

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman Mark Gail. Other Commissioners present were Kevin Leininger, Tom Monson, Dave Salberg, and Todd Johnson. 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, and Mark Gail. T. Johnson is appearing via Zoom. The agenda was unanimously approved upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson.

**Highway Department**

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

Leininger made a motion to pay the Recycling Center parking lot bill, in the amount of \$13,850.00, out of the building fund pending the approval of K. Johnson. Motion was seconded by Monson and approved unanimously.

Gillespie informed the Board that the new truck delivery is delayed until the second week in December.

Gail asked if the tractor window was fixed yet, and Koch said it has been fixed. Gillespie is still working with insurance to figure out if it is covered or not. Monson asked about the park mower. Gillespie will check with insurance and see where that status of that claim is at. Leininger asked about ditch cleaning. There was discussion about our permit and why the landowner that is cleaning the ditch needs permission from other landowners. Gillespie said that the permit requires the landowners to sign off in case another landowner needs to access the property to clean the ditch. Leininger doesn't think that the one cleaning the ditch always needs access to other landowner's property. Gillespie said that they can discuss changing the wording on the permit when the time comes to update it, and the Board asked Gillespie to start working on changing the permit.

**Traverse Care Center**

Dylan Hanson, Executive Director, appeared before the Board via Zoom with a quarterly update.

Hanson gave an update on the regulatory compliance and the resident and employee satisfaction surveys. The census at Prairieview Place is currently 18 out of 20 rented. Traverse Care Center occupancy has been around 87% – 91% occupancy, whereas the rest of the state is running 78% - 85% in other facilities. Due to COVID some skilled nursing facilities aren't taking new admissions. Hanson went over environmental updates. In September the concrete project in front of PVP was approved; they did a patch job until next spring when they can do the whole

section. TCC does have a dedicated COVID area and they are open to indoor visitation again with COVID precautions in place.

### **Zoning**

Ben Oleson, Zoning Administrator, appeared before the Board via Zoom.

The Board approved a Conditional Use Permit in May for Verizon to put up a cell phone tower just west of Wheaton on Highway 27. Oleson received a request from Verizon to extend the time frame to complete the project for up to 30 additional months. Oleson explained that Conditional Use Permits are usually valid for 1 year and if not acted upon they expire. Rick Adams, representing Verizon, appeared before the Board via Zoom and said that with the pandemic this year all projects have been pushed everything back. Oleson explained that the ordinance doesn't say that it expires after a year, but that is the practice and our application says that it expires after one year. Oleson wanted to bring it to the Board to find out if it was okay with this extension. T. Johnson has made a motion to extend the time frame, Monson seconded, after which the Board discussed the matter further: Leininger said if we allow them to then we will have to allow others. Monson said it should be handled on a case-by-case basis, and Gail agreed. Salberg is worried that it will deter other companies from coming out this way. Adams said that there shouldn't be any ramifications from this and he doesn't see any downfalls from extending the permit because the tower is needed so badly. T. Johnson said that COVID has made a lot of services backlogged, and it doesn't make sense to deny the extension and make them go through the same process again, and there is no downside to allowing the extension. The motion passed on a 3-2 vote, with Salberg and Leininger opposed.

Oleson informed the Board that Riverview LLP submitted an application to the Minnesota Department of natural Resources (DNR) for appropriating 153 million gallons per year of groundwater for a proposed dairy facility in Dolllymount Township in Traverse County. The DNR has a comment period that ends on December 3, 2020. Oleson wanted to get the information to the Board so there was time to look it over before the next meeting on December 1, 2020. The Planning Commission meets tomorrow and will give the Board their recommendation. Oleson did ask if the Board wants to make any comments during the DNR comment period or wait until the Environmental Assessment Worksheet process when you will have more information.

### **Auditor/Treasurer**

Kit Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer, appeared before the Board with a department update.

The office is still working on the election. Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. is the post-election review in which they will recount three randomly selected precincts for the Federal races. Thursday there will be a recount of the Wheaton Area Schools question. Truth in Taxation statements went out in the mail. And the tax settlement will be completed in the next couple of weeks. The Board asked K. Johnson if the recycling parking lot can be paid out of the building fund and he said it can be.

### County Coordinator

A motion was made by Monson to approve the November 3, 2020, Board minutes, with a second by Leininger and unanimous approval. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson, the following bills were approved unanimously:

ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA COUNTIES	\$4,900.00
BARTZ COLLISION & GLASS	\$4,943.98
CARDMEMBER SERVICE	\$4,121.98
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$4,857.37
DIRECT SUPPLY EQUIPMENT & FURNISHINGS	\$11,525.94
ELLINGSON PLUMBING, HTG & AC	\$10,725.00
FLEET SERVICES	\$3,291.74
GAZETTE PUBLISHING CO.	\$3,906.26
HORMANN/MARK	\$2,000.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ASS	\$12,500.00
WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL JUVENILE CTR	\$2,743.00
NELSON AUTO CENTER	\$3,786.07
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$6,067.39
WHALEY EXCAVATING, INC.	\$8,017.50
ZIEGLER, INC.	\$8,013.70

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 53, amounting to \$18,438.99.

The CARES Committee met and approved the following amounts; \$1,007.37 out of County Payroll; \$112.00 out of County Response/Recovery for COVID related charges; \$971.47 out of County Personal Protection Equipment; \$62,598.07 out of County Operational Enhancement; \$14,626.20 out of Business Relief for a total of \$79,315.19. These expenses were approved unanimously, to pay out of the CARES act funding, upon a motion by Salberg and seconded by Monson. Upon a motion by Salberg and seconded by Leininger the following agreements were approved unanimously; Gazette Publishing Inc. \$10,000.00; Crystal Frischer, Hairstylist \$3,000.00. There was a correction to the amount for County Operational Enhancement, it should be \$16,626.20, this was approved unanimously upon a motion by Salberg and seconded by Monson.

Upon a motion by Monson and seconded by Leininger the 2020 Market Study completed by Baker Tilly was accepted with implementation of option 2 as of January 1, 2021 and approved unanimously.

County Attorney Matt Franzese along with our Labor Law Attorney Justin Anderson appeared before the Board via Zoom. They discussed the complaint the Board received from AFSCME Council 65 regarding Franzese failure to wear a mask in county buildings. They went over the county's liability. Franzese proposed that he would work from home until at least 3:00 p.m. and then come into his office, with the door shut, and not leave until everyone else had left for the day at 4:30 p.m. The Board accepted this proposal, and if they receive additional complaints they will revisit the issue.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Mark Gail, Board Chairman