Berrien County Board of Commissioners
Finance Committee Minutes
Thursday, March 26, 2026
Kenneth L. Wendzel Conference Room

Finance Committee	**Attendance:**
Commissioner Mamie L. Yarbrough-Chairperson	Present (Arrived 9:19)
Commissioner Jon Hinkelman – Vice-Chair	Present
Commissioner Rayonte Bell	Present
Commissioner Teri Freehling	Present

Others Present: Annette Christie, Mike Sepic, Shelly Weich, Mac Elliott, Chris Swihart, Lora Freehling.

Meeting called to order: The Vice Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Administrator and Chair Q & A

Interim County Administrator Mike Sepic updated the board on the investment manager RFP's that were opened last week. He has a meeting scheduled on Monday morning with Jake Litaker, Shelly Weich, and Kristen Reynolds to review them all and move that process forward.

Chairman Mac Elliott told the committee he is close to having a purchase agreement with AEP for the Buchanan building. The agreement has been provided to Corporate Counsel for review.

Information Systems Update – Chris Swihart, Director

Currently the Information Systems Department is managing 50+ active projects across all departments. Their focus areas are public safety modernization and 911 initiatives, infrastructure & network upgrades, cybersecurity enhancements, and department specific operational improvements. Discussion ensued regarding JWorks, VM Ware, B S & A cloud based system, AI Policy, and the Printing department temporarily falling under Chris.

Treasurer Update – Shelly Weich

Shelly provided the Investment report as well as the year end Meeder Investment Report. She confirmed that making the move to Meeder to invest our funds was the correct one, while the rates are dropping slightly we are still getting a good return - at the end of the year we were at over $58 million. She will be working with them to do a cash analysis to look at possibly due additional investing. She just recently completed her visits to all the local municipalities in the county over a three month period. She will be going to Niles City and Niles Township probably once a month, based on how well it was received specifically for those in south county. The foreclosure process will take place next Tuesday and Shelly notably has reduced the original # of 1,949 parcels down to 438 and by the deadline, she expects even that number to decrease due to additional properties being redeemed and/or entering into a payment plan. The tax settlement is almost done, two municipalities remain. The committee will soon see the annual borrowing resolution out of her office, to make all other tax entities whole. Shelly provided an update on the two Court cases that will result in the County paying out funds related to foreclosed properties that are later sold at the foreclosure auction.

Committee Business

Approve the minutes of the March 19, 2026 meeting - Motion by Commissioner Hinkelman, supported by Commissioner Freehling. Motion carried.

Resolution(s): The following resolution was signed to move on to the full board:
F2603023 – Weekly Bills & Road Payables

Bid Results Reviewed:

Bid #	Department	Goods/Services Description	Results	Response
2026-049	Road	Bakertown Road Scratch & Seal	Michigan Paving $388,135.00 Rieth-Riley $406,606.75	2 of 5
2026-050	Road	Berrien Township HMA – Scherr Hills subdivision	Rieth-Riley $223,034.00 Michigan Paving $239,735.00	2 of 4
2026-051	Road	Harbor Country Drive – HMA mill & fill	Michigan Paving $192,848.00 Rieth-Riley $210,156.17	2 of 4
2026-052	Road	Mall Drive – HMA mill & fill	Rieth-Riley $167,999.00 Michigan Paving $186,253.60	2 of 4
2026-053	Road	McCoy Creek Trail – Drainage Improvements	Rieth-Riley $84,888	1 of 11

Motion by: Commissioner Hinkelman | Support by: Commissioner Bell

to refer the bids to the department with the approval to move forward with the lowest bidder, if they are an approved, responsible bidder that meets specifications and requirements. Communication from the department must be submitted to the Finance Committee in the event that they want to move forward with a bidder that was not the lowest bidder to provide justification and obtain additional approval. In addition, they authorize the County Administrator to execute any subsequent contract associated with the bid and any contract modifications up to $10,000. Motion carried.

Waivers presented to the Committee:

With no objection from the committee, Chairperson Yarbrough signed the waivers.

Waiver #	Vendor Name	Goods/Services Description	Requesting Department	Budgeted Amount	Waiver Amount
2026-03-26-01	Tele-Rad	New vehicle lighting	Sheriff	$0.00	$21,614.00
2026-03-26-02	Schneider Geospatial, LLC	Beacon hosting services – professional services	GIS	$21,290.00	$21,290.00
2026-03-26-03	Rugged Solutions America, LLC DBA Set Com	11 full face helmet kits for motorcycle team	Sheriff	$0.00	$4,530.00
2026-03-26-04	Berger Chevrolet	2026 Chevrolet Tahoe – for New Buffalo Township	Motorpool	$56,929.00	$56,929.00
2026-03-26-05	Neumo (fka GovOS)	Archival filming of digital records. 2025 rollover from fund balance	Register of Deeds	$7,000.00	$7,500.00

Discussion:
The National Association of Counties reached out to Annette about the County renewing their membership at the rate of $3,086. She was not sure what the consensus of the board was given that it was brought up during the budget hearing process, however, she did not know the final outcome of that discussion. It was her belief that it was not in the budget. The Finance Committee will bring it up to the full BOC for discussion to allow the whole BOC to weigh in.

The St. Joe Lincoln Senior Center Director has requested a meeting with Commissioners about the audit process. The Finance Committee is the parent committee for Senior Centers. Annette informed the committee that she will be on their agenda for April 23. Discussion ensued regarding what background the committee would like to have to prepare for that meeting.

Public Comments: None
Contract Modifications: None
Meeting adjourned: 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Christie
Executive Assistant