



## Administrator/Controller Report September 2013

### Strategic Goals

1. Maintain financial strength and stability
2. Strengthen and expand the County's use of technology
3. Address infrastructure needs
4. Continue community engagement and access to information
5. Ensure that County is viewed as a fair and equitable employer
6. Expand the capabilities of the Board of Commissioners
7. Advance the health and quality of life of the region
8. Protect and preserve County's water resources, forests, natural areas and scenic beauty

### Boardman River Dams (8)

- Finalized the agreement between the County and the Road Commission to allow for the design and construction of the road and bridge over the Boardman River on Cass Road through the Implementation Team.
- Worked with the city and Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) to allow the CRA to administer funds for the Implementation Team, and finalized an agreement with CRA to be the fiduciary for the county's funds for the Boardman River Dams Project.
- Working with Deputy Civil Counsel and the Road Commission on the agreement with URS for the design and engineering for the Boardman and Sabin Dam removal, river restoration, and the Cass Road Bridge replacement.
- Continued to work with MMRMA, assigned counsel, and Deputy Civil Counsel on the Boardman Dam litigation. Also working with the city's counsel on the Brown Bridge litigation.

### Administration Office (1-8)

- **Purchasing:** We are joining the Michigan Inter-Governmental Trade Network (MITN), which will fully automate the process for sending and receiving bids and quotes from vendors. We are also reviewing the county's purchasing policy to reflect this change and have asked county offices to provide their suggestions for improving the policy.
- **Web Site Changes:** A "Make a Payment" page has been created with links to all departments who accept online payments. A link has been created on the home page. The "Contact Us" page has been revamped to include information and links to each of the departments, their locations, and contact information. An article outlining the committee's progress since formation last fall was placed in the August 16 issue of the County Communicator.

## Central Dispatch (8)

### ➤ **Northwest Michigan PSAP Collaboration (NMPC)**

The group of Dispatch Directors met on August 20 in Bellaire and had a very productive day. MCOG representatives, Elaine Wood and Jan Kellogg, attended and expressed a lot of interest in helping with this group. We are looking at the Upper Peninsula group's model of recently forming an authority while maintaining individual 911 centers. For more information on the U.P. group, see:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/UP911\\_Virtual\\_Consolidation - Johnson 417788 7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/UP911_Virtual_Consolidation_-_Johnson_417788_7.pdf)

The NMPC participants are obtaining fiber maps, current equipment status, lists of needed equipment, and other information to bring back for the next meeting. TCAPS has also been invited to attend, and they will have two representatives there. (3,4)

### ➤ **911 Surcharge Lawsuit**

We are recommending that the county settle with the MPSC for an \$.80 surcharge, which is far below what is necessary to run 911 operations, but it appears to be the best we can hope to get at this time. (1)

## Commission on Aging (7)

### ➤ **Fund Balance Policy**

The Commission on Aging Board approved a draft Fund Balance Policy at their August 6, 2013 board meeting. The policy states that In-Home Services will have a target fund balance of \$1,200,000 but not to exceed six months expenditures, and the Senior Center Network will have a target fund balance of \$250,000 but not to exceed one year expenditures. (1)

### ➤ **Senior Center Renovation**

Lori Wells continues to work with the City of Traverse City to identify an architect who will prepare drawings for a renovated Senior Center in Traverse City. (7)

### ➤ **Board iPads**

All GTCOA board members received iPads in August. A training session was provided when the iPads were distributed. The Board will go paperless in November, allowing staff to work out any bugs and for two months of training.(2)

### ➤ **Board Member Resignation**

Long time board member, Shawn Burt, resigned from the GTCOA Board effective December 31, 2013. Shawn served on the Board for 10 years as the Pavilions representative.

## Facilities (3)

### ➤ **Historic Courthouse** staff received good news from Facilities Director Danny Brown on Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>:

*Pursuant to employee concerns, MIOSHA conducted an indoor air quality test on July 31. The test included screening samples for total particulates and heavy metals, organic solvents, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide*

*(vehicle exhaust), nitrogen dioxide (vehicle exhaust gas), and carbon dioxide (fresh air indicator). Testing also included a walk thru review, both inside and outside, to identify any potential problems that may exist.*

*The MIOSHA testing confirmed that there is no mold growth or other issues located in the office work environments.*

*In addition, Servo-Pro completed a certified mold analysis that included indoor and outdoor air quality. Again, the tests confirmed that a minimal level of spores - related to common seasonal allergies - were found both indoor and outdoors, with outside levels significantly higher.*

*All indoor findings were either minimal or not detected. The minimal finds were again based on seasonal spores rather than black mold. The test results clearly indicate that the Historical Courthouse air quality is within acceptable levels.*

- **Civic Center Pool:** The annual maintenance is complete. The pool was shut down in early August to be drained and cleaned. In addition, all of the lockers and locker rooms received some extra TLC, offices were painted, carpet cleaned, and workstation layouts reconfigured.
- **Howe Arena:** Staff has prepared Howe Arena for the 2013/2014 skating season.
- **Veteran's Affairs:** Security enhancements are nearly complete in the main office area. This project includes installation of a counter-to-ceiling receptionist window and replacing the half-doors with full size.
- **Jail:** Installation of the additional card reader and automated locking system for after-hour entry into the Jail lobby is complete.
- **Health Services Building:** George the Turkey has moved farther into the woods.

## **Health Department & Emergency Management (7)**

- **Environmental Health & Animal Control Division**
  - A joint progress meeting between the Grand Traverse County Health Department and Cherryland Humane Society representatives was held on Wednesday, August 21 to discuss the progress regarding the Animal Shelter Contract. The meeting was held to discuss any issues that may have come up over the past 2 ½ months which might need addressing. Several minor concerns and suggestions for improvements were made with no major items of concern. Both agencies agreed that the implementation of the agreement has gone quite smoothly with minimal problems. Another meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2014.
- **Emergency Management & Preparedness Division**
  - The National Weather Service Storm Ready certification for Grand Traverse County is in progress. We will be the fourth county in northern Michigan and the largest to receive this certification. This designation will allow all county residents to receive a discount on flood insurance, among

other benefits. This certification program will help us be more prepared and enhance our ability to recover quickly from severe weather. More info about the program can be found at <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/>

- Research into a county-wide Emergency Reverse Notification system continues. This system would quickly and easily allow notifications such as severe weather, missing children, police activities, criminal suspect descriptions, evacuations, etc. to be made at the simple click of a few computer keys. A presentation from Code Red was given in August to the Local Emergency Planning Committee.
- WebEOC classes were held August 6 and another 39 EOC personnel were trained. Grand Traverse County now has a total of 58 people trained that would serve in the EOC during an emergency event.
- The “Readiness: Training Identification and Preparedness Planning” course will be conducted in Grand Traverse County on September 16 and 17. This course will bring our public safety and local officials together to identify our strengths and weaknesses and help us better design a multiple-year training plan that will specifically target where we need to improve. Additionally, our Emergency Action Guidelines will be revamped accordingly. We have 30 people registered for Grand Traverse County representing 17 different disciplines.

➤ **Community Health Division**

- Communicable Disease Program - As is typical for this time of year, we have observed an increase in the number of animal bites and bat exposures in the area. Public health nurses follow-up on each potential rabies exposure, make recommendations for prophylaxis as appropriate and send in any specimens for rabies testing to the State lab. Staff is also busy responding to a small cluster of pertussis cases (whooping cough) and working hard to prevent further spread of the disease in the community. (4)
- Maternal and Child Health Programs - Jodi Kelly, the new Director of the maternal and child health programs, started working on August 1. She has been busy orienting to the many programs she will oversee. The immunization program is busy with back to school immunization, planning and preparing for its annual flu shot clinics and moving towards implementation of the electronic health record. Vision and hearing staff is also busy with back to school and Head Start screenings. The WIC program had its mid-year site review and received high commendations from the State.

**Human Resources (5)**

- We have processed 83 job requisitions so far this year, compared to 78 for the entire year last year.
- Negotiation discussions have begun for AFSCME, Teamsters General and Teamsters Command for non-economic issues. We will be scheduling a special meeting of the Board of Commissioners to discuss, in closed session, economic issues for negotiations.

- HR Director Jen Seman was invited to sit on the Chamber's Health Committee. The purpose of the Health Care Committee is to identify and articulate the local business issues related to health care, to establish appropriate policy guidelines for the Chamber to address those issues, and to specifically seek local solutions to the issue of uninsured and underinsured workers in the five-county region.
- Site-specific information regarding each building is being updated and compiled to update the Fire and Emergency Plan this month. This gives contacts for emergencies and details on each area of emergency for fire, weather, and workplace threats.
- Paperless paystub emails are being entered into the payroll system for all employees who receive payroll checks that are direct deposited. This includes all committee and boards as well. (2)
- ❖ Thank you Wellness Team and Arlene Grockau for another great Wellness Expo! The food was delicious and the booths were educational and fun. The work the team puts into it each year is truly appreciated. Many positive comments have been received.
- ❖ Thank you to the "anonymous employee" who submitted the paperless paystubs suggestion to the ERSA team and to the following individuals who made it a reality; Don Sheehan (IT), Mike Reed (IT), Cindy Green (Finance), Dean Bott (Finance) and Jen Seman (HR Director). We begin saving on labor and materials on September 27. (1)

### **MSU Extension (7)**

- Emily Pochubay has been named the MSU Extension Fruit Production Educator in Northwest Michigan, effective September 1, 2013. Pochubay will provide leadership and focus for fruit crop production management, developing and conducting research and educational training programs to address the priority needs of the Michigan fruit industry. She will be based at the MSU Northwest Michigan Horticulture Research Center in Leelanau County. Pochubay obtained her bachelor's and master's degrees in Entomology from Michigan State University, and has recently worked as a laboratory technician in the Organic Pest Management Lab at MSU. (7)
- Matthew Bertrand has been named the MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Program Instructor in Northwest Michigan, effective September 9, 2013. Bertrand will be based at the Leelanau County MSU Extension office, focusing on consumer/home owner horticulture and gardening. He will also provide leadership for the Master Gardener program and work with gardening clubs/groups in the nine county area. Bertrand has recently worked as an Invasive Species Specialist for the Grand Traverse Conservation District and is the Vice President of the Master Gardener Association of Northwest Michigan. (7)

### **Planning/Brownfields/Econ Development/Housing (1,3,4,7,8)**

- Development of a Bayshore Corridor Strategy will commence on September 25 with a meeting of planning commissioners from the communities of Acme, East Bay, Traverse City and Elmwood. The purpose of this first meeting is to identify the top community values for the corridor area and the top planning issues facing the communities along the corridor. Information about the Strategy will be posted here: [www.masterplan.grandtraverse.org/bayshore.asp](http://www.masterplan.grandtraverse.org/bayshore.asp) (4)
- AKT Peerless, consultant to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA), presented its preliminary evaluation results for the Garland Street Warehouse District within the Traverse City Place Brownfield plan on August 28. The report indicates the extent of contamination in the area and its impact on future development and the ecology. The BRA was relieved to know that the contamination was concentrated in the Hotel Indigo area and had not reached the bay, and is preparing next steps for additional remediation efforts in this area. (8)
- The Next Michigan Development Corporation (NMDC) is working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to finalize potential locations of Next Michigan Renaissance Zones as an economic incentive. The NMDC is also starting efforts to apply the local development financing authority designation to improve roads and other infrastructure to attract and support expansion of private business investments. (3,7)

### **Public Works (3,8)**

- During the months of July and August, much of the time was spent preparing budgets for each of the 11 separate entities that we provide service to and track expenditures for. These budgets are then presented to the township boards, reviewed, and used in preparation of the township sewer and water budgets. Most of the budget preparation is extrapolation of costs from previous years unless there are specific improvements planned. There were no big surprises in the projected budgets other than electrical costs going up about eight percent. The largest anticipated costs are for new water meter change-outs in the townships over the next few years. Sewer budgets held the line, or decreased, for the coming year.
- The Septage Treatment Plant will have sufficient revenues to be able to meet expenses and bond obligations as long as flows remain comparable with the past years' flows. (1)
- Acme Township is in the planning stages for a canoe/kayak launch on the Bay at the intersection of Bunker Hill Road and US-31. There is a sewer lift station at this site that the DPW maintains. We reviewed the proposed plans and provided comment on how the proposed layout of the site would impact our ability to access the station for servicing the pumps in this station.

**Resource Recovery (8)**

- Interviews with four candidates for the Resource Recovery Manager were conducted in August, and the four-person panel selected Susan Shipman to head the department. Susan has a degree in Biology/Environmental Studies from the University of Victoria, British Columbia and was most recently the Conservation Director for the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands while serving as the Parks Commissioner in Peninsula Township. Her expected start date is October 7.
- The fall Household Hazardous Waste & Pesticide Collection (HHW) will be held on Saturday, Sept. 28th from 9:00 – 2:00 p.m. at the GTC Road Commission building located at 1471 E. M-113 in Kingsley. An appointment is required and can be made beginning Monday September 16.
- The Aug. 15 HHW may have been the largest collection ever with 224 appointments.
- Landfill Surcharge information:

<b>Revenue History</b>	\$9.00/ton <u>2007</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$9.00/ton <u>2008</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$7.50/ton <u>2009</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$7.50/ton <u>2010</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$4.45/ton <u>2011</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$4.45/ton <u>2012</u> <u>Actual</u>	\$2.00/ton <u>2013</u> <u>Budget</u>
Landfill Surcharge	\$736,472	\$688,917	\$523,434	\$505,977	\$377,667	\$308,312	\$124,000

2013 actual landfill surcharge collected as of August, 2013-----\$98,870.63

**Veterans Affairs (7)**

- The USDVA has enlisted the help of states and counties in assisting them in addressing the backlog of claims and waiting times for decisions that has existed over the last five years.

In response to public pressure, the VA launched sweeping new initiatives in March 2013 which to date, reports a reduction in the backlog from 630,000 to 520,000. While the number looks impressive, it is noted that all of these claims represent only those claims that already were in the queue for 24 months or more.

At the local level, where 80% of VA claims originate, our county offices have had to totally revamp our process to integrate the VA's initiatives into our daily operation. The training, security, technology and credentialing requirements have been challenging and our staff has earned high marks for meeting the demands.

The continuation of unreasonable wait times and backlogs affects veterans of all eras and poses a financial and emotional roadblock to transitioning from military to civilian life. It also unnecessarily strains all of the state and local resources that have to be employed to meet the needs the VA is responsible for ensuring. In Michigan, the counties continue to need more support and resources from the state. The establishment of the State Veterans Agency in March 2013 is a step in the right direction and hopefully will begin to produce results as it gets up and running.