

**Leelanau County Board of Commissioners
Special Session – Thursday, August 4, 2022**

Tentative minutes – meeting recorded

Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded (audio and video). The video of the meeting can be found at the following link: <https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2370>.

Meeting called to Order by Chairman Ty Wessell at 1:03 p.m. Today's meeting is being held at the Government Center, 8527 E. 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	Rick Robbins	PRESENT
	#2	Debra L. Rushton	PRESENT
	#3	Lois Bahle	PRESENT
	#4	Ty Wessell	PRESENT
	#5	Patricia Soutas-Little	PRESENT
	#6	Gwenne Allgaier	PRESENT
	#7	Melinda C. Lautner	PRESENT

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Lautner commented that as they go into the first agenda item of Administrator Applicants Review, that she wanted to interview everyone. There was so much talent and experience as well as levels of education.

Purpose of Meeting – Discussion/Potential Action:

Administrator Applicants Review:

Administrator Janik indicated that all of the Commissioners submitted their information timely by last Friday. Janik referenced today's handout of the Commissioner ranking of the candidates (copy on file in the Clerk's office). Seventeen (17) of the candidates received at least one "yes" vote ("A" column), meaning Commissioners felt they should be interviewed. Twelve (12) candidates received at least two, seven candidates received at least three votes, five of the candidates received four votes, and two candidates received five votes. Janik said what he put together is a composite sheet of their results.

Janik reviewed the names of candidates that received at least three "yes" votes.

Discussion on the number of candidates to begin an initial interview with.

Screening portion is done, which was all of the Commissioners reviewing the applicants.

Discussion on background checks and Commissioner Rushton asked about a credit check. Rushton asked who would decide the type of background check and process.

Commissioner Soutas-Little asked for clarification of who they may be considering for interviews and Janik read the names that had received more than three "A" Column, "Yes" marks from Commissioners: #5 Confidential; #61 Shawn Fletcher; #67 Karl Fulmer; #109 Kyle Harris, #139 Patrick Lamb; #233 James Palenick; #329 Dan Ryan.

Discussion on applicants, who to interview, and the number to interview. Commissioner Rushton commented that this is just to interview and does not mean one will be hired. Commissioner Soutas-Little asked about process.

Administrator Janik offered comments regarding questions for the applicants and how that could work. It is up to the Commissioners as to the process.

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MOTION BY RUSHTON THAT THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CONTACT THE SEVEN CANDIDATES: CONFIDENTIAL, FLETCHER, FULMER, HARRIS, LAMB, PALENICK, RYAN, AND TO KEEP THE CURRENT B LIST ON THE MAYBE LIST FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION. SECONDED BY ALLGAIER.

Discussion – none.

AYES – 7 (Rushton, Soutas-Little, Wessell, Allgaier, Bahle, Lautner, Robbins)

NO – 0

MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion regarding possible interview dates the week of August 29, 2022. Janik said the brochure said the applicants would have the option to choose remote or in person and asked if Commissioners wished to stick with that. Commissioner Rushton asked if anyone was outside of the State of Michigan and if so that they would need to coordinate with the candidate. Commissioner Allgaier offered several of the names that may be out of state. Janik said the week of August 29 is just a guideline and would think they will want to have a meeting before that to talk about the questions. Janik will send you draft of questions but if you talk about the questions publicly, they will be in the minutes and candidates will have access. Also, the interviews will be public interviews and broadcast, where then other candidates are going to be watching the interviews. Out of fairness we will draw names for the order of interviews. Janik added that if the confidential candidate accepts an interview, then the name and interview is then public.

Chairman Wessell asked if those candidates in the A or B category who are not being asked to interview should be sent a thank you at this point, and Janik responded. Commissioner Allgaier asked if they had clarified on giving the option for in person or via Zoom for first round interviews. Janik said it was presented in the brochure that way and Wessell said his thought is that they give the option but there is no travel reimbursement for the first round.

Discussion on dates for interview. Potential interview dates proposed are Committee of the Whole meetings on August 29 at 1:00 p.m., and August 30, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Wessell recessed the meeting at 1:49 p.m.
Meeting resumed at 1:55 p.m.

FY 2023 Budget Review:

Administrator Janik introduced Finance Director Jared Prince whose start date was August 1, 2022. Janik stated to Commissioners that it has been a hard 15-months but we are moving forward and is assuming between August 1 and December 31, everyone will work as a team, along with County Clerk Michelle L. Crocker and Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer L. Zywicki, and get input. Janik said the book handed out today is a draft budget book. These books were put together yesterday due to payroll this week and gathering everything necessary. Prince has not had time to review it as he has just come on board. A copy has been also given to Crocker and Zywicki to review. In the past we have rushed to get done by October 1, but that is no magical date and many counties don't even start this process until November. Janik said he does not want anyone to be overwhelmed thinking it has to be done by some artificial date. A lot going on with this process and the Administrator search. Legally there are no consequences not having anything done by October, but does have to have a budget approved by Dec. 31, and is confident that it will.

Prince introduced himself to the Board and said gave them some of his background history. For the past eight years has been doing audits of Indian Tribal Government all over the United States. Gave thanks to Crocker, Zywicki, and Human Resources Director Darcy Weaver for sitting down with him and answering questions and is excited for his future here and is thankful for people with expertise to help him along.

Janik said he's gotten input from many people internally as well as Steve Peacock, Principal with Rehmann, and Grand Traverse County Finance Director Dean Bott, that Prince speaks the language of finance and government language.

Prince introduced Account Clerks Zhihua Ouyang who is handling payroll and Christine Kramer who is handling accounts payable.

Janik acknowledged previous Account Clerks Sara Lautner and Johanna Novak. Lautner is now Chief Deputy Treasurer and Novak has moved to the Deputy Treasurer/PRE Auditor position.

Commissioner Rushton asked Prince to expand on his education for history of government and finance. Prince responded. Rushton questioned again regarding his education and if he had received any certification for his accounting education and he responded no, he said he has a Bachelor's Degree. Rushton added education isn't everything but it helps. Experience is the key to practicality of what the job entails, and said so thank you for that.

Commissioners each welcomed Prince and stated something about their district areas.

Administrator Janik thanked Weaver for all of her efforts. He also thanked Crocker for having already met with Prince and Crocker said she has scheduled several more meetings with him.

Chairman Wessell questioned Janik regarding streamlining the process for the budget. Janik responded by saying the same process has been done year after year. All have a copy of the Draft Budget and would like to suggest each Commissioner go through these themselves and will be glad to answer questions. Hoping to have fewer budget meetings as they usually don't have any major changes.

Janik read from a memo dated July 29, 2022, to the Board of Commissioners with bullet points of the 2023 budget requests. A link to the memo can be found below:
https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/administrator_2023_budget_requests.pdf.

County Treasurer John A. Gallagher III was present and spoke to Commissioners regarding how he came up with the revenue projections.

Weaver discussed the steps taken to produce the draft budget books and said it was an interesting process. She said staffing levels, changes in the budget, and anything that was done was reviewed several times by herself, the Treasurer's Office, and then reviewed again. She thanked the Treasurer's Office for how much time they committed. Weaver said the one big change to note would be under the Special Funds section at the back of book as it is where the District Court Bond Account is listed and continued with further explanation and she put it there to make Commissioners aware they are addressing that issue.

Commissioner Lautner questioned Weaver regarding that District Court Bond information.

Chairman Wessell asked members if much of this can be reviewed and gone over but not necessarily line by line as in the past, to not spend any time that isn't necessary.

Commissioner Rushton commented it's important to take a look outside our budget ... as recession, inflation, deflation, and how that is going to impact us not just this year but coming years. Deflation will cause assets to go down and effect property taxes, and what that would look like for the County. Not sure how to do that necessarily, and is not opposed to changing the process of the budget review.

Commissioner Soutas-Little noted that changing the process sounds good and said she knows Zywicki would sit down and go over in detail any questions for them.

Administrator Janik asked for any questions to come through Prince.

Commissioner Rushton commented that to go along with her prior statement, though it may or may not happen, typically one of the shoes to drop is employment so when talking about keeping the employees we have we have to be careful as people in our community could be losing jobs. Being careful about increasing wages to the point where it will not be competitive out there in the community. Being overpaid you might say.

Commissioner Lautner noted taking a look at the gas and oil and Weaver responded that those were the most significant increase.

Treasurer John Gallagher addressed Commissioner Rushton and said that he and Prince could work with Equalization and see if there is any theory they could muster up based on her comments today. Rushton responded she was just looking at historically what you see when an economy starts to pull back and as responsible representatives of the people, they need to keep that in mind.

Administrator Janik commented on a recent article noting the average home sale in Leelanau County is now over \$900,000.00.

#212--08042022 Special Session

MOTION BY LAUTNER TO CANCEL THE AUGUST 5, 2022, SPECIAL SESSION OF THE LEELANAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS. SECONDED BY RUSHTON.

Discussion – Wessell requested the Clerk's office to post the cancellation.

AYES – 7 (Lautner, Robbins, Rushton, Soutas-Little, Wessell, Allgaier, Bahle)

NO – 0

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Rushton commented that it was great day and thank you.
- Commissioner Allgaier welcomed Prince to the County and thanked the Clerk's office who has just completed another great election.
- Commissioner Soutas-Little said it has been a good meeting and thanked Janik for slowing down the process.
- Chairman Wessell commented on hearing praise from public about the Building Safety office and the process. Also, there is the Lions Club breakfast this Saturday in Northport.

Adjournment:

Motion by Rushton to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Bahle and Soutas-Little.

Chairman Wessell adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Ty Wessell, Chairman
Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Alison Middleton, Admin. Deputy County Clerk
for Michelle L. Crocker, Leelanau County Clerk