

Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
April 7, 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, Kevin Leininger and Mark Gail. Appearing via Zoom is Todd Johnson. Additionally, there are several members of the public listening in through Zoom. The agenda was unanimously approved, upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson.

Highway Department

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Maintenance Supervisor, appeared on zoom. Gillespie gave the Board a department update. Requests for quotes for dust control were sent to contractors with the same plan as year past where the Highway Department is the middleman and having breakeven pricing.

The graveling contract location is being finalized for 2020 and request for quotes will be sent out to contractors soon.

We received word that we were selected for the State Park Road Account Grant for the Lake Valley Township Road accessing the Mustinka River public water access, this project will begin next year.

Law Enforcement Center

Sheriff Trevor Wright and Brenda Bartz, Jail Administrator, appeared by Zoom. Bartz presented the March jail report to the Board with the jail usage at 56.53% for the month. There are currently 5 inmates in the jail and they are not taking any new inmates in unless it is a public health or safety issue during the pandemic. The rec room window that was fixed is not working again and they are working with the insurance company regarding this.

Wright said that they are seeing an increase in violent crimes and he isn't sure if it is seasonal or COVID-19 related.

The County Park was discussed. It was decided to keep the County Park and Peterson's Park closed and the bathrooms at the Mustinka River closed until further notice.

Soil & Water

Sara Gronfeld appeared by Zoom with a department update. The USDA Service Center is locked to the public, the Soil and Water District is fielding phone calls and limiting staff as much as possible at this time. The Soil & Sandwishes Cover Crop Workshop attendance was excellent. Brock Pearson is scheduled to start April 13 and the conservation corps apprentice position has been filled and they are waiting on details.

The Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) program update; Tintah held its annual meeting and the City is working on more grant applications.

One Wetland Conservation Act project application was received for an Agricultural Exemption, it was approved and there are setbacks that will apply. The RV Park Project update; they are awaiting technical panel insight and further discussion.

There was an Arsenic Remediation Grant submitted by Horizon Public Health for Traverse, Grant, and Stevens counties. There are Weed ID booklets available. The Upper Minnesota River One Watershed One Plan will review its current plan by webinar on March 27. The local meeting with the full boards to review the draft plan is postponed.

County Coordinator

A motion was made by Leininger to approve the March 16, March 17, March 19 and March 27, 2020 Board minutes, with a second by Salberg, and approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Monson and second by T. Johnson, the following bills were approved unanimously:

CITY OF ST. CLOUD	\$4,942.24
HOMETOWN PLANNING	\$2,420.00
HORMANN/MARK	\$2,000.00
MEND CORRECTIONAL CARE, PLLC	\$2,581.89
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION	\$2,674.13
OTTER TAIL POWER CO	\$3,236.91
RAINBOW RIDER	\$2,158.00
SGTS, INC.	\$2,830.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY AUDITOR-TREASURER	\$34,597.39

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000 or less were 47, amounting to \$22,471.43.

It was unanimously approved to hold future Board Meetings by Zoom until further notice upon a motion by Monson and second by T. Johnson.

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager, gave an update on COVID-19 pandemic. We are waiting to hear what Governor Walz will decide regarding the Stay at Home order and to proceed after that is announced. Siegel has been working with the Nursing Homes and Browns Valley Ambulance Service doing fit testing for them for their N95 masks and getting supplies to agencies in need. She has been working with Public Health and the hospitals discussing surge plans. Currently she is discussing alternative care site, Public Health and the Minnesota Department of Health would like it to be a location that has separate entrances to each room along with a bathroom for each room. Siegel is also working on Memorandums of Understandings with the schools. The Emergency Operation Center trailer has been moved to the back parking lot of the Courthouse and all the phone and computer lines should be working and ready to go.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, asked the Board to set a special meeting for Friday at 3:00 p.m., to discuss COVID-19 and the Governors decision regarding the Stay at Home order, the Board was in consensus with that.

Zahl was asked about a piece of plexiglass for the Motor Vehicle department once they starting doing face to face appointments again. Gail said that is what the Post Office is using right now. Leininger said he could look to see if he can find a piece and make something for the office. Kit Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer, updated the Board on Motor Vehicle. Beginning on Monday, April 6 deputy registrars may offer motor vehicle title and registration services. Over the counter, face-to-face services are prohibited. Our office will offer title transfers, new to fleet title/registration applications, dealer work, initial and renewal registrations, duplicate titles, special plate applications, and vehicle permits only through phone, email and drop box. Deputy registrars cannot process driver's license or identification cards, Governor Walz signed a bill that provides an extension for Minnesotans whose driver's license or ID cards expire during the peacetime emergency. The law extends the expiration date for any valid driver's license, instruction permit, provisional license, operator's permit, limited license, and farm work license that would expire during the peacetime emergency. The expiration dates for these licenses will be extended for two months after the month the peacetime emergency ends.

There was minimal discussion on the due date of property taxes. The Boards consensus was to wait to discuss this issue.

US CENSUS BUREAU

Vicki Clayton, US Census Bureau, appeared by Zoom to give a Census update. Traverse County has a 41% self-response rate at this time. The southern part of Traverse County has a lower response rate then the northern part and this may have to do with residents that have PO Boxes. The census cannot be delivered to PO Boxes, it must be delivered to an address. The Census Bureau has delayed field operations until April 15th but residents can respond to the census without a census taker coming to their door. They can go online to 2020census.gov or they can call 844.330.2020 for English or call 844.468.2020 for Spanish to complete the census.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Mark Gail, Board Chairman