



COUNTY OF OSCODA

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Charles E. Varner, Jr, Chairman
Mr. Joe Breugh

Mr. Tom McCauley, Vice Chairman
Mr. Ted Handrich

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Oscoda County Government Center, 311 S. Morenci Ave, P.O. Box 399, Mio, MI 48647

Official Minutes April 14, 2026

A Regular Meeting of the Oscoda County Board of Commissioner’s was held on **Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.** open to the public; in compliance with Michigan Legislature requirements and as allowed by Public Act 228 of 2020, Open Meetings Act (Excerpt) Act 267 of 1976, MCL - Section 15.263, from the Mio Community Center, 305 9th Street, Mio, MI 48647.

A. Call to Order

Commissioner Varner called today’s “Public Meeting” to order at 10:00 a.m.

B. Invocation and/or Pledge

Pledge to the Flag

C. Roll Call of Board Members

Roll Call of Members:

Members Present:	Commissioners Breugh, Handrich, McCauley and Varner
Members Excused:	N/A
Public Present:	16, including Youth In Government students
Public by Teleconference:	Unavailable
Zoom Participants:	Unavailable

D. Approval of Agenda

The B.O.C approved the Agenda for **April 14, 2026**, as presented, with two additions to Unfinished Business/New Business.

McCauley/Handrich a motion to approve the agenda for **April 14, 2026**, B.O.C Regular Meeting, as presented, with two additions to Unfinished Business/New Business.
2026-078

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

E. Approval of the Consent Calendar Items for April 14, 2026

The B.O.C. approved the Consent Calendar Items for **April 14, 2026**.

Breugh/McCauley a motion to approve the Consent Calendar Items for **April 14, 2026**.
2026-079

Item #1 Unofficial Minutes for **March 24, 2026**, as presented.

Item #2 Claims and Audit Docket for **April 14, 2026**, as received from the County Clerk's Office in the amount of **\$111,570.18**.

Roll Call Vote: McCauley, yes; Varner, yes; Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes. **Motion Carried.**

F. Public Matters & Comments (Limited to three minutes per person)

Mr. Frank Radowski:

A resident of Oscoda County addressed public safety concerns in Oscoda County, and mentioned a proposal to install additional radar speed signs on CR-489, modeled after those currently maintained on M-72. While the Sheriff Department continues active speeding enforcement, Commissioner Varner has referred the matter to the Oscoda County Road Commission for further coordination and implementation.

Mr. Dan Shafer:

A resident of Oscoda County addressed concerns regarding Constitutional rights and the Oscoda County Sheriff's Department's conduct during traffic stops. He expressed personal opinions about the methods used by the Sheriff's Department during local traffic enforcement. Commissioner Varner clarified that the Oscoda County Board of Commissioners will not take action on this specific issue and noted that this particular session was not intended for the Board to answer direct questions, and the concerns raised were categorized as matters of opinion.

Commissioner Varner:

State of Emergency Declaration was formally declared on Monday, April 13, 2026, in response to significant property damage caused by regional flooding. The declaration has been submitted to the Michigan State Police and the Office of Governor Whitmer to facilitate the acquisition of state resources and support.

An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was established at the Sheriff's Department to centralize response efforts. Key coordination was managed by Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator in conjunction with the West Branch Emergency Manager and Emergency Responders. Sheriff Kann provided the facility to serve as the primary command site for multi-agency collaboration.

The Sheriff's Department, EMS, and local responders initiated "boots on the ground" assessments on April 10, 2026 specifically targeting the AuSable River, McKinley, and Comins Flats areas. Emergency Responders conducted door-to-door welfare checks and evacuated residents in high-risk zones. Emergency notifications were disseminated via social media, cellular emergency alerts, and direct contact. Tri-Point Church was designated and activated as the official emergency shelter.

Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator provided an evaluation of the initial response, noting that while multiple departments (including Tri-Town Fire and Emergency Management) contributed, there were instances of duplicated efforts. For future incidents, it was advised that the Sheriff's Department maintain the lead role to ensure streamlined communication through the Dispatch Department. All responding parties have been unified under a single operational plan to monitor rising water levels and manage resource allocation.

G. Appointments:

- 1) Ms. Jennifer Sprik, Mid-Michigan Medical Examiner Group – 2025 Annual Report Presentation

Discussion:

The Medical Examiner’s office presented the Annual Report for 2024–2025, noting 34 investigations, 12 toxicology reports, and 3 confirmed drug-related deaths (cocaine and methamphetamine). A new CT machine is now operational in Crawford County for regional use; while it does not replace autopsies, it serves as a diagnostic tool for identifying natural vs. suspicious causes, particularly in drug-related cases. Reports are reviewed by a Forensic Radiologist with a focus on maintaining a strict chain of custody. Sheriff Kann and Sergeant Ryan Blair confirmed that response times and services provided by MMMEG remain excellent.

2) Ms. Amber Woehlert, Equalization Director – Oscoda County 2026 Annual Equalization Report

McCauley/Breaugh a motion to enter an Equalization Session, as required by PA 135 of 1991 at
2026-080 10:14 a.m.

Roll Call Vote: Varner, yes; Breaugh, yes;
Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes. **Motion Carried.**

Ms. Amber Woehlert, Equalization Director, presented the annual update regarding county assessments:

- All Oscoda County townships passed their reviews without issues or correctional reports. The AMARS (Audit of Minimum Assessment Requirements) for local assessors is scheduled to begin next month.
- The total equalized value for the county is \$867,251,856 (including Disabled Veterans exemptions), representing a 5% increase over last year. This indicates a stabilizing market compared to the higher increases of recent years.
- The tentative taxable value shows an approximate 2.8% increase from the previous year.
- Total tax revenue is projected to decrease by approximately \$45,000 due to the impact of Disabled Veterans’ exemptions.

Varner/Handrich a motion to adjourn the Equalization Session and return to the Regular Board
2026-081 Meeting at 10:19 a.m.

Roll Call Vote: Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes;
McCauley, yes; Varner, yes. **Motion Carried.**

Handrich/McCauley a motion to accept the Oscoda County 2026 Equalization Report, with the total
2026-082 equalized value of **\$878,919,656** as prepared and received by Ms. Amber
Woehlert, Equalization Director, and authorize the Chair and the County Clerk to
sign, as requested.

Roll Call Vote: Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes;
Varner, yes; Breaugh, yes. **Motion Carried.**

H. Correspondence/Reports/Resolutions:

N/A

I. Unfinished Business/New Business:

1) Board of Commissioners Board Resignation

Breaugh/Handrich a motion to acknowledge the resignation of Ms. Jackie Bondar from the Oscoda
2026-083 County Board of Commissioners Board, effective Wednesday, April 1, 2026.

Roll Call Vote: Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes; Varner, yes; Breagh, yes. **Motion Carried.**

2) Motor Pool Staffing

Breagh/McCauley 2026-084 a motion to acknowledge the termination of Mr. Chris Fuhr, Motor Pool Supervisor, effective Friday, March 27, 2026.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

Addition

3) Motor Pool Staffing

Varner/Handrich 2026-085 a motion to acknowledge the hiring of Mr. Rod Marsh, as a temporary part-time non-union employee to fill the Motor Pool position, with a hire date of Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at a starting wage of \$25.00 per hour, working up to 28 hours per week, not eligible for County benefits, and so, amend the budget.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

Addition

4) District#3 Commissioner Appointment

Varner/Breagh 2026-086 a motion to appoint Ms. Linda Jagiello to fill the vacancy of the District #3 Commissioner per MCL 46.412 requirements, until the November 2026 election results are determined.

Roll Call Vote: McCauley, yes; Varner, yes; Breagh, yes; Handrich, yes. **Motion Carried.**

5) Ms. Libby Marsh, County Clerk/Register of Deeds - Jury Board Appointment

McCauley/Handrich 2026-087 a motion to appoint Ms. Sherry Marsh, to the Jury Board for a 6-six-year term, as a Republican member, beginning May 1, 2026 and ending April 30, 2032.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

6) Mr. Jimmy Vance, Park Manager – Seasonal Help

Handrich/McCauley 2026-088 a motion to acknowledge the re-hiring of Mr. Richard Mailhot, as a part-time seasonal employee to fill the seasonal position at the Oscoda County Park, with a start date of Monday, April 27, 2026 through Monday, October 5, 2026, working up to 28 hours per week, with a starting wage of \$13.73 per hour, and so, amend the budget.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

7) Mr. Tom Pratt, Court Administrator – Trial Court Staffing

Breagh/Handrich 2026-089 a motion to acknowledge the hiring of Ms. Brianna Bushre, as a full-time non-union employee to fill the Trial Court Clerk position, with a hire date of

Thursday, March 26, 2026, at a starting wage of \$18.59 per hour, eligible for County benefits, and so, amend the budget.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

- 8) Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator/HR Director – Materials Management Planning Committee Nomination

McCauley/Varner
2026-090 a motion to appoint Commissioner Handrich as the named elected official representative that will be guaranteed a seat on the 5-county Materials Management Planning Committee.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

Breaugh/McCauley
2026-091 a motion to grant Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator full authority to act on behalf of Commissioner Handrich for all matters relating to the role of the elected official representing Oscoda County on the 5-county Materials Management Planning Committee.

Roll Call Vote: Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes; Varner, yes. **Motion Carried.**

- 9) Northern Michigan Children’s Advocacy Center (NMCAC) Millage Proposal

The Board of Commissioners chose to not move forward with approving the millage for our county.

J. Financial:

- 1) Mr. Michael Bowers, Emergency Management Coordinator – EMPG Grant Agreement

Handrich/McCauley
2026-092 a motion to authorize the Fiscal Year 2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Agreement (Grant No. EMC-2025-EP-05001) between Oscoda County and the Michigan Department of State Police for the performance period of October 1, 2024 to September 20, 2025, in the amount of \$2,125.00, and authorize the Chair to sign, as requested.

Roll Call Vote: Varner, yes; Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes. **Motion Carried.**

- 2) Mr. Robert Stankiewicz, EMS Director – EMS Equipment Purchase

Varner/Breaugh
2026-093 a motion to authorize Mr. Robert Stankiewicz, EMS Director to enter into an agreement with Stryker to purchase all equipment listed below, totaling \$134,842.00 over a three-year term at 0% interest with annual payments of \$44,947.00, to be paid out of budget line AMB NEW CAPITAL OVER \$5K 102-651-977.00

- (2) PowerPro2 Cots
- (2) Power Loads
- (2) Manual Stair Chairs
- All Accessories (4x Cot Batteries, 2x charger, 2x power cords)

- Trade-in of 2x old power cots & 2x old stair chairs

Roll Call Vote: Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes; McCauley, yes; Varner, yes. **Motion Carried.**

3) Veterans Affairs – FY27 County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) Grant

Handrich/McCauley
2026-094 a motion to authorize Oscoda County Veterans Affairs to submit a Letter of Intent to Apply for the FY27 County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) Grant, on behalf of Oscoda County, and authorize the Oscoda County Chairman, Mr. Chuck Varner to sign as the authorized official.

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

4) Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator/HR Director – Fire Suppression

McCauley/Handrich
2026-095 a motion to authorize the quote from Sterling Fire Protection LLC to perform the scope of work described in the amount of \$37,950.00, and for services to be paid out of the General Fund budget, and allow the Chair to sign.

Roll Call Vote: McCauley, yes; Varner, yes; Breaugh, yes; Handrich, yes. **Motion Carried.**

K. Public Comments (Limited to three minutes per person):

Ms. Linda Jagiello:

She expressed her appreciation to the board for their support and shared her enthusiasm for serving the community where she has lived her entire life.

Mr. Peter Malan:

A candidate for the board vacancy introduced himself, congratulated Commissioner Linda Jagiello on her appointment, and expressed his interest in community involvement as a local business owner.

L. Committee Reports:

Commissioner Breaugh:

- Attended Veteran’s Affairs Board Meeting
- Attended Council on Aging Board Meeting
 - Effective July 1, 2026, the Council on Aging will welcome a new Director following the retirement of current Executive Director Suzanne Barker.

Commissioner Varner noted that following the official seating of newly appointed Commissioner Linda Jagiello, the Board will conduct a comprehensive review of all current committee assignments to re-align appointed committees and department liaisons to ensure balanced representation across the Board.

Commissioner Handrich:

- Attended M.O.A. Landfill Authority Board Meeting
- Reviewed Claims & Audit (County)
- Attended Historical Commission/Steiner Museum Board Meeting
 - To resolve frustration over a lack of clear direction, regional commissioners and townships are being surveyed to define local priorities and future planning goals. The regional board expressed frustration during their last meeting regarding a lack of clear guidance from the County and Townships. A survey has been created for each Commissioner and Township to

identify local priorities and future directions. Commissioners must complete these surveys and submit them to Ms. Rene Welser, B.O.C. Executive Secretary; they will then be forwarded to the Steiner board for review. The regional board is surveying Commissioners and Townships to gain clearer planning direction; completed forms should be returned to Rene for the Steiner board's review.

Commissioner McCauley:

- Attended Oscoda County Road Commission Meeting
- Discussions between Ms. Amy Knepp, District Library Director, Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator/HR Director and Commissioner Varner regarding updating outdated collections and managing the challenges of disposing of, or vetting of the collections. These efforts aim to keep the collection current while ensuring a safe environment.

Commissioner Varner:

- Internal and individual Commissioner discussions regarding the Board of Commissioners board vacancy.
- Reviewed Claims & Audit (County)
- Reviewed M.O.A Landfill Claims & Accounting
 - Commissioner Handrich has been appointed to the M.O.A Landfill Authority Board
- Attended Wellvance Program/Planning Committee Meeting
- Attended Wellvance Buildings and Grounds/Facilities Committee Meeting
 - Received clarification regarding the carpet that was being requested at the space being leased from Oscoda County by Wellvance. Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator/HR Director will work with Wellvance to develop a plan.
- Reviewed Letters of Interest from all candidates and conducted individual phone interviews with each candidate for the Board of Commissioners board vacancy.
- Meetings with Mr. Michael Bowers, Emergency Management and Ms. Michelle Knepp, County Administrator/HR Director regarding the current flooding situation.

M. Adjournment:

Breaugh/Handrich a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 11:20 a.m.

2026-096

4 yes: 0 no: **Motion Carried.**

The Board of Commissioners will hold their next scheduled "Regular B.O.C Meeting" on **Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.** held at the Mio Community Center, 305 9th Street, Mio, MI 48647.

**Charles E Varner, Jr., Oscoda County
Board of Commissioners Chairman**

**Libby Marsh-Shephard, Oscoda County
Clerk & Register of Deeds**