

Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
April 18, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Kayla Schmidt. Other Commissioners present were Mark Gail, Dwight Nelson, Jerrel Olson and Chad Metz. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A motion to approved the agenda was made by Olson with the following additions, the minutes from the April 11, 2023 special meeting and the April 12, 2023 public hearing; the National Center for Public Lands Counties; a closed meeting to discuss the Request for Proposal for the lease of the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place; and the Planning and Zoning interim ordinance on solar, second by Nelson and approved unanimously. No conflicts of interest were expressed for the meeting topics. The April 4th, April 11th, and April 12th, 2023 Board minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Nelson and second by Gail.

Highway Department

Traverse County Highway Engineer Chad Gillespie appeared before the Board with a department update. Gillespie reported that his department is attending to flood damaged areas as they are reported. Gillespie is arranging a demonstration of a Road Groomer that he is researching for road maintenance in lieu of purchasing an additional road grader, he is also gathering input from neighboring counties who utilize the groomers. Gillespie provided the Board with a progress update from FEMA from the two floods in 2022. Gillespie informed the Board that a representative from Windmill Farms stopped by for a short meeting and relayed that Nobles County would be a good resource for questions and gave a general outline of the process as pertaining to roads.

Emergency Management

Lynn Siegel appeared before the Board seeking Board approval for the following resolution. Gail moved to approve the declaration, Metz second it and the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION

Traverse County Board of Commissioners
Wheaton, MN 56296

Date: April 18th, 2023

Resolution No. _____

Motioned By: _____

Seconded By: _____

Resolution Declaring a State of Emergency

WHEREAS the spring flooding and overland flooding event resulting from rapid snow melt has impacted the population of Traverse County and its cities; and

WHEREAS the spring/overland flooding event resulting from rapid snow melt has caused a significant amount of damage to the county and township roads and

WHEREAS the Traverse County Department of Emergency Management requests the Traverse County Board of Commissioners to declare Traverse County in a STATE OF EMERGENCY for the spring/overland flooding event of 2023;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Traverse County Board of Commissioners declares Traverse County in a State of Emergency for conditions resulting from the spring/overland flooding event started on April 12th, 2023.

Adopted by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners this 18th day of April, 2023, to be effective until 2nd day of June, 2023 (45 days).

VOTING AYE:

Commissioners Schmidt __ Gail __ Olson __ Metz __ Nelson__

VOTING NAY:

Commissioners Schmidt __ Gail __ Olson __ Metz __ Nelson__

ABSTAINING

Commissioners Schmidt __ Gail __ Olson __ Metz __ Nelson__

ATTEST:

I, Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, hereby attest that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners on the 18th day of April, 2023.

County Coordinator

Mike Chaput

Mike Chaput appeared before the Board with concerns regarding the practices of the current management company overseeing the operations of the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place.

Law Enforcement Center

Trevor Wright appeared before the Board to request approval to attend a conference in Virginia. Wright was selected by the Central Minnesota Emergency Services Board to represent sheriffs at a 911 Staffing Crisis Summit. Wright requested permission to rent a vehicle for the trip and noted that all other expenses will be covered by the organizers of the event. Nelson moved to approve Sheriff Wrights request, second by Gail and approved unanimously.

Auditor Treasurer

Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. Johnson informed the Board that his department is processing property taxes and delinquent tax Expiration of Redemptions for those properties that are 3 years in arrears and went on to describe that process. Johnson is working on cost allocation plan, finishing department inventories and performed an estimate for the county Worker's Compensation policy.

County Coordinator

Nelson moved to approve the following bills, second by Olson and the motion was unanimously approved.

Barts Collision and Glass	6,868.06
Cardmember Service (Elan)	4,792.43
City of St. Cloud	4,449.15
Counties Providing Technology	5,235.36
Gazette Publishing Co.	6,346.75
Hometown Planning	2,620.00
Mark Hormann	2,000.00
Morris Electronics	4,333.53
Regents of the University of Minnesota	15,736.20
Sgts, Inc	3,748.16
Traverse Care Center	3,400.00
Tri-County Coop Oil Assoc.	4,999.01
Wold Architects and Engineers	3,500.00
CHS	6,144.99
Larson Oil Inc.	8,192.80
Little Falls Machine, Inc.	4,895.13
M-R Sign Co. Inc.	14,532.60
Nardini Fire Equipment Co.	3,212.50
Serocki Excavating, Inc.	2,330.00
Ziegler, Inc.	20,816.81

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less was 67 totaling \$26,202.76.

Zahl asked for the Board’s approval to extend Highway Engineer, Chad Gillespie’s contract, which is up as of April 30, 2023, until the terms of permanent contract can be arranged. Metz moved to extend the agreement and Gail was a second and the motion passed unanimously.

A Memorandum of Agreement between Traverse County and The Traverse County Highway Employees Council was presented for the Board’s approval. This memorandum changes the Highways hours from Memorial Day to Labor Day to 4 day per week, Monday – Thursday, 10 hours per day, 6:00 am to 4:30 pm. Gail moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement, Nelson was a second and the motion carried unanimously.

The Windmill Work Group was selected by the Board with the following members: Jarrel Olson, Chad Metz, Commissioners; Starla Tekrony and Jerome Deal, Planning and Zoning Committee; Jeremy Huhnstock, Traverse Electric; Steven Deal, Township Board; Alan Wold, landowner; Jonathan Mathias, landowner; Ryan Lubben, pilot; Jody Hasbargen, landowner; Dave Metz, Township Board; Mike Heck, Mayor of Browns Valley. It was decided that Ben Oleson, Zoning Administrator, will coordinate the work group. Nelson moved to approve the Windmill Work Group volunteers, Gail was a second and the motion was approved unanimously. Oleson informed the Board that the Planning and Zoning committee wanted to note that Traverse County does not currently have an ordinance pertaining to any solar power initiatives and recommended that there be a moratorium on any solar projects until an ordinance can be designed. Nelson moved to add solar to the already formed wind power work group, and to schedule a public hearing for the moratorium, Gail was a second and the motion was passed

unanimously. The Public hearing is scheduled for May 16, 2023 during the regularly scheduled Board meeting in the Traverse County Commissioner's room.

Zahl reported on correspondence she received stating that the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the Western Interstate Region (WIR) have established the National Center for Public Lands Counties to create an enhanced opportunity to demonstrate how prosperous public lands counties create a prosperous America. The Center will utilize traditional and new media, such as podcasts and video interviews, to tell these stories and also develop detailed, individual research and written county profiles. For the Center to meet its mission and serve as a long-term tool for public lands counties a voluntary investment is needed. They are asking Traverse County to contribute \$1,000 over a 2-year agreement, Zahl will report to the Board when further information becomes available.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05 subdivision 3 (c) (3) the meeting will now be closed "To develop or consider offers or counteroffers for the purchase or sale of real or personal property." To discuss a Request for Proposal received for Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place. Upon motion from Gail and a second by Nelson the meeting was closed by a unanimous vote.

Upon a motion by Metz and second by Nelson the Board meeting was reopened. Schmidt reported that the Board has decided to move forward with the RFP received from Minnewaska Community Health Services.

Public Comment Period

There were multiple comments regarding the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place. Citizens were asking the Board to reassure residents and the public that they won't be closing the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place and that they will make every effort to keep it open. Others commented that they are moving their family members out due to lack of care at this time. The Commissioners responded that they are working on their options to keep the facility open and reminded the public that Traverse County does not run the operations of the facility and that the current lessee will be done at the end of September.

Commissioner Reports

Schmidt reported on the Traverse Care Center/Prairieview Place Committee, Western Prairie Human Services, Horizon Public Health, Social Services Pre-Placement, and Planning and Zoning Committee meetings she attended. Nelson updated the Board on the PrimeWest, Western Prairie Human Services, Horizon Public Health, Planning and Zoning Committee, Traverse Care Center/Prairieview Place and the University of Minnesota Extension Committee meetings. Metz reported on Rainbow Rider, and the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Before the meeting was adjourned County Attorney Matt Franzese asked the Board if they wished to make a decision regarding the Interim Ordinance for Meteorological Towers. Gail moved to amend the moratorium on Wind Power to include the Meteorological Towers, Nelson was a second and the motion passed 3-2 with Metz, and Olson opposed.

Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 11:27 am.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Kayla Schmidt, Chair