

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
May 2, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 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. County Coordinator, Lisa Zahl informed the Board that Dewayne Groneberg would not be attending today's meeting and with that update the agenda was approved 5-0 upon a motion by Gail and second by Metz. No Conflicts of Interest were expressed at today's meeting. The April 18, 2023, minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Nelson and second by Olson.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, Traverse County Highway Engineer, and Brain Koch County Highway Supervisor appeared before the Board with a department update. Gillespie asked the Board to approve the final payment for SAP 078-606-027 (the 2022 CSAH project east of Dumont) to Central Specialties for \$73,462.19, Nelson made the motion to approve the final payment, second by Gail and approved unanimously. Gillespie asked the Board to approve the quote from Hormann Works, LLC for CP 23-01 (CSAH 11 Graveling Project), Olson moved to approve the estimate, second by Nelson and approved unanimously. Gillespie informed the Board that the Road Groomer demonstration had taken place. Gillespie noted that it worked better than he had expected and would be a good addition but would not be in place of a grader. Gillespie updated the Board on flood damage repair and reported that fewer culverts needed replacing this year than in previous flooding years. Gillespie reported that the CSAH 20 project is due to begin at the beginning of June and will take approximately 2 weeks to complete. The Highway department has received both snow blowers and MnDot will post to its website when road restrictions are lifted.

**Law Enforcement Center**

Trevor Wright appeared before the Board along with the LEC Administrative Assistant Janessa Miller for a department update. Wright reported that one full-time dispatch position has been filled and they are still hiring for a part-time position. Wright's department is also hiring two deputy positions. Wright reported that the Jail capacity for April was 26.69%. Wright explained that a Community Notification meeting will be held at the Browns Valley Legion Thursday May 5, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. to inform and update residents of a Level III predatory offender has relocated as homeless to the Browns Valley area and will be over-the-road truck driving. Miller updated the Board on the details, and protocols being implemented with this individual. Wright and Miller added that they will assist with any questions.

**Traverse Care Center/Prairieview Place**

Matthew Wocken, from CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA) appeared before the Board. CLA is a professional Certified Public Accounting firm that provides, among other things, business owner solutions. Wocken presented data on nursing home industry trends for Minnesota that included facility occupancy, workforce, industry financial strains, and recent facility closures. Wocken also presented demographics and considerations specific to Traverse County. The data presented reflected trends from 2017-2023. Wocken presented 4 options for the Board's consideration 1) find another management company, 2) the County resumes operating the facility, 3) merge with another entity or 4) closure. Wocken noted that 22 facilities have closed from 2017 – 2023 with 3 closures in April 2023. Wocken took questions from the Board and others present for today's meeting.

**Assessor**

Diane Reinart appeared before the Board to seek permission to increase the assessment rates for the cities. Reinart reported that her department is currently performing the assessing duties for 6 townships and 3 cities with likelihood of a 4<sup>th</sup> city seeking the county services. Nelson moved to increase the rates from \$14 per parcel to \$16 per parcel countywide, Gail second and the motion passed unanimously.

**Soil and Water Conservation District**

Sara Gronfeld appeared before the Board with a department update. She reported that her office has been approved for an Upgrade Grant Contract and 2 new grant applications were received for the Septic System Program. Gronfeld reported on the Local Water Planning meeting held April 17,2023 and that a budget has been approved for Well Sealing Practices and Lined Waterway Outlets. Gronfeld provided updates on One Watershed One District and the Bois De Sioux-Mustinka Plan Steering Committees. She also reported that tree planting is underway along with GPS Flagging of Conservation Practices. Gronfeld informed the Board that her department is part of a larger engineering pod with 4 other counties, the engineer conducts surveys and inventory and evaluation for the 5 projects that are underway in the county. Gronfeld shared photos of education presentation for schools and gave a brief recap of the curriculum.

**Auditor Treasurer**

Kit Johnson Appeared before the Board seeking permission to sell 2 forfeited parcels to the City of Wheaton Economic Development Board for \$150.00 per parcel plus the filing fees. Gail moved to approve the sale, Nelson was a second and the motion passed unanimously.

**County Coordinator**

Gail moved to approve the following bills, Metz was second and the motion was unanimously approved.

CS Diesel	6,472.67
CT Sibson Gravel and Crushing Inc.	2,811.49
Cummins Sales and Service	2,293.54
Hormann Works, LLC	100,674.50
Kris Engineering, Inc	6,434.84
M-R Sign Co., Inc	5,831.49
Tri County Coop Oil Assoc.	55,914.37
Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc	4,931.58
Hometown Planning	2,620.00
Horizon Public Health	6,827.25
Powerphone	5,512.50
Sanford Medical Center	7,468.26

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less was 41, totaling \$17,086.44.

Discussion took place regarding the Interim Ordinance on Windmills. Nelson moved to reconsider the amendment regarding Met Towers, removing them from the moratorium, Gail was a second. The motion was passed unanimously. Zahl included a funding request from the 2024 Southern Minnesota Tourism Association for Board consideration.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments at today's meeting.

**Commissioners Reports**

Nelson reported on the Social Services group meeting he attended. Schmidt reported on meetings she attended for the Region 4 South Adult Metal Health, Bois De Sioux Watershed District, Traverse Care Center Residents Council, Traverse County Adult Protection and Rural Minnesota Counties. Metz reported further on the Rural Minnesota Counties.

Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 10:28 am

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Kayla Schmidt, Chair