

Administrator/Controller Report
November, 2012

Administration

- Summarized and distributed results of the Employee Survey to all employees. Department-specific results were sent to Departments on November 5th along with instructions for completing internal strategic plans/work plans for 2013-2015. These are due by the end of the year.
- Met with the Tribal Chairman, Al Pedwaydon, regarding issues surrounding the closure of the Horses for Heroes program on Silver Pines Road operated by the Charity Hill Ranch. As a result, the county is returning \$17,000 in 2% funding to the GT Band and did not enter into an agreement with Charity Hill Ranch.
- ❖ Met with Bob K. from the Tribe last week, and we discussed the possibility of an informal meeting of the Tribal Council and the new Board early next year.
- ❖ Met with the Sheriff and the Health Department on Animal Control issues. We discussed several issues, and the Sheriff and the Animal Control officers will be working out several details. I have drafted a memo summarizing the issues discussed at the meeting and outlining next steps. I also will be meeting with the Humane Society to discuss the proposed agreement before the end of the month.
- ❖ Sent a letter to all county offices inviting them to participate in a Website committee that will be charged with reviewing county websites each month and providing feedback on ways to improve the content. This group will meet for one hour each month to review departmental websites and suggest improvements. Each departmental website will be reviewed twice in a two-month period. Sarah Adams in my office has offered to facilitate this group and will be given additional administrative responsibilities for the county's home page and will work closely with the IT staff to provide technical support to the group. The first meeting is scheduled for November 28th at 9 am in the Training Room.
- We have had an ongoing issue with building security at the governmental center and have determined that we need to begin locking down the building in the evenings. We are considering having DK security at the entrance on Wednesday evenings for our Board meetings and on the third Thursday of the month for Parks and Recreation Commission meetings. We are working out the details with the city for its night meetings, and to have 911 allow access to the building at other times. The cost of security for our meetings would be approximately \$3,500/year.

Human Resources

- Currently recruiting for 13 vacant county positions.
- Fall supervisor training will be held on Friday, November 30th from 8 a.m. to Noon at TC Central High School. This will be our second supervisor training that will be held jointly by the County, the City, and TCAPS.
- ❖ Thank you to Cheri Tuller and Joanne Tuck for assisting with the Health Department's flu shot clinic. Both employees graciously assisted the Health Department during the Clinic to make sure everyone got through the line effectively and efficiently. Approximately 130 employees received a flu shot at the annual Shot clinic that was held for all county employees on October 2nd at the Governmental Center.

Parks & Recreation

- The Parks Department has received a \$10,000 NWMCOG Community Growth Grant for further development of the Parks and Recreation Network Hub Website and to develop the Up North Experience App. Tree Sturman worked with our department to write the grant. \$8,500 will go towards developing the Up North Experience App and \$1,500 will go towards further development of the Hub Website. This will allow the site to be optimized for mobile phones. LIAA has offered a match to the \$1,500 portion of the grant to even further develop the site. This grant is worth a total of \$11,500, leveraged from a \$250 contribution directly from GT Parks & Recreation.

GIS

- As a temporary cost-saving measure, the GIS department performed the task of delinquent property tax notification, which will require them to visit all subject parcels, and document each notification. They also agreed to help with some additional equalization duties between now and the end of the year. This is a great example of how Grand Traverse County employees are willing to go the extra mile to cooperate to achieve the greater good.

Facilities

- **New Health Service Building:** The Health Department staff is finishing its move into the new building on LaFranier. Routine services that were provided at the Garfield location (Immunizations, Family Planning, WIC, Communicable Disease) shut down on Tuesday, Nov. 13, and full services will be restored to all programs by Monday, Nov. 19.
- **Governmental Center – County Finance Office:** The front counter was removed to improve mobility for both the employees and patrons.

- **Jail:** Five garage door openers were installed and will be operated by the Jail control center.
- **Hall of Justice:** The hot water heater continues to need resetting. Staff is troubleshooting and notes that the circuit board may need to be replaced.
- **Civic Center Pool:** The pool pump failed today. A new pump will be installed on Wednesday, October 24. {\$1,300 replacement cost}
- **Facilities** – We are currently looking into some possibilities regarding the need for after-hours security at the Governmental Center for the 911 Center and general building security.

Central Dispatch

- Eleven candidates were interviewed for dispatch, and the interview panel recommended an unprecedented SIX people for job offers. Back-ground investigations are being done on the top four, and the remaining two will be placed on a hiring list.
- ❖ Newly promoted Supervisor Leah Hornacek is extremely interested in improving 911 Public Education and took the initiative to apply for some funding. She identified two grants that included public education, and thanks to her efforts, we were awarded \$500 from Walmart. These funds will assist us in purchasing items to help our community learn more about 911. Thanks Leah!
- Central Dispatch hosted four training classes for dispatch centers, including 40-Hour Beginning Dispatch Course, Emergency Mental Health Dispatching, Domestic Violence Management, Survive & Thrive Alumni Refresher Course. Although it isn't always possible, bringing training in locally has several advantages:
 - It allows more of our personnel to attend
 - Eliminates travel costs
 - Makes scheduling to cover the 911 Center more manageable
 - Provides us an opportunity to show others our 911 Center
 - Brings people to our community
- The Facebook page proved to be extremely helpful during the Brown Bridge Dam incident. We were able to post real-time critical information that helped people know who needed to evacuate, which roads were closed and when they opened, links to Health Department advisories, the Flood Damage Hotline phone number, and other pertinent information. Over the course of that incident, over 8,000 people viewed our posts. We received many comments thanking us for keeping people updated.

- There were also two serious accidents which resulted in road closures. Both times, the information was posted on our Facebook page and, in both incidents, well over 1,000 people were informed and could avoid that area, and also knew when the roadway was open for normal traffic.

Commission on Aging

- ❖ **Memory Walk** - Commission on Aging staff members participated in the Alzheimer's Walk Saturday October 6, 2012, raising \$369 to support the Alzheimer's Association.
- **Senior Center Building Update** - The Senior Center building steering committee has been meeting on a regular basis, investigating various options for a new building. Many different options have been researched, including the past Health Department building and remodeling the current Senior Center building on East Front Street. Participants of a feasibility study conducted in 2011 were re-interviewed and the responses will be included with the final report. A final recommendation from the committee will be forthcoming.
- **Staff Anniversary** - Lori Wells will be celebrating her 20 year anniversary as Director of the Senior Center November 9, 2012. She will be recognized at the December GTCOA board meeting.
- **Senior Corner** - For many years, Mike Sheehan developed and maintained a website on the Traverse Area District Library website called the Senior Corner. The Senior Corner was a well-respected and highly-used website for many years. Sadly, with the reorganization of TADL, the Senior Corner was removed, but thanks to GTCOA board members who made the suggestion, and to staff who worked with Mike Sheehan, the Senior Corner is now housed on the Commission on Aging website. Both IT (Don Sheehan, no relation) and our own Cyndie Forster worked to make this happen. We are excited to have formed this partnership and thank Mike Sheehan for his willingness to work with us.

Grand Traverse County Health Department

- **Boardman River Dam Breach/Flooding** - Emergency operations, emergency preparedness, environmental health and health department administrative staff responded to Boardman River Dam Breach event. The emergency operations director worked with the county board chairman to declare a local state of emergency to assist with the mandatory evacuation of houses on the river and rerouting of traffic in the affected areas. Once the actual flooding had subsided, the emergency operations director established a hotline for affected citizens and has continued to respond to and assist

citizens with insurance claims, returning to their homes safely (if possible) and referring them to other services as needed. The environmental health and administrative staff responded with pertinent flood safety media messages and guidance in all media forms (TV, Radio, website and newspaper).

- **Fungal Meningitis Outbreak** - Health Department staff has been instrumental in coordinating the community response to the fungal meningitis outbreak. The health officer, nursing administrator and many nurses have been involved with the following activities: daily meetings with affected clinics, medical and hospital staff, assisting with hotline phone calls and questions, assisting with patient notification calls for those at risk who received recalled product shots/medication, press releases, interviews and health alerts to area providers and tracking of local cases. Additionally, the Health Department houses a regional epidemiologist from the Michigan Department of Community Health, and this position has been involved in coordinating the regional response to this on-going effort.
- **New Building** - GTCHD staff are planning and coordinating for move in November to ensure minimal interruption of essential public health services. Steady progress has been made on packing for the move into the new building on November 13. The move will be an exercise in our continuity of operations planning and will be treated as an actual event with documentation. The event will start on November 1 with the move of our first piece of critical functions, one vaccine refrigerator. This will involve moving, installing and testing both the phone notification system if the refrigerator temperature falls out of range and the automatic generator kick-in if power is lost. The exercise will commence once all operations are back up and fully operational, which is estimated for November 16. See Danny Brown's report for construction progress specifics.
- **Medicaid Reimbursement** - The State of Michigan has issued a proposed policy draft indicating that local health departments will be able to submit a request for Full Cost Reimbursement for Medicaid Health Plan Encounters retroactive to January 1, 2011. This will be a very positive change in funding in particular for our Family Planning, Maternal Infant Health and Adolescent Health Programs. It is estimated that this change would provide additional funding from the 2011 cost report year in excess of \$100,000.
- **Seasonal Flu** - Health Department continues to administer flu vaccine to individuals via our community flu clinics and scheduled immunization clinics. We assess adults for all immunizations needed including Pneumovax, Tdap and others. Health Department clinics target the at-risk populations not likely to access vaccine from other resources including: GTI Industries and the Community Meals (homeless population); Parents, siblings and care givers of

children less than six months of age; Pregnant Women; and School age children.

Veterans Affairs

- Veterans and their families in Michigan continue to receive the short end of the stick when compared to other States. 2010 VA performance figures for MI tell the same tale they have told over the past decade. These dismal outcomes are the direct result of continued inaction by our State Legislature and Governors to change the way Michigan conducts business with the Veterans Administration; providing no support for the counties and resulting in inequitable distribution of funding for Michigan's veterans.

Michigan has lowest national usage of G.I. Bill education benefits. Although Michigan veterans received \$1,172,360,000 in annual benefits, on a per capita basis, Michigan is at the bottom of the list:

<u>Average National VA Per Capita Expenditure:</u>	\$4,894
<u>Median Expenditure:</u>	4,703
<u>Range of Expenditure:</u>	3,409 - \$9,827
<u>Expenditures in Michigan:</u>	3,409
<u>Total MI Per Capita Ranking:</u>	53 out of 53 (includes Puerto Rico, Guam, & D.C.)
<u>Returning veteran unemployment rate:</u>	28% 1 out of 53

Finance

- We have just hired a new Deputy Finance Director. Her name is Cheryl Wolf, and she has given notice at the TBAISD and will start work after Thanksgiving.

Information Technology

- Electronic Ticketing for the Sheriff and City Police. The Sheriff is fully operational with the exception of a couple of computers. The City has five computers installed. The City wanted the County to fully test the system before proceeding with additional computers. IT will follow up with the City to see if the remaining computers can be set up.

- The replacement of the core network switch at the Governmental Center has been scheduled for November 19th.
- IT will be working with County Administration and departments to review the County web site. Some of the goals will be to provide current and relevant content, improve the appearance, and set standards for content for all departments.
- Health Department move – November 9 – 15.

Planning

- Staff is preparing application for a \$1,000,000 blight elimination grant from the State of Michigan Land Bank Authority. The grant would be used to demolish the farmhouse at Maple Bay Park, buildings located in the Acme Township shoreline project and buildings at the Historic Barns at the Grand Traverse Commons site in Garfield Township.
- Our Brownfield Redevelopment Authority has issued notices to the potentially liable parties for the four-corner site of Front and Division in the City of Traverse City requesting their cooperation in the remediation of the contamination. Staff will be presenting a project update to the Board of Commissioners at an upcoming meeting.
- Staff continues to meet with adjacent county planning commissions for input into the new County Master Plan. So far, staff has met with Antrim County with additional meetings scheduled with Leelanau, Wexford, Kalkaska and Benzie Counties.

Resource Recovery

- Curbside recycling is up 1,300 tons through the 3rd quarter of 2012 compared to the same time period in 2011.
- American Waste has started distributing 96 gallon recycle carts to residents. According to American Waste more than 100 carts have been delivered to residents in the City of Traverse City.
- Four Household Hazardous Waste events were held during 2013. 603 participants dropped off 48,142 pounds of material at a cost of \$40,798. Final cost after reimbursements was \$29,100. Of the 603 participants, 91% or 546 were from households and 9% or 57 were from businesses.

Legislative Report

- I am pleased to report that the Governor signed SB 1129 into law as PA 329 of 2012, which allows a municipality with at least a AA credit rating (like us) to issue a municipal bond to pay all or a part of the costs of its unfunded pension liability for the partial or complete cessation of accruals to a defined benefit plan or to pay for the liability for a closed defined benefit plan.

In order to do this, we would need to have a comprehensive financial plan prepared that includes an analysis of our current and future obligations for the retirement plan, evidence that the bond amount will be sufficient to eliminate the unfunded pension liability, a debt service amortization schedule, and a certification by the one preparing the plan that it is complete and accurate.

I would like to know whether the Board is interested in issuing bonds to eliminate our unfunded liability for the closed defined benefit units. Specifically, I would seek out quotes and qualifications from financial advisors to assist us in determining the feasibility of using this option to amortize our accrued liability in the closed defined benefit plan, and bring back a recommendation for moving forward at a later date.

- I am not pleased to report that HB 5804, which you opposed last month, and would allow the state to take over indigent defense and bill the county if it deems the county is inadequately funding the service, was approved 71-36 by the House of Representatives last week, with most of the no votes coming from the Republican caucus.

The bill would create the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission, which would become an autonomous entity in the judicial branch. It would establish minimum standards for local delivery of trial counsel to those in need. The Supreme Court has final say over the standards the commission sets. The commission would consist of 14 members, including the chief justice of the Supreme Court and 13 members appointed by the governor including some recommended by the speaker of the House and the Senate majority leader, as well as some representing various legal and local government interests.

The commission would be able to hire an executive director and staff and require that local governments comply with its standards.

A spending floor would be established that would be the statewide average as determined by the commission and approved by the Supreme Court. An additional provision would allow counties the ability to petition the commission to inspect their program and, if they can prove they meet the standards while spending below the state average, they can continue to do so.

The good news is every Republican legislator in the area voted against HB 5804 (Indigent Defense bill), and for that we thank them.