenan for Chairman of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Leelanau County for the ensuing year.

Motion by Mikowski, supported by Joyce to nominate Robert Joyce for Chairman of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Leelanau County for the ensuing year.

Roll call vote: Popa and Greenan: Greenan. Calhoun, Mikowski and Joyce: Joyce.

Motion to appoint Robert Joyce as Chairman of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Leelanau County for 2024 is hereby approved.

Boyd turned the meeting over to Joyce.

### Vice-Chairman:

Motion by Mikowski, supported by Greenan to nominate Jim Calhoun for Vice-Chairman of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Leelanau County for the ensuing year.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Mikowski, Greenan, Calhoun, Popa and Joyce. Nays: None. Motion is hereby approved.

### Manager:

Motion by Greenan, supported by Popa to appoint Brendan Mullane as Manager of the Leelanau County Road Commission for the ensuing year.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Mikowski, Greenan, Calhoun, Popa and Joyce. Nays: None. Motion is hereby approved.

### Secretary to the Board:

Motion by Joyce, supported by Greenan to appoint Susan Boyd as Secretary to the Board of the Leelanau County Road Commission for the ensuing year.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Popa, Calhoun, Greenan, Mikowski and Joyce. Nays: None. Motion is hereby approved.

### Meeting Schedule:

Motion by Popa, supported by Greenan to approve the proposed meeting schedule for 2024.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Popa, Calhoun, Greenan, Mikowski and Joyce. Nays: None. Motion is hereby approved.

Joyce then closed the organizational meeting.

Agenda: Approved as presented.

Minutes from the December 19, 2023 regular meeting approved as presented.

Public Comments: None.

Communication Items: None.

### Appointments:

1. Manistee-Benzie Snowbirds.

Joe Bartlett would like the permit requested by the organization finalized since all lease agreements are in place with private owners and the DNR has approved the proposed signage plan. He responded to the list of requirements/comments previously submitted by Mullane. He stated that possible ownership changes will allow the trail to bypass the road. The law considers snowmobiles motorized vehicles and as such have the right to use roads and that the cost of repairing any damage would be covered by the gas tax paid by snowmobilers. Over the years he has not ever noticed any damage to roads from snowmobiles. The DNR will not approve the route without a permit issued by the road commission. Mullane noted that the proposed crossings were a concern of the DNR as well as of the road commission. There was further discussion regarding signage placement, contact with and efforts to accommodate landowners, and damage to paved roads. Brown stated that snowmobiles have the right to drive in the right of way but not to set up a trail on the road. Mullane verified the current proposed route but sight distance at crossings will still have to be checked by road commission staff and there are still liability concerns over possible damage to private property and pavement. Calhoun confirmed that there was a start and end date for trail usage and asked about minimum snow requirements for snowmobiles. There is a minimum of 4 inches of snow required for trail usage but no requirements for driving snowmobiles on roads. Popa said this issue is between the Snowbirds and the road commission manager. Mullane stated that all concerns had not yet been addressed but he would review the plans and check the crossings. Joyce assigned Mullane to review the proposal and contact the DNR as well.

### Staff Reports:

Mullane: Met with Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail but there are still some unresolved design issues. Other funding options are being explored for the planned TART Trail expansion in Elmwood Township due to the design

requirements of TAP grant funding which would require moving the road. Residents of Fire Lane 6 are discussing abandonment of the road.

Greenan mentioned that a resident of the Little Traverse Lake area had asked him about water direction studies relative to the trail expansion and road improvement projects. Mullane responded that the National Park Service had conducted a hydrology analysis and believed that it had been made public.

Brown: Bid requests for 2024 have been put together and will be reviewed soon with a goal of getting the bids out by the end of January. Asset Management plans are in final review and should be received soon.

Trudell: Updated status of sander rebuilds and year end parts inventory. Repair of floor drain system should be completed by mid-January. The 2024 plow trucks will be delivered to the Suttons Bay shop for radios, GPS systems, and decals in the next few weeks. One bid was received for 2025 plow trucks from Stoops Western Star of Michigan with a significant price increase and a projected build timeline of November/December. There is an anticipated price increase of \$20-30,000 per truck with the required future emission changes. Patrol pickups are on schedule for a February 2024 build date. A bid request has been issued for a new fire monitoring system due to ongoing problems and lack of support from the current provider. Bidders will be required to look at the current system before a bid will be accepted. Popa asked how the GPS system was working and if there would be any additional costs associated with it. Aside from minor programming changes, the system has been very effective. It is easy to work with, involves simple installation, and has excellent reporting capabilities. The only additional cost has been for sensors. Calhoun agreed that the reports are very helpful and it is a great system.

Boyd: MTF payment for November was higher than anticipated. The audit is scheduled for February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Discussions: None.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

1. Discussion of annual presentations to townships.

Mullane said that commissioners should be appointing each other to attend these meetings and the timing of attendance should coincide with the availability of the Asset Management Plans. A list of the townships and the commissioner who attended last year will be presented at the next meeting and decisions for this year can be made based on that list.

Public Comment: Bruce Betzler, Cleveland Township, snowmobiles about 400 miles locally each year and travels extensively along the road to access trails. He said that snowmobiling occurs regardless whether or not there are trails. He thanked the road commission for assistance in pulling this together and emphasized that it was much safer to have a dedicated area for snowmobilers.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for January 16, 2024 at 1:00 pm.

Staff Comments: Mullane wished all a Happy New Year.

Commissioner comments:

Mikowski said that main roads were well sanded early on Monday morning and good job getting them done so early.

Greenan thanked all for the opportunity to serve as chairman for the last year.

Calhoun suggested that commissioners schedule time to meet with staff one on one possibly on a monthly basis. He also mentioned that crews did a great job on the roads over the weekend.

Popa said there are still issues to be resolved and topics to be covered in the strategic plan and requested that a longer meeting be scheduled for another work session.

Joyce will contact the other commissioners and schedule a work session. He thanked the Snowbirds for their presentation and directed Mullane to work towards a resolution with the group. Welcome 2024.

With no more business to conduct, Joyce adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS  
OF LEELANAU COUNTY

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Joyce, Chairman

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Boyd, Secretary to the Board