

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
May 16, 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. With the additions of the Browns Valley Fire Department gambling permit request and the Declaration of Conflict of Interest, the agenda was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and a second by Metz. No Conflicts of Interest were expressed at today's meeting. The May 2, 2023, minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Nelson and second by Gail.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, Traverse County Highway Engineer, and Brian Koch County Highway Supervisor appeared before the Board with a department update. Gillespie informed the Board that the CSAH 20 project start date has been postponed until after July 4, 2023. Gillespie will be representing District 4 at a joint meeting with District 2, this board meeting will discuss pre-screening and Minnesota State Aid to assess the needs of the districts. Gillespie updated the Board on the truck purchase that is included in the 2024 budget, he included ordering deadline dates for the purchase. His department is still pursuing information for the motor grader and is working to arrange a time to test the equipment. Gillespie informed the Board that weight restrictions will be removed May 17, 2023, he then provided updates on the 229 flood-damaged sites with estimated damage of \$1,200,000.00.

**Public Hearing**

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to get comments relating to wind and solar power ordinances. A motion was made by Gail and a second by Nelson to approve an amended interim ordinance placing a moratorium on the issuance of conditional use permits for the construction of wind energy conservation systems within the county of Traverse, the floor was then opened for discussion. Members of the public voiced their opinions. Before a vote was taken, County Attorney Matt Franzese noted that an additional motion is needed to further modify Section 2. Franzese stated that section should state the prohibiting the issuance for permits rather than prohibiting conditional use permits. It was then discussed that there be a motion to amend the original motion by Gail and Nelson to reflect the wording change in Section 2. Gail moved to amend the original motion and Nelson was a second. A roll call vote approved the motion 4 – 1 with Olson voting against it. Nelson moved to approve and Interim Ordinance placing a moratorium on the issuance of developmental approvals for the construction of solar energy systems within Traverse County, Gail seconded the motion, and the floor was opened for comments. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was approved 5 - 0. The following Summary was approved unanimously upon a motion by Gail and second by Olson:

SUMMARY OF INTERIM SOLAR ORDINANCE AND  
AMENDMENT TO INTERIM WIND ORDINANCE  
INTERIM ORDINANCES PROHIBITING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AND WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS  
WITHIN THE COUNTY OF TRAVERSE, STATE OF MINNESOTA

An interim ordinance is hereby established a moratorium temporarily prohibiting the issuance of development approvals for Commercial Solar Energy Systems within Traverse County. This shall include, but not limited to, applications for building permits, preliminary plats, re-zonings, variances, conditional

use permits, site places, or licenses. Any application submitted shall not be accepted or processed by the County.

The existing temporary ordinance for Wind Energy Conversion Systems is hereby amended to re-define "Wind Energy Conversion Systems," replaces that phrase for "wind energy production facilities" in the interim ordinance, adds "meteorological tower" to the definitions, and clarifies what is being prohibited.

This summary is being published in compliance with Minnesota Statutes Section 33 IA.01, Subdivision 10 and Minnesota Statutes Section 375.51, Subdivision 3. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance shall be available at regular office hours of the office of the Traverse County Coordinator. The full text of this Ordinance will be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication according to law. PASSED AND ADOPTED this 16th day of May, 2023.

TRAVERSE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Kayla Schmidt, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

#### **Auditor/Treasurer**

Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. Johnson reported that his department has been processing property taxes and they will be preparing settlements to submit to the cities, townships, and watersheds. Late notices for property taxes will be sent out in June. Johnson will be preparing Form 51 which is a report of the school districts taxes receivable which he prepared for the county's 6 school districts and will submit a copy to the Department of Education. Johnson will be preparing a property tax refund file to submit to the state for mobile homes.

#### **Hall's Landing**

County Attorney Matt Franzese appeared before the Board with information regarding Hall's Landing, DeWayne Groneberg was also in attendance. The DNR removed the dock and all signage at the landing because it is not allowed on private property. Franzese has been researching options and found a statute that states if a government entity has been maintaining a road for more than 6 years that entity is entitled to an easement over the road, and suggested that the County take over the entirety of the road to the lake. Groneberg has been in communication with the DNR and attempting to complete the steps required that include getting signatures from landowners. County Engineer Chad Gillespie presented his suggestions to the Board prior to today's meeting that recommended a land survey to write a legal description for the landing area to continue to road to the lake and that legal description gets recorded as an easement. Roger Schwagerl from Windsor Township stated the township would hold a meeting to discuss approving the county taking over the remaining portion of township road in this area.

**DeWayne Groneberg**

Groneberg provided the Board with photos of Halls Landing highlighting the changes to the topography since 2015. Groneberg is working to arrange funding and speaking with representatives from various agencies to repair several areas with the landing and prevent further erosion. Groneberg asked the Board for their support as he proceeds. The Board offered its support.

**Traverse County Historical Society**

Beverly Erickson appeared before the Board seeking permission for Traverse County to accept a grant in the name of Traverse County Historical Society. Erickson explained that the necessary paperwork had not been completed for the Historical Society to accept the funds from a grant they received for the Wheaton Dumont Community Fund. Erickson’s request was that Traverse County accept the funds and then issue the proceeds to the historical society. Gail moved to allow this grant money to be run through the county and Metz was a second and the motion passed unanimously.

**Traverse County Food Shelf**

Crystal Peterson appeared before the Board with an update on the food shelf operations. Peterson informed the Board that she is working on completing an application to register the food shelf as a non-profit and the food shelf board will be holding its first meeting the week of May 22, 2023. Peterson asked the Board for permission to continue to occupy the space and to use the current address to register with the board of non-profits. The Board approved the request.

**MCIT Risk Management Consultants**

Tom Suppes, MCIT Risk Management Consultant, appeared before the Board with a 2023 report that included the County Worker’s Compensation rates, property and casualty claims, and various coverages afforded by the policy.

**Law Enforcement Center**

Sheriff Trevor Wright appeared before the Board and explained that he and Police Chief Jason Berning and the associated personnel committees had met to discuss employee shortages and the possibility of future pairing of the City of Wheaton Police Department and the Traverse County Sheriff’s Office. Wright informed the Board that the time has come to pair the two law enforcement entities. There will be a full joint meeting between the Wheaton City Council and the Traverse County Board to ratify the contract.

**County Coordinator**

Gail moved to approve the following bills and Nelson was a second, the motion passed unanimously.

CHS	2,734.45
H & R Construction Co.	5,004.11
Houston Engineering, Inc.	2,017.25
Tri County Coop Oil Assoc.	26,001.97
Twin Valley Tire Wheaton, Inc.	9,983.00
Unlimited AutoGlass LLC	2,795.00
Whaley Excavating	28,825.00
Ziegler, Inc.	7,363.96
American Solutions for Business	3,313.83
Cardmember Services (Elan)	9,210.97
Counties Providing Technology	5,285.36
Fleet Services	3,583.75

Gazette Publishing Co.	2,915.50
Government Management Group	3,350.00
Mark Hormann	2,000.00
West Central Regional Juvenile Ct.	16,098.00
Wilkin County	9,882.96

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less was 76, totaling \$29,645.46.

The Veterans Service Officer contract with Wilkin County was discussed. Russ Foster, the current VSO is retiring and will be done November 1, 2023. Zahl was in touch with Wilkin County requesting that Commissioner Nelson who sits on the Personnel Committee and myself be allowed to participate in interviewing the candidates. Wilkin agreed to the request but maintained they would have the final say in the hiring. The only addition that was requested by the Board was a 6 month notice if either County wants to get out of the contract early. It was a consensus to move forward with a 4-year contract for Veterans Services Officer contract with Wilkin County, Zahl will continue communications with Wilkin County on the contract specifics and have a contract for approval at the next meeting. Metz moved to approve the hiring of the law firm Ballard Sparr at \$495/hour to negotiate the Traverse Care Center and Prairievew Place contract with potential lessees. Olson was a second, discussion took place, the motion was approved unanimously. The Board agreed to hire Mike Jacobsen for his quote of \$500.00 to perform a building inspection on both Traverse Care Center and Prairievew Place upon a motion by Nelson and a second by Olson, discussion was held, and the motion passed 5-0. The Browns Valley Fire Department is asking for a one-time gambling permit to be held at Rosebud RV Park. Olson moved to approve the request and Nelson was the second, the motion passed unanimously. There were no general updates at today's meeting.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments at today's meeting.

**Commissioners Reports**

There were no commissioner reports at today's meeting.

Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 12:08 pm

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Kayla Schmidt, Chair