

**LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL SESSION – Monday, November 9, 2020**

Approved 12/15/2020

Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded (audio and video) and are not the official record of the meeting; the formally approved/accepted written copy of the minutes will be the official record of the meeting.

Meeting called to order by Chairman William J. Bunek at 9:00 a.m. Today's meeting is being held at the Government Center, 8527 Government Center Drive, Suttons Bay, Michigan.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited, followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call:	District #1	Anthony Ansorte	PRESENT
	#2	Debra L. Rushton	PRESENT (via Zoom)
	#3	William J. Bunek	PRESENT
	#4	Ty Wessell	PRESENT
	#5	Patricia Soutas-Little	PRESENT
	#6	Carolyn Rentenbach	PRESENT (via Zoom)
	#7	Melinda C. Lautner	PRESENT

Public Comment:

Chairman Bunek called for Public Comment and announced the call in number 231-256-8109.

- John Popa, Bingham Township. Popa offered comments regarding questions that he feel are important for candidates to be asked.

Purpose of Meeting – Discussion/Potential Action —

Road Commissioner Appointment:

Administrator Janik stated that last time Commissioners interviewed candidates, the candidates were given the opportunity to give an opening statement.

Commissioner Rushton had a point of order regarding the Agenda and that it has not been approved. Chairman Bunek commented that it is a special session and it cannot be amended.

#242-11092020 Special Session

MOTION BY ANSORGE THAT THE LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY SOUTAS-LITTLE AND WESSELL.

Discussion – none.

**AYES – 7 (Ansorte, Bunek, Lautner, Rentenbach, Rushton, Soutas-Little, Wessell)
NO – 0
MOTION CARRIED.**

Applicants:

- James Kiessel began with an opening statement. Kiessel responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: background and experience; relationship between the Road Commission and the County; availability; McNitt Act of 1931 and Public Act 51; accident reconstruction; relationship with Townships and Villages; responsiveness to citizens; should the

Road Commissioners be Elected or Appointed; Road Commission attendance; number one priority if appointed; complaints from residents and how to handle; Leland Dam Authority and Board of Public Works – separate or remain under the Road Commission. Kiessel ended with closing comments, adding he does not plan to run in the election for the vacancy and is just looking to fill the appointment.

- Mike Zeits began with an opening statement. Zeits responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: time commitment, including the Leland Dam Authority and Board of Public Works; number one priority if appointed; complaints from residents and how to handle; availability; McNitt Act of 1931 and Public Act 51; relationship between the Road Commission and citizens or others; Elected or Appointed Road Commissioners; Road Commission attendance; length of service interested in; availability for and knowledge of Dam Authority and Board of Public Works; number one priority and what does he bring to the Board; what does he see as the most important function of the Road Commission; staffing levels and would you make a change to the current procedures and is full-time or seasonal/part-time more advantageous; computers are going to be part this. Zeits ended with closing comments. Regional aspects of representation discussed briefly.

- Barry Adler began with an opening statement. Adler responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: time commitment and the Leland Dam Authority and Board of Public Works and should they be handled by the Road Commission; being an attorney – how do you separate from the advice the Road Commissions' Attorney would give you; incident and how would you handle it; McNitt Act of 1931 and Public Act 51; what your priorities are on spending given the limited resources that the County has; how would you prioritize the work that would be done at the Road Commission; it is a two-year appointment and would you plan on running for the seat; relationship between the Road Commission, Villages and Township and how does he see that working; Elected versus Appointed Road Commissioners and should it be changed or remain in the hands of the citizens; how many Road Commission meetings have you attended in the last year; what is it that you know about our Roads, Dam, and Public Works; historically Road Commission positions were full-time and there were issues about attracting full-time employees and moving to seasonal workers – long term it presents problems and how do you weigh in on the position. Adler concluded with closing comments.

Chairman called for a recess at 10:26 a.m.

Chairman called the meeting back to order at 10:35 a.m.

- Mel Black began with an opening statement. Black responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: time commitment and the Dam Authority and Board of Public Works; goals for the Road Commission; prior experience and what he served on; what is his number one priority if appointed; given his negative comments on the current Road Commission Chairman, could he elaborate on his comments at the beginning of today's meeting and how would he get along; McNitt Act of 1931 and Public Act 51 and what are your priorities on spending the limited resources that the County has; how would you reach out and ensure that your working relationship with other members and staff would move forward and do you feel that you could listen openly to other methods and means given your strong opinions; past experience and did you attend Township meetings and do you see working with Townships and Villages as part of your job; Elected vs. Appointed Road Commissioners; how many Road Commission meetings have been attended in the last year to get up-to-date on problems, goals,

or pertinent issues; full-time appointment and transitioned to seasonal workers – would you be looking at more full-time employment or continue with seasonal employment; why should he be appointed to the Commission; what are his thoughts that would make it a more efficient operation; does he look at himself as a problem solver; how important is it to attend association training; what would you do to improve or increase the County's share of the MDOT dollars; a lot of the work has to be done on your computer, do you have a good internet connection. Black offered closing comments.

- Robert Gregory began with an opening statement. Gregory responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: time commitment and the Leland Dam Authority and Board of Public Works; what skills do you bring from your businesses that would benefit the Road Commission; how would you like to see the team work together; how would you have acted if you were on the Board with the recent public statements by a former Road Commissioner; how do you move forward based on the prior statements at the Road Commission; McNitt Act of 1931 and Public Act 51 and what are your priorities on spending the limited resources that the County has; what do you see as the overall function of the Board of Road Commissioners; if appointed and took the position immediately, what would be your first priority be or needs to be accomplished be; what about the relationship between the Road Commission Board and Township Boards; Elected vs. Appointed Road Commissioners; have you been following or have you attended any Road Commission meetings in the last year and are you aware of current issues; how many engineers do you think should be employed/appointed by the County Road Commission; why should he be appointed to the Road Commission Board and what will he bring to the Board that would make them more effective; how important does he feel it is to attend the association training meetings. Gregory finished with closing statements and he challenged Commissioners to choose the individual that can serve the County best.

Chairman Bunek called for a brief recess at 11:25 a.m.

Chairman Bunek called the meeting back to order at 11:30 p.m.

- Garth Greenan began with an opening statement. Greenan responded to questions from Commissioners regarding: time commitment and availability for meetings of the Road Commissioners, as well as the Dam Authority and Board of Public Works; if appointed to the position what would be his first priority; you are soft spoken and referenced your talents, so what are those talents that you would bring to the position; having worked at Grand Traverse County Road Commission and knowing what is going on in Leelanau County, provide two things that we should be doing at the Road Commission; is there a criterial/circuit breaker for which roads get improved; what do you see at the primary function of the Road Commission; what do you see as the primary goal for the Road Commission for this year; how do you see the Road Commission communicating with the Townships regarding what needs to be done with the Roads and how do you communicate that; Elected vs. Appointed Road Commissioners; how many Leelanau County Road Commission meetings have you attended and/or watched; how or what would your position be to those two board and what would you bring as an asset to those two Boards; all have been interested in expanding broadband and having talked to ISP it is Road Commissions that slow it down, can you address; if you, as a Commissioner on the Road Commission, found that you needed to hire a new Director for the Road Commission, what kind of characteristics or skill set would you look for. Greenan offered closing statements.

Commissioner Lautner offered comments that it was nice to have a slate of candidates with all kinds of backgrounds for all areas of the County.

#243-11092020 Special Session

MOTION BY LAUTNER THAT THE LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPOINT ROBERT E. GREGORY TO THE ROAD COMMISSION FOR THE VACANCY IN THE OFFICE UNTIL NOVEMBER 2022. SECONDED BY RUSHTON.

Discussion – Commissioner Lautner addressed her motion as did all of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Ansortge commented that any one of them could do the job and added additional comments.

Commissioner Soutas-Little commented that Commissioner Ansortge expressed it very well. She would like to have more discussion on the candidates before a motion is made and voted on.

Commissioner Wessell said he felt that it is too quick to make motion and would like discussion on the candidates and offered additional brief comments.

Commissioner Rentenbach commented that each candidate addressed the Board and she reviewed each candidate and the positives that they would bring to the position.

Chairman Bunek commented that he has worked with Mr. Gregory for many years in Bingham Township on the Planning Commission. Bunek continued with positive comments regarding the motion on the floor. Bunek stated that he also understands what others are saying that we had a wonderful slate of candidates.

Commissioner Lautner commented and expressed her concerns regarding who will serve as a good Road Commission Board member and offered brief additional comments.

Commissioner Rushton commented that each one of the candidates come to the Board with a certain skill set, certain attitudes and she believes that any one would fill the position and continued with brief comments.

ROLL CALL: Lautner – YES; Rentenbach – NO; Rushton – YES; Soutas-Little – NO; Wessell – NO; Ansortge – NO; Bunek – YES.

AYES – 3 NO – 4

MOTION FAILS.

#244-11092020 Special Session

MOTION BY WESSELL THAT THE LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPOINT GARTH E. GREENAN TO THE VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF ROAD COMMISSIONER UNTIL NOVEMBER 2022. SECONDED BY RENTENBACH.

Discussion – Commissioners Ansortge, Rentenbach, Soutas-Little, and Bunek offered comments.

ROLL CALL: Wessell – YES; Ansortge – YES; Bunek – YES; Lautner – NO;

Rentenbach – YES; Rushton – YES; Soutas-Little – YES.

AYES – 6 NO – 1 (Lautner)

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Comment:

Chairman Bunek announced the public number for individuals to call in for Public Comment.

- John Popa of Bingham Township was present in person and offered comment. Popa commented that he believes a good choice was made. Popa referenced the Road Commissioner handbook and the need for communication.

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Wessell restated that we saw six good candidates today.
- Chairman Bunek welcomed Mr. Greenan to the Road Commission.

Adjournment:

Chairman Bunek adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.

William J. Bunek, Chairman
Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Michelle L. Crocker, Leelanau County Clerk
Clerk-Leelanau County Board of Commissioner