

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE



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Newly Elected Officials in 2017
Welcome Three New County Commissioners, Other Elected Officials

GRAND RAPIDS – The first Kent County Board of Commissioners meeting for 2017 was held this morning, starting off with the welcoming of three new Commissioners. Betsy Melton, Phil Skaggs and Robert Womack joined the Board in accepting the Oath of Office before the Board took on the business of the morning.

The Board also approved some changes in leadership. Commissioner Jim Saalfeld was re-elected Chair of the Board and begins his second year in this role. Commissioner Mandy Bolter will now be Vice-Chair of the Board and Chair of the Legislative and Human Resources Committee. “Mandy has demonstrated great leadership in her role over the past three years,” said Jim Saalfeld, Board Chair. “I am excited to work with Mandy in leadership during this new term.” Commissioner Diane Jones will chair the Finance and Physical Resources Committee. Commissioner Carol Hennessy will continue to serve in her role as Minority Party Vice-Chair for the Board. In addition to these changes, Chair Saalfeld made the following appointments to round out the new leadership team: Commissioner Hennessy will serve as Vice-Chair of the Finance and Physical Resources Committee, and Commissioner Stan Stek will serve as Vice-Chair of the Legislative and Human Resources Committee. “I am very pleased with the new leadership team. It is an experienced group who have demonstrated a willingness to work together and accomplish our goals and objectives,” added Chair Saalfeld.

Former State Representative Ken Yonker is now the newly elected County Drain Commissioner. His office oversees the administration of the State Drain Code for the establishment, improvement or maintenance of over 536 miles of County drains and 356 storm water detention ponds in Kent County. He replaces Bill Byl who recently retired.

Former State Representative Lisa Posthumus-Lyons was elected Clerk/Register of Deeds. The Office manages County elections, vital County records, maintains all Circuit Court files and provides service and information as to the public record regarding real property. She replaces Mary Hollinrake who retired after 22 years in the Clerk’s Office; 16 of those years were as County Clerk.

Kent County has a new Prosecutor after four decade: newly elected Chris Becker takes over for the recently retired Bill Forsyth. Becker has been with the Office for two decades. From 2008-2011, he was a Senior Assistant Prosecutor for the County, and for the past five years Becker has been the Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney.

The Board also approved appointments for various committees, subcommittees and boards. The County received 215 applications for 56 vacancies. The list of appointees is attached. **Members of the media are invited to attend the new appointee orientation on January 11, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building. (Media note: Pictures of this morning’s meeting will be posted on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/KentCountyMI) – please courtesy [Facebook.com/KentCountyMI](https://www.facebook.com/KentCountyMI).)**

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