

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
December 17, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commission Chair Todd Johnson. Other commissioners present included Dave Salberg, Tom Monson, Mark Gail and Kevin Leininger. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Leininger, the agenda was approved unanimously with the following additions: approve AFSCME contract.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Maintenance Supervisor, appeared before the Board.

The following Board resolution was approved upon a motion by Monson and second by Leininger and approved unanimously:

BOARD RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: County Project No. SAP 078-605-007 have in all things been completed, and the County Board being fully advised in the premises.

NOW THEN BE IT RESOLVED: That we do hereby accept said completed project for and on behalf of the County of Traverse and authorize final payment as specified herein.

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION

STATE OF MINNESOTA, COUNTY OF TRAVERSE

I, Kit D. Johnson, County Auditor, within and for said County do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution on file in my office.

Dated at Wheaton, Minnesota. This 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

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County Auditor (Seal)

Gillespie informed the Board that they are still working with FEMA on the Spring Flood. The fall flood will be reimbursed by the State disaster declaration, 75% is covered by the state and 25% covered by local, no administrative costs are covered under the State program.

The Board discussed the Highway budget, and the new truck that was ordered. The decision was made to leave the budget as is and pay for the truck in 2020 as planned.

**Tax Forfeited Property Request**

Mike Klein appeared before the Board to ask the Boards approve to buy back his tax forfeited property in Dumont. K. Johnson said that he spoke with Dumont City and they do not recommend the repurchase. He can buy it back at the public sale but not for less than what is owed. Monson said that our policy in the past is that we don't allow people to repurchase before the public sale which will be held in the spring. The Board's consensus was to stay consistent and not allow the buy back.

### **Horizon Public Health**

Kelsey Peterson, Horizon Public Health, Chere Rikimoto, T-21 initiative, and Kayla Maas, Extension Educator, appeared before the Board to discuss the e-cigarette epidemic that is targeting our youth. Between 2017-2018 e-cigarette use increased for the first time in 17 years. They have been working hard across Minnesota on decreasing tobacco use in our youth. One of the issues is the way e-cigarette companies are targeting our youth.

Peterson explained that they are working as a community to try to conquer this problem, from talking with parents, the schools and clinics they are educating people about this epidemic. They are going to policy makers and asking to increase the tobacco age to 21. Across the nation there is 30% of Communities that have passed the tobacco 21 policy. 54 Minnesota cities and counties have raised the tobacco age to 21 including Pope and Stevens Counties.

There is so much nicotine in the pods that individuals become addicted very quickly and this is why there have been so many health issues and even deaths. T. Johnson feels that we should be part of this solution and to send a message to our youth that we care about them. The County can discuss passing an ordinance to change the tobacco age to 21. Leininger thinks that if an 18 year-old can go to war they should have the right to buy tobacco. Gail thinks that it should come from a national level not a local level. The consensus of the board to have County Attorney, Matt Franzese, draft an ordinance for the Board.

### **Soil and Water Conservation District**

Sara Gronfeld appeared before the Board. Gronfeld informed the Board that the \$125,000.00 Cover Crop Grant they applied for was funded. An additional local match was pledged to bring the total to \$137,500.00 for establishment and demonstration of cover crop practices in drinking water supply areas and on fields after corn silage is harvested.

Gronfeld discussed the Joint Powers Agreement between Traverse County and Traverse SWCD. There were a few minor changes, the budget summary was also updated to reflect the actual SSTS Upgrade Grant for 2020. The state agency changed its requirements for the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) grant match and the Local Water Management (LWM) levy. The matches are no longer required by the grant agreement, but the budget request remained the same and LWM Levy is allocated to local projects. Gronfeld mentioned the program administration expenses have exceeded grant funding in the past few years. The SWCD's base funding request of \$80,000 has not increased since 2008.

Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) continues to administer several programs for the County including the Wetland Conservation Act, the Feedlot Program, and the Local Water Planning program. The Planning and Zoning and the Shoreland activity was transferred to Ben Oleson from Hometown Planning last year. Gronfeld added the SWCD serves to return a lot of value back to the County; they work with development of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts for Traverse County landowners which in 2018 the value paid out was over \$3.1 million. The State has implemented the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) along with Reinvestment In Minnesota (RIM) and in 2019, Traverse County landowners received \$947,000 in RIM payments.

Leininger asked if they still needed the County contribution of \$80,000 each year. He stated when they moved to the new building the organization was looking to be more self-sufficient and at some point the county's contribution would go down. Monson asked about the status of the SWCD fund balance; Gronfeld didn't have the figures at hand but offered to discuss it to them later. Gronfeld explained that the SWCD Board did evaluate their financial situation and they are still in need of the County's contribution of \$80,000. T. Johnson remarked that the added value is a good deal, the allocation has remained stable at \$80,000 for 12 years. Salberg made a motion to approve the Joint Powers Agreement between Traverse County and Traverse SWCD for 2020, second by Leininger and approved unanimously.

### **Emergency Management**

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager, appeared before the Board. Siegel is looking for approval of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Currently in the 300 page document there are County employee's names, Siegel will be changing them to positions, this will make it less daunting to update if changes are made. Siegel will also be putting the names of the State Statues in the document as well. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson the Emergency Operations Plan was approved unanimously.

Saturday Siegel took part along with local EMS, Law Enforcement, Fireman and First Responders, in an active threat training in Herman. It was funded by a Homeland Security grant for Pope, Grant, Stevens and Traverse.

### **Auditor/Treasurer**

Kit Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer gave a department update. The tax settlement was paid out to the different entities. Supplies have been ordered for the March 3 election, absentee and mail ballots can be mailed out on January 16, 2020.

Traverse County received a \$50,000 dividend from Counties Providing Technology (CPT), Salberg sits on the Joint Powers Board and said that there is no guarantee for dividends in future years.

The levy for 2020 is currently \$5,826,141.21 which is a 3.8% increase over 2019. Our budget for 2020 is \$14,182,544.00. Our fund balance is still below what our County policy says we should be at and there is \$120,000 being put into reserves for 2020. Leininger made a motion to set the levy at \$5,826,141.21, a 3.8% increase over 2019, second by Salberg, followed by discussion. Monson would like to increase the levy and put extra into reserves to get it up to what our policy says. With no other discussion the motion passed 4-1 with Monson opposed.

### **County Coordinator**

A motion was made by Salberg to approve the December 3, 2019, Board minutes, second by Leininger, the minutes were approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Leininger and second by Gail, the following bills were approved unanimously:

AMERICAN SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS	\$2,551.33
BRANDON COMMUNICATIONS	\$11,421.00
CARDMEMBER SERVICE	\$4,324.11

IDENTISYS INC.	\$12,275.21
INFORMATION SYSTEMS CORP	\$2,318.00
MEND CORRECTIONAL CARE, PLLC	\$2,532.00
OTTER TAIL POWER CO	\$3,388.27
RAINBOW RIDER	\$2,125.00
REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNE	\$18,444.99
TRAVERSE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPT	\$3,720.17
TRAVERSE COUNTY SOIL & WATER SERV	\$47,716.00
WELLS FARGO CORPORATE TRUST SERVICES	\$75,986.25
WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL JUVENILE CT	\$2,715.00
SAG'S HARDWARE HANK, INC.	\$3,303.67
TRAVERSE COUNTY AUDITOR-TREASURER	\$5,703.36
TRI COUNTY COOP	\$7,229.80

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 72, amounting to \$35,529.62.

Upon a motion by Gail and second by Monson the 2020-2021 Highway union contract was approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Gail the Western Probation Services Joint Powers Agreement was approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Leininger the West Central Regional Juvenile Center Annual Purchase Agreement was approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Monson, second by Gail and unanimously approved, John Nerenz was appointed to the Traverse County HRA Board for District 3 with term expiring October 4, 2024.

Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson the AFSCME contract with the outlined changes and the ability for the Chairman to sign when the final contract is completed was approved unanimously.

T. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Todd Johnson, Board Chairman