

Benzie Senior Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
November 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Nancy Mullen Call called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Said by all present

Roll Call:

In Person: Nancy Mullen Call, Victor Dinsmoore, Dinah Haag, Rob Manilla, Ingrid Turner, and Paul Turner.

Via Conference Call: Leo Hughes

Also In-Person: Commissioner Tim Markey, and staff members Eric Cobb, Doug Durand and Kelly Ottinger

Absent: Rosemary Russell

Approval of the November 20th, 2024 agenda – Two items added under Old Business: Update on BWAC/Crystal lake Elementary status and BSR/IA Discovery Process status. A motion to accept the amended agenda was made by Victor Dinsmoore and seconded by Rob Manilla. All Board members responded Aye. Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes from the October 16th, 2024 Board Meeting --A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Victor Dinsmoore and seconded by Ingrid Turner. All Board members responded Aye. Motion approved.

Public Input: Nancy took the opportunity to introduce potential Board member Hugh Walton, who was visiting for the first time. Hugh worked at Crystal Mountain for 30 years and has been active in the work of the Crystal Lake Watershed. He came to the area to be with family after suffering health challenges (his brother Steve is an HDM volunteer driver). He appreciates the support he received from Benzie Bus and other local agencies during his time of recovery, which he describes as “the challenges we have as we advance through life.” He feels strongly that, “The more involved you are, the more impact you have on your local community.”

Information Items:

Leadership Committee Report – Nancy Mullen Call shared that the Leadership Committee’s primary focus over the past month has been hiring and working with employment consultant Tom Kern in the search for Doug’s replacement. To date there have been 47 applications, 17 for which Kern feels are viable candidates. This list will be further culled by Kern and then three questions will be presented to 7+/- candidates, the topics being financial, communication, personnel and long-range strategy planning. Based upon the question responses, the candidate pool will then be reduced down to the final three candidates for more intensive interviews and final selection. Kern shared with the Search Committee that he feels very encouraged by the results, which range from local to out-of-state candidates. As the candidate pool is being reduced, the five-member Search Committee will bring in the remaining three Board members so that the entire Board is involved in the selection process.

Fund Development Committee Report – Kelly shared highlights of the Fund Development Report for November, focusing on grant updates and the upcoming \$50,000 match opportunity for the year-end appeal. She will look for possible new grant sources to apply to through the end of 2024, to help recoup the loss of one smaller-than-anticipated award and the additional expense of the emergency purchase of a new rooftop HVAC system. BSR will continue to apply for the Governor’s Service Award on behalf of our volunteer force, until the State gives them their due recognition. Nancy suggested looking for a donut sponsor for the Coffee with Vets monthly meetings, rather than seeking grant funds to cover those. Would WESCO be a possibility for this?

Governance Committee Report – Nancy reported on behalf of Leo that the Governance Committee has been working in tandem this month with the Leadership Committee, in the search for Doug’s replacement.

Director’s Report –

- 80 people have signed up for snow removal, and six contractors are in place. Doug feels confident that snow removal is ready to go for the winter.
- Team Bob will be at The Gathering Place on Nov. 27th to replace the Rooftop HVAC (thanks to all who helped give input). The installation should not affect operations. This was an unanticipated expense, but there is gratitude that the work is being completed now and not in January or February, mid-blizzard.
- Doug was approached by the leader of the Betsie Valley SEEDS program, who wanted a community service project for her students. They will make Christmas cards and collect items for the senior holiday gift bags. Doug will pick up the items on December 9th.
- Re: Legislative news, after receiving two months of nutrition funding in Oct./Nov., December’s funding is up in the air. Government entities are playing hardball during the lame duck congressional season, with the state not releasing funds until the new Congress is sworn in. Never has Doug seen a time when the state money was so tied to the federal government, which could be a worrisome future trend.

Program/Personnel Committee Report – Doug shared that a new kitchen assistant began today, and that a former contract homemaker is returning, with one more potentially in the wings. These new hires will help reduce the waiting list. He shared that he is feeling better about the Homemaker Program than he has for a long time, even while acknowledging that the nature of this program is that this could change at any time.

Board of Commissioners Update – County Commissioner Tim Markey reported that things at the county have slowed a bit post-election. The bond for the Road Commission’s new building did not pass, and he is not sure how they will proceed. Although the jail bond passed, there is still a \$250,000 shortfall in the budget that has been partially addressed (by \$180,000) by not rehiring an employee who retired and adding some responsibilities to the maintenance employee. He reports that ballot fatigue was indeed a real factor, with Brownfield verbiage being confusing. The Headlee reset could allow for projects to be taken out of the general county fund rather than individual millages. He also shared that the Village of Honor will be pursuing a Corridor Improvement project, which will primarily affect tax-paying businesses located along the downtown corridor. Tim has been re-elected to his County Commissioner position and is beginning his first 4-year term (as opposed to the previous 2-year terms).

Finance Committee Update – Victor reported that BSR is enjoying a small surplus in the budget for the first month of the fiscal year. Eric and Paul are tasked with the project of ensuring that the Operational Reserves remain where we need them to be. They will report on this project during future Board

meetings. Victor issued an open invitation for any of the Board members or staff present, to attend the Finance Committee meetings.

Action Item:

Approval of the October 2024 Financial Reports – A motion to approve the October 2024 financials was made by Rob Manilla and seconded by Paul Turner. Roll Call: Victor Dinsmoore – Yes; Dinah Haag—Yes; Ingrid Turner – Yes; Paul Turner – Yes; Nancy Mullen Call – Yes; Rob Manilla – Yes; and Leo Hughes – Yes. Motion approved.

New Business:

All are invited to celebrate together with a carry-in dinner during the December 18th Board meeting. Spouses, significant others or friends are also encouraged to attend. Broasted chicken will be served, with everyone bringing other dishes to share. Kelly will make an assignment and attendance sheet to circulate as needed until the carry-in.

Old Business:

- Doug shared that he has been creating lists and organizing the information needed for the new director. Kelly has volunteered to serve as the interim director so that the remaining staff will have some continuity during the transition. Beginning the week of Thanksgiving, Doug will spend significant time with Kelly to bring her up to speed on the critical components of his position. The goal is to give the Transition Committee enough time to hire the best-qualified candidate and ensure BSR's outstanding reputation as the premier senior service provider in Benzie County.
- Rob reported that a member of the BWAC Board reports that the project is full steam ahead and they expect to close the sale on the Crystal Lake Elementary School soon.
- Rob also reported that the Elberta Waterfront Community Conservation Project planned by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy will proceed with the help of a Detroit technology entrepreneur offering a 4-year, 0% interest loan.
- There was brief discussion around the bullet-point information Mike Corby (Integrated Architecture) has yet to provide, that will help BSR communicate the Discovery Process findings to our community at large. Although we recognize this still needs to happen, the effort is being paused by the search for and installation of BSR's new Executive Director.

Respectfully submitted:

Kelly Ottinger, Fund Development/Communications Director

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, December 18, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

Location: The Gathering Place Senior Center, 10579 Main Street, Honor, MI 49640