

BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of March 26, 2026

Roll Call Present: Jim Curran, Chairman
David Vollrath, Vice Chair
Sharon Tyler
Alex Ott

Absent:

Scheduled: Mike Sepic, Interim Administrator
Mac Elliott, BOC Chair
Ashley Herr, Animal Services
Caitlin Sampsell, 911

Others:

Call to Order

Chairman Curran called the meeting to order at 9:19 am.

Animal Services Update – Herr

Herr reviewed the quarterly report. There are open kennel positions, and they are looking for an outreach coordinator. They have been participating in the Michigan Pet Alliance Dog Behavior and Handling training. The trainer is very knowledgeable, and they have all benefitted from it. They have been staying at capacity with dogs and adoptions have been steady. Live release rates are 84% for dogs and 99% for cats. There have been no positive rabies incidents so far this year. Upcoming events include a vaccination and microchip clinic on April 25th, a staff and volunteer appreciation cookout planned in May, and staff training on March 28th with Stay & Obey for difficult dogs. The adoption floor is full. There are 5 permanent and several temporary kennels open.

911 Update – Sampsell

Sampsell reported there are 5 people in various states of training, which takes a total of approximately 9 months from start to finish. She reviewed the training tools which include AI automated assistive call simulators. The non-emergency AI is currently active, and I/S is working on capacity for the AI auto call handling for hang-up callbacks. She reviewed the career ladder mapping used for recruitment and retention. They have completed Protocol 41 Caller in Crisis training, which provides greater tools to connect and assist people that are suicidal or are in a mental health crisis. Current projects include the CAD Mobility, which is set to be complete for law enforcement, fire and EMS by the end of the year.

Elliott stated the Purchase Agreement for selling 500 Circle Drive back to AEP is ready. Sampsell will provide a timeline and details to Sepic after checking to see if the Emergency Management grant can be used for new construction. Discussions ensued regarding reconvening the committee for construction planning on this project.

Q & A – Sepic & Elliott

Sepic provided an update on the Administrator search. Several applications have been received, and the contractor is reviewing them and will provide a presentation on April 9. Interviews will then be set up.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Vollrath, supported by Ott, to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2026 meeting. Motion Carried.

Resolutions

None.

Sheriff's Funds Distribution Request

None.

Property Use Request

None.

Miscellaneous

None.

Public Comments

Michael Haskins, Pipestone Township – When does the Road Department get their equipment back from the storage in Dowagiac? Regarding the AEP building, he has been concerned about it since hearing they were keeping an entire floor. He is glad Elliott is able to get out of it.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

J Arent

Jennifer Arent