

**Mason County Republican Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Invocation – Pastor Brian Ford

Pledge – Ben Norton

Roll Call by Tina Shirshun – Present: Janet Anderson, Kirk Chavalia, Verna Chavalia, Bill Chye, Pastor Brian Ford, Sheila Genter, Margaret Greiner, Duane Hobart, Cynthia Johnson, Jason Kirkpatrick, Cindy Muzzo, Ben Norton, Nicole Norton, Charles Robinson, Rebecca Robinson, Tina Shirshun.

Excused Absences: Eric Juers.

Guests: Aldon Maleckas, Shannon S., Daniel Jensen, Carole Johnson, Lyla McClelland, Richard Boes, Rick Knuth, Brittany Carsten, Thomas Johnson.

Approval of October 3, 2023, Meeting Minutes –

***Motion** made by Jason Kirkpatrick to approve the meeting minutes of November 7, 2023. Seconded by Bill Chye. No discussion. Motion carried.

Guest Speaker –

Rebecca Berringer, Executive Director of the Mason Co. Historical Society, gave a presentation on the Historical Society and what they do. They have been around since 1937 and operate at 3 locations, the Historic White Pine Village founded in 1972, the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum which opened in 2017, and the Mason Co Research Center which opened up last year. Rebecca talked some about each location individually and also other locations in Mason Co where they have participated in events over the years. Rebecca also talked about MCHS Partnerships, covered some historical data, and the economic impact the MCHS has for Mason Co. The MCHS is a private non-profit (no tax support) and has a \$550,000.00 budget every year which 50% of that is revenue driven through admissions, ticket sales, etc. The remaining 50% is from individual donor support, corporate donations, and memberships. Rebecca then took the committee members and guests on a grand tour of the basement, a place which is usually not open for public, where there are many old original maps of Mason County, old newspapers, post cards, and where indexing of items occurs.

Treasury Report –

Margaret Greiner reported that after expenses from the Chili Cook-Off advertising, printer cartridges, monthly Quickbook fee, annual post office box, and the end of the month State Account the balance is \$4,740.78. A donation to the Mason County Walk to End Alzheimer's of \$100.00 was approved and paid from the Admin Account and the end of the balance is \$453.33. We are making progress as we have canceled the phone and November canceled the storage unit.

***Motion** made by Nicole Norton to approve the Financial report for the month of November. Seconded by Duane Hobart. No discussion. Motion carried.

Reports from State Elected Officials –

-Sheila read report from Damon Jordan (John Moolenaar's representative). (See attached)

-Sheila read report from Senator Jon Bumstead. (See attached)

Reports from County Elected Officials –

-Janet Anderson reported the County adopted the final 2024 budget (\$16,471,000.00). The budget is balanced and we maintain our current level of services. The Board will interview 4 County Administrator candidates on November 14th following the regular monthly board meeting. The candidates are Kaitlyn Szczypka, Mark Justin, Timothy Dolehanty, and Jason Schlick. We will have a Special meeting on the 16th to discuss a second interview or selection and if a second interview is decided, they will be on November 20th. Janet has been attending meetings on our housing study presentations and talked about work force .housing, low income housing, middle market that's missing and the higher end is as well, and the majority of our concerns should be directed to the fact that families and people can't afford to find housing in this community. Janet has accepted an offer to be part of a housing taskforce because it's important to this community. Also HB 5120 passed (56-54) with 25 amendments to it and we adopted a resolution opposing that. Janet then answered questions and shared good discussion with committee members. *Sheila commented that she read in the newspaper about the selected applicants to interview and that one of them there were allegations of inappropriate spending? Janet responded that would be Mark Justin and it was over an alleged payroll incident regarding a raise that was given, the employees got a raise and he took one too. Sheila asked out of 21 applicants there wasn't someone qualified without allegations to interview? Janet explained that the pool is extremely shallow and it's really challenging times and that in the past 6 months there have been about 5 counties looking for an administrator. Thank you for explaining.*

Unfinished Business:

1)Rebecca Robinson provided the Chili Cook-Off report by first presenting a gift certificate to the winners as follows; 1st Place goes to Duane Hobart, 2nd Place goes to Rebecca Robinson, and 3rd Place goes to Cynthia Johnson. Chili Cook-off participants were Rebecca Robinson, Duane Hobart, Cynthia Johnson, Verna Chavalialia, Cindy Muzzo, Fran Chye, Shaun Shoemate, Pastor Brian Ford, and Nicole Norton brought in a pot in case we ran out. Prizes were donated by Rebecca Robinson and Tina Shirshun. A big thank you will go out to the Crossroads Church as they did not charge for the use of their building. Rebecca reported 36 people in attendance and 2 take-outs which brought in \$380.00 for the dinners and an additional \$70.00 in donations were received. Baked goods brought in a donation of \$118.00. Advertising cost was \$175.00. Total funds raised after expenses came to \$393.00. Verna Chavalialia added that she sent out a reminder via email including her phone number to all the precinct delegates and a precinct delegate had called her back with regret he couldn't attend and he and his wife both donated \$1000 each.

2) Cindy Muzzo reported on the New By-Laws they were emailed out to all committee members on 11/5. Cindy contacted several different counties to review their by-laws as well as viewed the MIGOP by-laws before she and her sub-committee began rewriting the new by-laws. Sheila talked about the added by-law, Conflict Resolution, and advised that if we didn't have language in our by-laws covering this topic, then the MIGOP would intervene. The MIGOP are in the process of amending their by-laws which will have wording to allow the MIGOP to intervene if we don't have our own Conflict Resolution process. We need to protect our local party and its executive committee from state intervention. Some good discussion occurred along with questions on how often By-Laws can and/or need to be reviewed. By-laws are reviewed on an as-needed basis. The last time the by-laws were reviewed or modified was in 2019. There were a handful of executive members who suggested the current by-laws needed to be reviewed and clarified because they left too much individual interpretation. Cindy was appointed captain of the by-laws sub-committee group back in February. Cindy has contacted elected members that she thought might be interested in being a part of the sub-committee, has welcomed suggestions from our committee during this process over the past several months, and has provided updates at our monthly Executive Committee meetings. Per our current by-laws, the new proposed by-laws were

electronically emailed 30 days before the date to be voted on and will require 66 2/3 affirmative vote of the Committee Members in attendance, provided there is a quorum (10) present, to pass. Thank you Cindy and your subcommittee for taking on such a difficult task.

New Business:

1) Sheila provided committee members with an updated 2023-24 Executive Committee Member list (including email and phone numbers) with the new District-2 Commissioner Les Johnson added. Janet Anderson reported there were 9 applicants and Les Johnson got the 4 votes needed. *Janet shared that she voted for Les Johnson because she felt we needed someone that already had a good foundation even though it was city-related, he could transfer that over pretty quickly. He serves on the finance committee so he understands on that level and I also think he didn't come with an agenda. Sheila questioned if his recall didn't come into any of the decision-making or the fact that he voted Democrat at the last Presidential primary. Janet stated she doesn't see him as a Democrat and she did talk with him about these concerns.*

2) Sheila reported the Pre-Election MERTS report was submitted to the State on 10/22/23 with all green lights (it passed) and the SOS confirmed receiving it the same day. The Post-Election MERTS is due on 12/07/23.

3) Sheila requests to change the "format" of the Mason County Executive Committee Meeting Agenda by moving the "Business" section up to follow the Treasury report.

***Motion** made by Cindy Muzzo move forward with the request by Chair Sheila Genter to change the format of the Agenda and move the "Business sections" up to immediately follow the Treasury Report. Seconded by Cynthia Johnson. Sheila informed the committee that we needed to ensure the official business section of the agenda was completed as required and we are not getting to this area until 1 ½-2 hours into the meeting. . No additional discussion. Motion carried.

4) Sheila reported on HB 5120 & 5121 MPSC permitting authority overseeing wind projects with generators larger than 100 megawatts, and solar and battery storage projects with generation larger than 50 megawatts. The bills were passed by the House and it was going to be before the Senate this week and according to Senator Bumstead, it passed today. Discussion continued on how this can affect business and property owners.

5) Sheila talked about Poll Watcher training and how they will be highly needed in 2024. People who are inquiring about what they can do – advise them to get involved as a "Poll Watcher" and/or "Inspector." There is training for both.

Announcements –

-Sheila reported the Mason County Board of Commissioners meeting is Tuesday, November 14th at 9:00am. Also is a Special Meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 16th at 9:00am, another Special Meeting on Monday, November 20th at 9:00am, and a Work Session scheduled on Tuesday, November 28th at 7:00pm. All meetings and work session will be held at the Airport.

-The Ludington Area School Board meeting is Monday, November 20th at 6:00pm at the Administration Office, 809 E. Tinkham, Ludington.

-The Mason County Central School Board meeting Monday, November 20th at 7:00pm at the MCC High School Library.

-MI District-2 Committee is having a "Get Ugly Christmas" fundraiser event on Saturday, December 9th from 6:00-9:00pm. Dinner, Desserts, Games, & Auctions. Contact Rebecca for more information.

-Rebecca reported that the Right to Life has reserved a bus for the rally in Lansing with speakers, tomorrow, November 8th. The bus will be leaving at 7:30am from the Park-n-Ride parking lot next to Meijer.

-Sheila also talked about meeting locations and having a Christmas potluck at the next meeting on December 5th.

Public Comments –

Carole Johnson talked about the “Freedom Pods.” These are conservative groups formed by local citizens to prevent the state from controlling local government and local representatives. Aldon Maleckas provided printed material and talked about “The Corporate Enemy Within,” “The War Between the States,” “Mayer Anselm Rothschild,” and “1938 and the Erie Railroad”; Dick Boes commented on a statement Hitler said when he was in power; Lyla McClelland commented the meeting was in the Ludington News Community Calendar; Thomas Johnson talked about “Tactical Civics” and how County Board Supervisors can go to same day voting and paper ballots; and finally Nicole Norton commented we did same day voting, no machines, and paper ballots for the Chili Cook-Off.

Adjournment –

***Motion** made by Nicole Norton to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jason Kirkpatrick. No discussion. Motion carried.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 5th, 6:30 pm, at the Hamlin Town Hall, 3775 N Jebavy Drive, Ludington.

By: *Tina Shirshun*
MCRC Secretary