

Traverses County Commission
Special Board Meeting
July 26, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Commission Chairman Todd Johnson. Other Commissioners present were Kayla Schmidt, Dave Salberg, Mark Gail, and Dwight Nelson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The purpose of this special meeting is to discuss options for our Veterans Service Officer/Solid Waste Manager and to meet with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to look at access development options at the County Park and to visit Halls Landing to review parcel that's for sale and current access.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, explained to the Board that we looked at our Veterans numbers and according to the Veterans Administration data Traverse has 248 veterans. Stevens and Pope County have been sharing their County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) since 2003 and according to the same data combined they have 1,323 veterans. Big Stone County has 389 and Wilkin County has 341. We do realize that they numbers may differ because each Veterans Office can service Veterans from other counties and other states. Zahl reached out to Big Stone and Wilkin County's to see if they would have any interest in sharing and both submitted proposal for sharing their CVSO. The first proposal was from Wilkin County, Russ Foster is their CVSO, they would share theirs equally 50/50, we would be billed for 50% of his salary, fringe benefits, ½ of his cell phone bill along with mileage from Wilkin County. He would be in Traverse County 2 days a week, Wilkin County 2 days a week and work from home 1 day a week. Our second proposal from Big Stone County, Ward Odom is their CVSO, they would share their CVSO 60/40, we would be billed for 40% of his salary, fringe benefits, and ½ his cell phone bill, they would not charge mileage. He would be in Traverse County 2 days a week and Big Stone 3 days a week. There was discussion regarding the time they would spend in each County and the consensus was that the Board would like to see 50% in Traverse instead of 40%. And going with either option would save Traverse County approximately \$50,000 a year. Nelson made a motion to go with Wilkin County's proposal, second by Gail followed by discussion. They would like to try this for 1 year with a stipulation that either party can back out if they don't feel it is working. The motion passed unanimously. Zahl explained that she spoke with Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager, and she has agreed to take over the Solid Waste Manager position. A new PAQ would need to be sent to Baker Tilly in order to get a new job description along with a salary grade for the position. Upon a motion by Salberg, second by Schmidt and approved unanimously to have the Solid Waste Manager and the Emergency Manager merged together.

Four employees from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) meet the Commissioners at the County Park. The explained that there is potential funding for parking and landing at the County Park. The County would need to put a plan into place and then apply for the funding. If the funding did go through, one important thing is that the parking lot could only be used for boaters. The Commissioners came to a general consensus to have Chad Gillespie do the plan design. The DNR mentioned that they would need a Joint Powers agreement with the County that we are moving forward with the plan design and will work with them for possible funding. Salberg made a motion to move forward with the Joint Powers agreement with a second from Nelson and approved unanimously. The Commissioners and the DNR then went to Hall's Landing to look at the area. It has come to their attention recently that the parking lot at the landing is privately owned. The County will have to decide whether to move forward with purchasing the property that is for sale next to the landing or not have a parking lot. The DNR gave the Commissioners some things to think about in regards to the property that is for sale. It was a general consensus to add Halls Landing to the next Board agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Todd Johnson, Chairman