Traverse County Commission
Special Board Meeting
March 27, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission Chairman Mark Gail. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. This is a Special meeting being conducted pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021, which allows a meeting be conducted by telephone or other electronic means during a health pandemic by the governor of the State of Minnesota in Minnesota Statute Chapter 12.  Appearing personally are Dave Salberg, Tom Monson, and Mark Gail.  Appearing via Zoom are Kevin Leininger and Todd Johnson.  Additionally, there are several members of the public here and listening in through Zoom.  The purpose of today's meeting is to discuss COVID-19.

Governor Tim Walz issued Emergency Executive Order 20-20 Directing Minnesotans to Stay at Home from Friday, March 27 at 11:59p.m. until Friday, April 10 at 5:00 p.m.  He is allowing local Government to decide who should continue to work and who shouldn't.  If the Board deems the workers essential then they will continue to work.  After speaking to several counties, our Labor Attorney and the Executive Committee, our recommendation is that we deem all employees essential during this particular Order.  Upon a motion by Salberg, second by Monson and approved unanimously, all Traverse County employees are considered essential.

Through Friday, April 10, employees will continue to come to work or telework if possible.  The Department Heads have the discretion to allow their employees to work from home.  The Board strongly recommends working from home during this time as long as they have work that can be done remotely, they have the equipment needed and the security measures in place. The Board is requiring employees to maintain a 6 foot distance from others when in the workplace.  All essential meetings should take place virtually or by telephone.  The State did close Motor Vehicle so they will be closed to the public.  All doors of the Courthouse will be closed with no admittance.  There is a drop box that has been installed on the outside of the building by the elevator doors if someone would like to drop something off.  Social Services will remain doing what they have been doing, the main door to the office is locked however the hallway by the Commissioners room is still open for the public to pick up and drop off applications. The main Social Services door and the handicap door will remain open. Law Enforcement Center main lobby will remain open and Highway doors will be locked.

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for April 7, if there is enough information prior to that date, a decision on how to move forward will be made.  If there is not enough information another special meeting will be held on or before April 10.

The Federal Government has put into place on April 1, 2020 the Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family and Medical Leave Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.  This gives paid leave to employees in certain situations regarding COVID-19.

The Utilization of Paid Leave during a Public Health Emergency Policy was put into place, by the Board, on March 17, 2020.  Zahl explained that it has been brought to her attention that the accrual and use of leave are terms and conditions of employment and are mandatory subjects of collective bargaining. If we put something like this into place we should contact the unions prior.  T. Johnson made a motion to rescind the Utilization of Paid Leave during a Public health Emergency Policy, second by Salberg and approved unanimously.

Dianne Reinart, County Assessor, addressed the Board regarding her Board of Reviews.  At this point Reinart hasn't gotten any guidance from the State that they can change the Board of Reviews so these meetings will still need to be conducted and one  supervisor from the Township will need to be let in the Board Room for the Board of Reviews on Thursday, April 2 from 8:30 – 12:00.  By consensus of the Board this will be considered an essential meeting and can be held.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator                       Mark Gail, Board Chairman