

Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
February 6, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Mark Gail. Other Commissioners present were Jerrel Olson, Dwight Nelson, Chad Metz, and Kayla Schmidt. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were no conflicts of interest expressed. Upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz the agenda was unanimously approved. The January 16, 2024 meeting minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Metz and second by Nelson.

Highway Department

County Engineer Chad Gillespie, and County Maintenance Supervisor Brian Koch appeared before the Board. The following resolution was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and second by Nelson:

Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners

Authorization to Submit a Proposal to the Legislative-Citizen
Commission on Minnesota Resources for Public Land Survey System
Restoration (PLSS) T58R13

WHEREAS, Traverse County has the opportunity to request funding from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) for the project titled "PLSS Restoration T58R13".

WHEREAS, Traverse County has identified a Contracted Licensed Land Surveyor assigned to provide professional and technical oversight to the Grant Project.

Name: Nicholas Stattelmann, PLS 49835, of True North Surveys, P.A. Address: 6707 113th Ave NE, Spicer, MN 56288

WHEREAS, Traverse County Auditor's office has reviewed the funding request and the "Duties of a Fiscal Agent" document provided by the State and is aware of the work that will occur if funded.

County Auditor/Treasurer: Kit Johnson

Address: 702 2nd Ave N PO Box 428 Wheaton, MN 56296

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Traverse County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County to submit a proposal for the project titled "PLSS Restoration T58R13" for grant funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) funding from the Legislative-Citizen Commissioner on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) and receive grant funds for the purpose of PLSS Preservation.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Traverse County Board authorizes the Traverse County Auditor's Office to act as the fiscal agent if funding is awarded for the project.

Approved By: _____ Date _____
Chair, County Board of Commissioners

Attest: _____ Date _____
County Coordinator

Gillespie requested approval for a two-year lease with Gerald Murphy for the use of land for mining and removing gravel. Upon a motion by Metz and second by Olson, the lease was approved unanimously. Approval was given unanimously to advertise for crushing bids CP 24-01 upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Nelson. Unanimous approval was given to advertise for graveling project CP 24-02 upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Metz. Upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz the proceeds from the Bombardier will go into the Highway Fund. Gillespie informed the Board that \$1,278,562.50 in LBRP Grant funds were secured for bridge project SAP 078-598-038.

Public Hearing for the Extension of the Wind/Solar Moratorium

County Attorney Matt Franzese appeared before the Board. He asked the Board to approve the extension to give the workgroup more time to finalize the draft ordinance. Schmidt made a motion to approve the following resolution, second by Metz followed by discussion:

COUNTY OF TRAVERSE RESOLUTION 24-04

A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE INTERIM ORDINANCE PLACING A MORATORIUM ON THE ISSUANCE OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS WITHIN THE COUNTY OF TRAVERSE

WHEREAS, on April 11, 2023, the Traverse County Board of Commissioners passed an interim ordinance temporarily prohibiting the issuance of conditional use permits for construction of wind energy production facilities within the County of Traverse for a period of twelve (12) months;

WHEREAS, on May 16, 2023, the Traverse County Board of Commissioners amended the interim ordinance to temporarily prohibit the issuance of permits for construction of Wind Energy Conversion Systems within Traverse County, including, but not limited to, applications for building permits, preliminary plats, re-zonings, variances, conditional use permits, site plans, or licenses;

WHEREAS, on May 16, 2023, the Traverse County Board of Commissioners also issued an interim ordinance temporarily prohibiting the issuance of development approvals for Commercial Solar Energy Systems within Traverse County, including, but not limited to, applications for building permits, preliminary plats, re-zonings, variances, conditional use permits, site places, or licenses

WHEREAS, the Traverse County Board of Commissioners subsequently appointed several members of the community to a workgroup to meet on a regular basis in order come up with proposed modifications to the County's existing Wind Energy Conversion Systems ordinance, as well as create an ordinance for Commercial Solar Energy Systems;

WHEREAS, the workgroup has been diligently meeting at least once a month to attempt to accomplish its task, including meeting three times in the month of December;

WHEREAS, the workgroup has reviewed a number of ordinances from other counties and states, and has met with several people from other counties within the State, in order to obtain their knowledge on crafting ordinances in each area that would suit the

needs of the people of Traverse County;

WHEREAS, despite the workgroup's diligence, it most likely will not be able to complete its task and be able to provide the Traverse County Planning Commission and Traverse County Board of Directors with viable ordinances for Wind Energy Conversion Systems and Commercial Solar Energy Systems by the twelve- month deadline;

WHEREAS, whereas it is also acknowledged that it will soon be planting season, which will further interfere with the workgroups' ability to have the ordinances ready for review and implementation; and

WHEREAS, M.S.A. §394.34 allows an interim moratorium to be extended up to one additional year after the original deadline.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners that it hereby approves the extension of the Amended Interim Ordinance Placing a Moratorium on the Issuance of All Permits and Permit-related Items for the Construction of Wind Energy Conversion Systems and the Interim Ordinance Placing a Moratorium on the Issuance of Developmental Approvals for the Construction of Solar Energy Systems, both dated May 16, 2023, for an additional twelve months.

Adopted by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners this 6th day of February, 2024.

TRAVERSE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mark Gail, Board Chairman

ATTEST:

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Metz, who sits on the workgroup said that everyone is working diligently on this and they are close but they don't want to rush through this, they don't plan on using the full year. There were comments and questions from the public. The motion passed 5-0.

The Summary of Extension to Interim Ordinance for Wind Energy Conversion Systems and Solar Energy Systems was approved unanimously upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz and passed 5-0.

Law Enforcement Center

Sheriff Trevor Wright appeared before the Board, the jail occupancy for January was at 39.37%. Wright gave an update on the Law Enforcement Contract with Browns Valley, we met with them and we are waiting for the revised contract. Wright explained that the Law Enforcement Center is having some lighting issues. Ottetail came and did a study, they have a project where we can replace our current lights with LED and they will give a discount. In two years, we will have our investment back. We received one quote for \$8,595.25. The Commissioners asked that Wright get another quote and table it

until that is received. Wright informed the Board that we had a Communications/Corrections Officer resign so we will be advertising for the replacement. Deputy Sheriff Brody Farmer gave his resignation effective February 11, 2024. Wright said that he is headed to a job fair in Alexandria on Thursday.

Auditor/Treasurer

Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board, upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Olson the following resolution was approved unanimously:

**ABSENTEE BALLOT BOARD RESOLUTION
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TRAVERSE COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION; ESTABLISHING AN ABSENTEE BALLOT BOARD WHEREAS, **Traverse County** is required by Minnesota Statutes 203B.121, Subd. 1 to establish an Absentee Ballot Board effective June 24, 2022; and

WHEREAS, this board will bring uniformity in the processing of accepting or rejecting returned absentee ballots in **Traverse County**; and

WHEREAS, the Absentee Ballot Board would consist of a sufficient number of election judges as provided in sections 204B.19 to 204B.22 or deputy county auditors trained in the processing and counting of absentee ballots;

WHEREAS, this resolution will cover all elections held in Traverse County in 2024.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the **Traverse County** Board of Commissioners hereby establishes an Absentee Ballot Board that would consist of a sufficient number of election judges as provided in sections 204B.19 to 204B.22 or deputy auditors to perform the task.

COMMISSIONERS	VOTE			
	Yes_	No_	Absent____	Abstain____
	Yes_	No_	Absent____	Abstain____
	Yes_	No_	Absent____	Abstain____
	Yes_	No_	Absent____	Abstain____
	Yes_	No_	Absent____	Abstain____

STATE OF MINNESOTA

TRAVERSE COUNTY

I, Lisa Zahl, duly appointed qualified and County Coordinator for the Traverse County, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of a resolution with the original minutes of the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners, Traverse County, Minnesota at their session held on 6th day of February, 2024 now on file in my office, and have found the same to be a true and correct copy thereof.

Witness my hand and official seal at Traverse County, Minnesota, this 6th day of February, 2024

_____ County Coordinator

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

Johnson presented the 2023 State Auditor Engagement Letter which was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and second by Schmidt.

Attorney

Franzese brought forward the following resolution, which was approved 4-1 with Olson opposed, upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz.

**COUNTY OF TRAVERSE
RESOLUTION 24-03
A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO REDESIGNING THE STATE FLAG AND SEAL
FOR TRAVERSE COUNTY**

WHEREAS, the 2023 Legislature created a State Emblems Redesign Commission in the Laws of Minnesota , Chapter 62, Article 2, Section 118 the purpose of which is to redesign the official state flag and official state seal due to perceived cultural insensitivity;

WHEREAS, the Redesign Commission was charged with bringing recommendations on the redesign to the Legislature by no later than January 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, the official state flag and seal are not only symbols of our state, but also of our history, and both the current official state flag and official state seal contain historical information on our farming background, American Indian heritage, and the co-existence that is part of the rich history of our state;

WHEREAS, the redesigned flag removes these identifiable symbols pertaining to our state's history in lieu of convoluted colors and symbols that contain no obvious identification to our state;

WHEREAS, and the redesigned seal inexplicably removes the year of our state's founding and the state motto;

WHEREAS, there has been substantial negative public reaction to the redesigned state flag and seal that has prompted the County Boards of Crow Wing, Houston, Nobles, and Fillmore, so far, to enact resolution opposing the redesign.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. The Traverse County Board of Commissioners hereby urges our legislative delegation and the Governor to reject the work of the State Emblems Redesign Commission; and,
2. The Traverse County Board of Commissioners hereby urges our legislative delegation and the Governor to retain the existing state seal and state flag as the official emblems

for the State of Minnesota.

Adopted by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners this 6th day of February, 2024.

TRAVERSE COUNTY

Mark Gail, Board Chairman

ATTEST:

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

County Coordinator

Upon motion by Nelson and a second from Metz followed by discussion, the following bills were approved unanimously.

ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCARE INC.	\$5,553.16
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$5,459.72
HOMETOWN PLANNING	\$2,860.00
HORIZON PUBLIC HEALTH	\$6,827.25
MINNESOTA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION	\$2,572.14
MN OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY	\$2,155.76
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$3,655.63
NORTHLAND BUSINESS SYSTEMS, INC	\$13,870.92
RAINBOW RIDER	\$8,898.80
RUNESTONE TELEPHONE ASSN.	\$19,491.00
STEVENS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE	\$2,000.00
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$5,076.16
ZIEGLER, INC.	\$44,837.79

Per M.S. §375.12, there were 65 claims of less than \$2,000.00 totaling \$25,546.18.

County Assessor Dianne Reinart appeared before the Board to discuss the Deputy Assessor I position. Currently, it is 30 hours per week, with the added Townships and Cities that we have gotten Dianne asked for the position to go to 37.5 hours per week. Upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Nelson it was unanimously approved. The County Board of Appeal was set for June 17, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

County Coordinator Lisa Zahl informed the Board that the Extension Office will be moved to the Food Shelf building and they will share the space with the Food Shelf. We are currently waiting for the internet and phone to be connected before the final move. The Assessor Office has moved back to the Extension Office. Extension is utilizing the Assessor's old office until everything is up and running at the Food Shelf building. The plan is to make the old Assessor's Office an additional meeting space once the final move is made. Zahl asked for approval of the updated ESST Policy, upon a motion by Olson and second by Metz it was approved 4-1 with Schmidt opposed. The Memorandum of Agreement with AFSCME regarding ESST was approved 4-1 with Schmidt opposed. Zahl informed the Board that the

Department Heads agreed that we should form an IT Committee but they asked if one Commissioner would sit in. Metz volunteered to join the Committee.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Committee Reports

Schmidt attended an MCIT Open Meeting Law Meeting, Mental Health, Viking Library, Building Committee, Law Library, and Emergency Services. Nelson attended the Building Committee, Primewest, and WesternPrairie meetings.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Mark Gail, Chair