

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
June 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commission Chairman Mark Gail. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. This meeting is 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, Todd Johnson, and Mark Gail. Several members of the public are listening in through Zoom. The agenda was unanimously approved with the following addition, revised Preparedness Plan and Rainbow Rider Joint Powers Agreement, upon a motion by Monson and second by Leininger.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Maintenance Supervisor, appeared before Board with a Department update.

Upon a motion by T. Johnson and second by Leininger, it was approved unanimously to hire up to two additional trucks with belly dumps at \$100/hour for hauling gravel with county forces.

Gillespie started talking with BNSF Railroad about the crossing on CSAH20. The plan is to have them do a full-depth reconstruct of the crossing in 2021 ahead of our 2023 project on CSAH20. The current estimate for the counties portion is \$40,500 and to have us do the traffic control. We will most likely need to purchase an easement through their property as neither of us have one on file.

CSAH 15 project update; milling operations started on Thursday, June 11, 2020 and reclaiming and geotextile work started Monday, June 15, 2020.

A request for proposal for hydraulic analysis for the 3 bridges on CSAH 6 will be sent out soon. These 3 are on the bridge priority list and are existing timber bridges and will be concrete box culverts.

**Soil & Water Conservation District**

Sara Gronfeld, Soil and Water, appeared by Zoom to discuss Binsfeld's RV park expansion project Wetland Replacement Plan. The Board went over the Findings of Fact Report, the impact to the wetland area from the installation of a two culvert crossing and riprap bank stabilization are proposed at a replacement ratio of 4:1. Upon a motion by T. Johnson and second by Salberg there was unanimous approval of Binsfeld's Wetland Replacement Plan as presented and the finding of facts as were recommended.

**Zoning Administrator**

Ben Oleson, Zoning Administrator, appeared by Zoom to give the Planning Commission Recommendations. The first application is a request from The Overland Group on behalf of Dollar General and it is related to the rezoning of the property from Agricultural to Commercial-Industrial. Approvals required include an amendment of the official zoning map of Traverse

County. The Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment has recommended approval of the requested rezoning with no conditions of approval by a 4-1 vote. The second application is from the Overland Group on behalf of Dollar General related to the construction of a 9100 square foot Dollar General retail store in Browns Valley, MN. The Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment has recommended approval of the requested Conditional use permit with conditions by a vote of 4-1. Oleson told the Board that he received a letter from the City of Browns Valley that expresses their support for the project. MN DOT approved the proposed entrance to the property off of State Highway 28. There is also two letters of concern from city of Browns Valley residents. T. Johnson has done some research and has talked with some people and he thinks that Browns Valley already has everything that Dollar General can offer and it would be more of a value for Browns Valley to retain their existing business and not bring in a Dollar General. He would like the Board to table this and give the Board more time to look into this. Leininger doesn't feel comfortable voting on today, he would like more information. One positive is that they are open until 9:00 when other places in town are closed. Gail would like to talk to Wheaton's grocery store owner prior to making a decision to find out if it has impacted them having a Dollar General in Wheaton. Monson said he spoke to people in Browns Valley and at first they were against it but now they are for it. Leininger made a motion to table the decision until the next Board meeting second by Salberg and approved 4-1 with Monson opposed. County Attorney, Matt Franzese, informed the Board that to rezone there needs to be a 4/5<sup>th</sup> vote. Two representatives from Overland Group were on Zoom and voiced their opinion on competition and mentioned that the Dollar General stores bring in people from other towns and therefore bring business to the other local businesses in town.

#### **Auditor/Treasurer**

Kit Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer, appeared before the Board and gave a department update. August 11, 2020 is the Primary and his office is working on setting up training for the election. Nursing home facilities won't allow them in to conduct the election so workers can be trained instead. The new computer switch was installed in the office last week and it is too loud and will need to be removed. It will need to be relocated to a new spot. Motor Vehicle is functioning well with appointment only. The biggest question is when will they start testing here in Wheaton again and there isn't an answer to that yet.

#### **Veterans Services/Solid Waste/Safety**

Dustin Kindelberger, Veterans Services Officer/ Solid Waste Director/Safety Officer, appeared before the Board to give a department update.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has offered 2 grants available for Veterans that has been affected by COVID-19. We have been utilizing these grants but there is one veteran that is in need of help with their property taxes among all of their other bills. This particular Veteran is waiting on the grant money that would help pay for their taxes but it hasn't been approved yet. If he pays his taxes then he won't get the grant. Kindelberger said he is asking the Board to waive the late fee and penalties for this Veteran. Monson made a motion to waive the late fees for this Veteran, second by T. Johnson, with the following discussion. Leininger

said the COVID-19 has hurt everyone and if we do this for one where do we stop. The motion passed 4-1 with Leininger opposed.

The electronics pick-up is starting today with the city wide clean up. We will be formally open tomorrow for the pick-up.

### **Emergency Management**

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager, appeared by Zoom to give a COVID-19 update. There isn't much new with COVID, there has been less conference calls regarding COVID and the State has shifted to the civil unrest. Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) has extra funding of approximately \$4,000-\$6000. The West Central Initiative Resiliency Fund grant that we applied for to receive mist disinfectant spray guns has closed and we did not get picked. Siegel has a call in to find out if we could use the EMPG money for those. Siegel is still working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan, information is being sent in for that. The Executive Committee has revised the Preparedness Plan to add phases; currently we are in phase two. Phase three would be to open the doors at the Courthouse and Highway. Motor Vehicle and Social Services would remain by appointment only. The revised Preparedness Plan was approved unanimously upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Leininger it was approved unanimously to move to phase three on Monday, June 22, 2020.

### **County Coordinator**

A motion was made by Salberg to approve the June 2, 2020, Board minutes, second by T. Johnson and approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Leininger and second by Monson, the following bills were approved unanimously:

CARDMEMBER SERVICE	\$3,806.80
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$4,857.37
DAVID DROWN ASSOCIATES, INC.	\$17,500.00
FLEET SERVICES	\$3,254.96
GAZETTE PUBLISHING CO.	\$2,718.20
OFFICE PEEPS, INC.	\$5,922.05
OTTER TAIL POWER CO	\$2,355.08
S & P GLOBAL TATINGS	\$10,000.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY SOIL & WATER SERV	\$11,375.00
CHAMBERLAIN OIL COMPANY	\$2,537.05
KNIFE RIVER CORPORATION – NORTH CENTRAL	\$34,205.12
LARSON OIL, INC	\$9,202.05

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 64, amounting to \$29,744.31.

Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Leininger the 2020 annual salary adjustment for the Western Probation Services employees which was already budgeted for in 2020, was approved unanimously.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, informed the Board that in order for our courtroom to hold misdemeanor trials we need to be able to maintain a 6 foot distance between people in the courtroom. Sheriff, Trevor Wright, did a walk through with the Court Administrator and it was decided that we would need to replace our current chairs, which are bolted to the floor, with other chairs that are movable and minimize the amount of people able to sit in the courtroom. The Building Committee approved the purchase of 40 chairs for \$1,599.00. Jury trials will not be able to be held in our courtroom as there is not enough space for the number of jurors that are needed; alternate locations in Traverse County are being assessed at this time.

Upon a motion by T. Johnson and seconded by Monson the Rainbow Rider Joint Powers agreement was approved unanimously.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 10:50 a.m. by Chairman Gail. All were present except T. Johnson. County Attorney, Matt Franzese, informed the Board that Zoning Administrator Ben Oleson had sent a letter out extending the 60 day for the rezoning and conditional use permit for the Dollar General pursuant to statute, but wanted to make sure that the Board approved of his decision, and in the event his letter was not legally sufficient, another letter could be send extending the 60 days. Upon a motion by Leininger and seconded by Salberg, the extension was approved on a 4-0 vote.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Mark Gail, Board Chairman