

May 22, 2023

The special work session meeting of the Mason County Board of Commissioners was held at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room located at the Mason County Airport Terminal 5300 W. US 10, Ludington, MI.

The meeting was called to order by Chair J. Andersen.

Roll call was taken. Present: N. Krieger, J. Hartley, L. Squires, S. Hull, R. Bacon, J. Andersen
Absent: G. Castonia

Invocation was given by J. Hartley and the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America followed by all.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2023 regular meeting. Motion carried.

Correspondence: None.

Public comment: Gene Kyle thanked the Board for the cookies and water.

Chair Andersen introduced new Emergency Manager Heath Scarbrough to the Board and public in attendance.

Work Session: The Board reviewed the County Administrator Position packet that was prepared by Administrator Knizacky regarding hiring his replacement. BOC members noted that the Community profile was really well written. Overall consensus was the packet is ready to go with minimal changes. Discussion ensued as to whether or not split the duties and hire two individuals, as well as to also hire a consulting firm to manage and provide the Board with five candidates to interview possibly via ZOOM, and then whittle the candidate pool to three candidates with an in-person interview process. Board members were in agreement to hire a consulting firm to move forward with. Further discussion surrounding possible compensation packet for hire, three year contract, severance pay were all items that the BOC stated could be amended in the future once the final candidate was picked. The Board requested Administrator Knizacky to get a Request For Proposal together for the June 13 Board meeting.

Administrator Knizacky noted that he has received two responses to the request for Broadband services for Mason County. 123 Net provided an alternative proposal, which basically did not respond to the County's request but to what their proposal would cover. This request would only serve the 4,000 underserved homes at a cost of \$40,125,000.00. This is not what the County wanted.

Aspen Smart Network's proposal would provide 1 GB to all households with a \$40 month subscription fee to operate the system on behalf of the County for five years, but a \$168,000.00 engineering design cost fee would need to be paid upfront to get the process started. Concerns regarding Bead/Robin grant applications/timelines if grants were still going to be offered through the Federal Government; obtaining capital monies through a County-wide millage, which election to place the millage request on, were reviewed. Final decision was whether or not the Board wanted to spend \$168,000.00 by July in order to start the process. Comments were also made that the Board does not do anything and see what the private sector does. Concerns regarding putting further financial burdens on the taxpayers was also discussed.

Public Comment: None.

Other business: None.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

CHERYL KELLY, COUNTY CLERK

JANET S. ANDERSEN, BOARD CHAIR