






Administrator's Update 4/25/08

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 **County Surveyor** At the Ways & Means meeting of the County Board of Commissioners last week, a public hearing was held to consider whether the County Surveyor position should remain elected. The primary function of the County Surveyor is to keep the public survey records of the County. An added responsibility, which has become the main emphasis of the position, is to run the remonumentation program. The remonumentation program started out as a 20-year program, which will extend beyond that, by which Register of Deeds monies are captured for the purposes of putting new monuments at every legal survey corner in the County. The County Surveyor oversees that program and, in our case, actually works on re-establishing corners. There was little in the way of public testimony presented at the public hearing. The County Board will take the issue up for final decision at its County Board meeting on April 30. If the County Board chooses to eliminate this elected surveyor's position, it must do so by Board resolution before May 15 in the last year of the elected office.


 **Meeting with Congressman Camp** Last week, several County Commissioners and staff met with Congressman Camp here in Traverse City to discuss a number of issues related to county government. The County Board reiterated the requests made for appropriations that were presented to the Congressman's office in March of this year in Washington, D.C., including several improvements at the airport such as a new control tower and west access road. In addition, we talked to the Congressman about the Boardman River Dams project and the Grand Vision project. Fred Keeslar, Health Director, and Greg Paffhouse, area Mental Health Director, were also present to speak to the Congressman about cuts in Medicaid programs and their impacts. Mary Gillis, Road Commission Manager, spoke about the fact that Michigan is a donor state when it comes to transportation dollars. In other words, more money is generated from federal gas tax in Michigan than is allocated back to Michigan. We are receiving less than 95% of the funds collected from tax in our state. The Congressman pledged to do what he could to support our efforts.

 **Dams** Recently, we experienced a significant increase in the dam level as a result of spring run off and recent rains. The problem has been magnified by the fact that, because of the area that the current lower water level covers, fluctuations - or bringing additional water into the basin - causes it to rise much more quickly than several years ago when the water level was 14 feet higher. It's not unusual now for us to see fluctuations and water levels up to 6 feet in a matter of 2 or 3 days. We are looking at alternatives to move more water through the Boardman and the Cass Street Dam including opening a second penstock, which currently houses turbine equipment. We hope to have a solution to this problem soon to try to reduce the significant river fluctuation. The main concern is that, as

the river fluctuates, it causes further erosion and does not give plant and aquatic life a chance to regenerate.

 **211** The County Board of Commissioners has set a goal in 2008 of working towards the establishment of a 211 plan for Grand Traverse County. 211 is a program similar to 911 in which the 211 number can be dialed by individuals looking for human services support. This would be a general number that would have a database of all human services agencies in the area and could direct individuals in need to the appropriate locations. This program exists primarily in the southern part of the state, but also in the U.P. The County Board of Commissioners is now working with the surrounding counties to determine whether there is any interest in joining in this effort, and I expect they will continue to pursue a 211 program for Grand Traverse County.

 **Septage Treatment Plant Business Plan** Two weeks ago, we took bids on a Septage Treatment Plant business plan. We received two bids from teams that included accounting firms, engineers, and environmental firms. Interviews of those two teams will be held on May 2, and a recommendation will be forthcoming to the County Board in May. It is hoped that the evaluation of the existing operation could give us some insight in changes that would increase the revenue, reduce the cost, and put the plant on a more solid financial footing.

 **2009 Strategic Plan** On April 30, the County Board will adopt their strategic plan for 2009. This year, with the help of Jim Wiesing, MSU Cooperative Extension Director, and John Sych, County Planner, we will be unveiling a new strategic planning document. This is the first time that Grand Traverse County has developed a strategic plan that we hope to roll out to the public in an effort to give an accounting of the activity of the County. As mentioned before, this plan will tie into the individual department plans to ensure that we are moving along in the same direction. Many thanks to Jim and John for their help in this project. I believe the document that we will produce, which will be updated annually, is one that we can all be proud of.