

League of Women Voters Northern Lower Michigan

Observer Corps Summaries

May 2023

Emmet County Commission

Date: 05/08/2023

Notes: A broad range of people attended, and many spoke regarding the issue of the Board of Health being unable to hold its meeting and conduct business because some of its members did not approve the agenda. Many people felt it was disrespectful to the people that the members represent.

One commissioner, Neal Ahrens, was recognized for completing the County Commissioner Academy program. It involved 20 hours of training, and it would benefit all the commissioners to increase their knowledge of their responsibilities by completing the training.

Issues

To Watch: Continue to monitor the actions of boards of Commissioners and Health Dept for anti-government measures.

Date: 05/18/2023

Notes: This was a long meeting, and it had an overflow crowd. Public comment lasted one hour at the beginning of the meeting and a half hour at the end. Many people commented regarding the recent board of Health concerns.

There was an unfinished business item, which was a discussion of Goals and Objectives of the Health Department. Matt Koontz provided 8 draft goals and objectives for discussion, which was facilitated by the administrator. At the end of the discussion, the board decided to review the information, including a 7th one that was added. A motion will be brought forward at the next meeting.

Issues

To Watch: The league is already advocating for public involvement by encouraging constituents to express their preference on how their commissioners should vote at the next meeting.

Petoskey City Council

Date: 05/01/2023

Notes: Mayor Murphy announced the Arbor Day Celebration and thanked the league for all their hard work. There was discussion about the draft Ethics Ordinance for City employees. There was citizen comment about the washed-out portion of the Wheelway and it's unsafe condition.

Issues None

Date: 05/15/2023
Notes: Passed a resolution to move the City Council meetings to 6:00 p.m.
Issues: None

Bear Creek Township

Date: 05/03/2023
Notes: Solar Ordinance: Townships have been advised to develop ordinances about solar installations. There were some sentiments for being as restrictive as possible and there was also some dismissiveness of the farmland preservation claim.

Line 5: Commissioner Getuskey reported on a real estate transaction with Enbridge, affording them their desired location for the tunnel “landing” on the lower peninsula side. He also reported that Enbridge spoke of providing the county grants totaling \$1 million.

Issues: The ENR committee may want to seek info about any proposed solar ordinances in area governmental units. Also, LWVNLM should keep informed about action on the proposed Enbridge tunnel.

To Watch

Harbor Springs City Council

Date: 05/15/2023
Notes: Nothing to report

Issues
To Watch: None

Charlevoix County Commissioners

Date: 05/10/2023
Issues: The board passed a resolution to oppose the use of state lands in Grayling by the National Guard.

Issues: None

Date: 05/24/2023
Notes: The board has agreed to continue to broadcast full meetings virtually.

Issues: None

Cheboygan County Commissioners

Date: 05/23/2023

Notes: There were very extensive 2022 Annual Reports from the County Prosecutor and the County Sheriff's offices. Commissioner Wallace asked that the Second Amendment Resolution be put back on the agenda when the City Counsel is there to give his opinion.

Issues: Second Amendment Resolution
To Watch

Board of Health

Date: 05/15/2023

Notes: Probably about 40-50 people were there. Public comment given on both sides, supporting, and criticizing the board. The only item really on the agenda was approving payment of bills. The agenda was available to the public. Rubingh had detailed questions on the bills. LaVanway pointed out that the finance committee had investigated all those items, and that there is a statement at the top of the information given to the members stating that if they have questions, they should call and ask them PRIOR to the meeting. He went on to ask more questions.

Issues: We still need to encourage attendance to counteract the conspiracy-laden mis and disinformation stated in some of the comments. Dave Penniman did speak against the prayers given at the opening of the meeting.