

BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of March 12, 2026

Roll Call Present: Jim Curran, Chairman
David Vollrath, Vice Chair
Sharon Tyler
Alex Ott (arrived at 9:29 a.m.)

Absent:

Scheduled: Mike Sepic, Interim Administrator
Mac Elliott, BOC Chair
Lisa Jardine, Friend of the Court
Sheriff Heit, BCSD
Undersheriff Sanders, BCSD

Others:

Call to Order

Chairman Curran called the meeting to order at 9:18 am.

Friend of the Court Update – Jardine

Jardine reviewed the 2025 numbers. They met all Federal performance factors and State standards except for the collection of current support. However, it did increase over the previous year, so she is pleased it is trending up. The total support collected in FY25 was \$19,877,482. She noted locating people can be difficult as we are a border state. She will be hosting an intergovernmental border conference in April for Northern Indiana and Southwestern Michigan counties. The only current open position in her office is the Attorney Referee, which is required to be filled by a licensed attorney. Discussions ensued. She reviewed their office improvements, noting they reinstated a co-parenting class for high conflict cases. The participants are ordered to attend and their feedback after the class has been good. Jardine noted they will have an updated FOC handbook available April 1st which will have less jargon and be more user-friendly.

***Ott arrived at 9:29 a.m.*

Sheriff's Department Update – Sheriff Heit & Undersheriff Sanders

Sheriff Heit reviewed February statistics, noting there was an uptick in ER visits. There are two new DOC academy graduates. Undersheriff Sanders reviewed the enforcement numbers. One Animal Control Officer is still out on long-term medical leave and there is one opening for a part time officer. Heit reported that Lt. Hopkins from the marine division has accepted a position as Chief for Berrien Springs/Oronoko police. Sanders reviewed the detective bureau statistics, noting the graph has been removed and more detailed information on the activity summary is included. Discussions ensued regarding computer forensics in criminal cases due to the increase in cell phones that need to be analyzed. It is a vital position that prevents a backlog. The total number of complaints worked is 1,388 with 332 tickets issued and 164 arrests. Heit reviewed the Emergency Management report. He also presented a new door hanger with rights and scam warnings for mortgage foreclosures. He worked closely with corporate counsel on the information and had the printing department print and prepare them.

Q & A – Sepic & Elliott

Elliott verified the consent calendar. Sepic had no updates to discuss.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Ott, supported by Vollrath, to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2026 meeting. Motion Carried.

Resolutions

The following resolution was signed by the committee:

A2603177 – Approve the request to submit a new grant request to the MIDC for the Public Defender's Office.

Sheriff's Funds Distribution Request

None.

Property Use Request

None.

Miscellaneous

None.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jarent

Jennifer Arent