

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
March 19, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 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. The agenda was approved unanimously with the following additions: a flag with the new County logo; position change from Case Aide to Account Technician and approval to hire; and under Sheriff Wright, future staffing considerations, upon a motion by Olson and second by Metz. Olson had a conflict of interest, he submitted a bid for the lighting replacement at the Law Enforcement Center. The March 5, 2024, Board minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Olson and second by Schmidt.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Highway Supervisor appeared before the Board with a department update. The Resolution Establishing Equipment Rental Rates was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and second by Schmidt. A summary of the Resolution is below, there will be a 4% increase each year through 2028.

		<b>2024 Hourly Rates</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>County Roads CSAH &amp; CR</b>
<b>Motor Grader - Diesel</b>	Motor Grader - Blading	\$170.00	\$125.00
	Motor Grader - Snow Plowing (w/plow & wing)	\$200.00	\$155.00
	Blad-Mor Grader	\$95.00	\$70.00
<b>Trucks - 50,000 GVW Tandems</b>	Tandem Truck	\$170.00	\$125.00
	Tandem Truck with Pup Trailer	\$200.00	\$155.00
	Tandem Truck with Snow Plow, Wing, & Sander	\$200.00	\$155.00
<b>Trucks</b>	Sign Truck	\$105.00	\$80.00
	Service Truck	\$105.00	\$80.00
	Water Truck	\$130.00	\$85.00
<b>Snow Blowers</b>	Front End Loader with 3-Auger SnoGo Klauer MP-3D	\$250.00	\$205.00
	OshKosh Truck with 3-Auger SnoGo Klauer MP-3D	\$220.00	\$175.00
	Tractor & Snow Blower	\$180.00	\$135.00
<b>Excavator</b>	JD 160G Excavator	\$190.00	\$145.00
	PayLoader - Cat 950D, Cat 950H	\$170.00	\$125.00
	Dozer - D5H Cat	\$170.00	\$125.00
	Dozer - D5H Cat (winter)	\$210.00	\$165.00
	Skid Steer Loader	\$120.00	\$75.00
	Skid Steer Loader with Attachement	\$130.00	\$85.00
<b>Rollers &amp; Compactors</b>	Pull Type 9-Wheel Pneumatic	\$40.00	\$35.00
	1-Ton Steel Wheeled	\$50.00	\$35.00
	Self-Propelled Sheepsfoot Compactor	\$85.00	\$60.00
<b>Mowers &amp; Mulchers</b>	Tractor with Disc Mower	\$125.00	\$90.00

	Tractor with Mower (Rotary-side and rear & Schulte)	\$135.00	\$100.00
	Tractor with Mulcher	\$160.00	\$115.00
<b>Pickups &amp; Vehicles</b>	Personal Vehicle <b>Cost per Mile</b>	County Approved Rate	
	Pickups (1/2 ton and 3/4 ton) <b>Rental Cost per Hour</b>	\$20.00	\$20.00
	Pickups (1 ton) <b>Rental Cost per Hour</b>	\$22.00	\$22.00
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Motor Grader with Shouldering Machine	\$190.00	\$145.00
	Steamer	\$60.00	\$60.00
	Self-Propelled Broom	\$80.00	\$65.00
	Air compressor - Trailer Mounted - Sullair	\$60.00	\$60.00

Upon a motion by Nelson and second by Olson the Township contracts were approved unanimously. The Ottetail Utility Relocation Agreement, CSAH 15 project, was unanimously approved upon a motion by Metz and second by Nelson. Upon a motion by Metz and second by Olson, the approval to award CP 24-01 crushing bid to CT Sibson Gravel and Crushing, Inc. for \$339,086.16 was unanimous. Gillespie informed the Board of some information items including crack filing projects, the fixing of the bathrooms at the County Park, the Survey Pickup was received, a flood payment update, and the Wind Turbine Road Use Agreement meeting with three other counties.

#### **Law Enforcement**

Sheriff Trevor Wright appeared before the Board. He presented two quotes for the lighting replacement at the Law Enforcement Center. Olson Electric came in with the lowest bid at \$8,152.65 and with the Ottetail rebates it will be around \$4,100.00. We should have the project paid off in approximately two years with the savings in our electric bill. Schmidt commented that until other counties start paying a fair amount to house their inmates in Traverse County she won't vote to spend more money at the Law Enforcement Center, this issue needs to be addressed. Nelson made a motion to replace the lights in the jail, which Metz seconded, and discussion followed. Metz agrees that we do need to figure something out and address the issue of out-of-county inmates but we need to save money when we can. The motion passed 3-1 with Schmidt opposed and Olson abstained.

Wright wanted to discuss future staffing considerations after he received an email from Commissioner Schmidt that addressed the disparity between counties with jails and those without and gave three options for moving forward. Wright went over the email and a discussion took place. There is a letter being drafted by County Attorney Matt Franzese and will be sent to the other counties with jails to see if there would be interest in starting a workgroup to figure out how we can combat the disparity. Wright asked the Commissioners if the plan is to start a workgroup and take the needed time so that changes can be made that would have a positive impact or do they plan to cut the budget and ultimately staff. The consensus was that a letter will be going out to see if a work group can be formed.

#### **Auditor/Treasurer**

Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. The 2024 tax statements are in the process of being mailed out. The first-year delinquent taxes were just published in the paper, it is a requirement by law. His office is currently working on the annual inventory. Johnson gave information regarding the probation funding that we are receiving this year, it doesn't cover all expenses so the five counties will still be responsible for some expenses. The Traverse Care Center fund will need a loan from the general fund of \$42,000.00, upon a motion by Olson and second by Schmidt the loan was approved unanimously. Johnson is working on the presidential nomination reimbursement,

a portion of it will be reimbursed by the State. He also informed the Board that his office will be helping cities and townships with their elections.

#### **County Coordinator**

Upon motion by Nelson and second by Olson the following bills were approved unanimously.

CITY OF ST. CLOUD	\$5,282.69
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$5,459.72
ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE, INC.	\$2,326.11
GAZETTE PUBLISHING, INC.	\$4,225.25
HORMANN, MARK	\$2,200.00
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$2,346.31
QUADIENT FIANCNE USA, INC.	\$3,000.00
STEVENS COUNTY TREASURER	\$11,604.00
TYLER TECHNOLOGIES, INC.	\$6,815.27
WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL JUVENILE CT	\$8,021.00
MIDWAY FORD COMPANY	\$46,308.76
TRAVERSE COUNTY AUDITOR/TREASURER	\$26,688.07
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$3,081.26
WHITE CAP, LP	\$16,202.25
JONES LAW OFFICE	\$2,010.00
LSS OF MN	\$2,242.50
LSS OF ST PAUL	\$6,428.82
MILEAGE/COST EFF REIMBURSEMENT	\$6,036.66
MN DHS	\$6,050.88
PLACEMENTS	\$28,270.90
RURAL MN CEP	\$5,953.80
TC COLLABORATIVE	\$8,020.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY A/T	\$2,500.00

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 61 in the amount of \$35,551.14.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, asked for approval to purchase a new computer for the Extension office, their current computer has a 2017 operating system and no support is available. The quote from Morris Electronics which includes a 3-year warranty, docking station, and Microsoft 365 operating system for \$1,851.88 was approved unanimously upon a motion by Metz and second by Nelson.

Traverse County Opioid Taskforce received and approved its first application for Opioid funding from the Browns Valley School District for \$20,000.00 to be used to increase the academic performance of participating students who are low-performing in academics and to provide youth enrichment programming to be fun and engaging to increase student's connectedness to school and community. To date Traverse County has received \$49,817.29 in the Opioid Settlement.

Pheasants Forever land purchases were discussed, there has been some concern by some residents. Schmidt presented the Commissioners with State Statute 97A.145 Wetlands for Wildlife, when a nonprofit purchases land they can donate it to a government agency right away. Schmidt brought up putting a resolution into place that if a nonprofit were to purchase land they would have to wait a specific amount of time before donating it. Another issue that was brought to the Commissioners was from Meeker County who put a resolution into place encouraging Congress to enact legislation to equalize revenue sharing payments and ditch assessments from Federally-owned land to the amount

that would be owed in property taxes if the property were privately owned. Schmidt said there will be more to come with these issues.

The Commissioners received a request from the Yellow Medicine County Board regarding the closure of the Upper Sioux Agency State Park near Granite Falls because it was transferred to the Upper Sioux Community tribe. They asked that we send a letter urging that legislation focus on the process of identifying appropriate recreational replacement values for its loss. The decision was made without any public input or opportunity to suggest possibilities such as partnerships that could benefit everyone. Schmidt said that there is a bill SF3480 that they are trying to do something similar by Detroit Lakes as well. Schmidt would like to send a letter to our legislatures in support of opposing these types of things. Schmidt made a motion that we draft a similar letter, second by Nelson followed by a discussion. Nelson would like to see the letter before final board approval. The motion was passed 5-0 to draft the letter and bring it back to the Board for final approval.

Zahl asked for approval to purchase a flag with the new County logo on it to be put on the flag pole in front of the Courthouse. Zahl was instructed to look for additional quotes.

In Social Services one of our Case Aides will be retiring and instead of hiring to replace that position Stacy Hennen, Social Services Director, asked that we put a new Account Technician position into place. Upon a motion by Olson and second by Metz it was approved unanimously to change the position title and if the grade came back the same or lower they could hire for this position.

Zahl discussed general updates including AMC benefits for Traverse County and BdSWD Ditch No. 5 project, Preliminary Survey and Engineers report.

#### **Public Comment Period**

There were two public comments on the Fish and Wildlife issue and the jail issue.

#### **Committee Reports**

Nelson attended the Personnel Committee, Primewest, Horizon Public Health, Township meetings and Planning and Zoning. Schmidt attended the HRA Board, Canvassed the election, One Watershed One Plan, Horizon Public Health, Township meetings, Social Service preplacement and Planning and Zoning.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

---

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

---

Mark Gail, Chair