



Administrator's Update 8/29/08

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✚ **2009 Budget** This week the County Board received the proposed 2009 Grand Traverse County budget. General fund budget requests for next year were \$42,285,929. The recommended budget for the County Board is \$38,598,861 which is a reduction of 8.72% from the requested budgets. The budget represents a 2.86% increase from the original 2008 budget and an approximate increase of 1.5% from the current 2008 budget. The budget can be characterized primarily as a maintenance budget. With the downturn of the economy revenues are expected to take a significant hit next year, as they did in 2008. While a long term trend has not been established, 2009 will be a pivotal year as we attempt to rebound in this area. The downturn is reflected in less construction and more demand on human services.


✚ **Wind Resources** The Sewer and Water Committee of the Board of Public Works is investigating the possible use of wind energy to reduce utility costs at the Septage Treatment Plant. An informal sub-committee has been appointed to evaluate the possibility. It is anticipated that the County Board will be asked to formalize the work of this committee and to begin to research the viability of wind generation for the plant. The Board intends to work with other local interested parties such as Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA), Traverse City Board of Light and Power, and Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) to attempt to collaborate on the project.

✚ **Boardman River Dams** This project continues to move towards its final phase. Many of the reports necessary for completion of the project are done and are available on the website www.theboardman.org. A survey is currently being prepared for public input into the future of the dams and the adjacent areas. This past month we heard reports from the engineers on some possible alternatives for the dams including power generation, elimination of the dams or modifications of the dams, in order to maintain "status quo" activity level. Reports will continue to come in until November with an anticipated vote by the Boardman River Dams Committee (BRDC) in December to make recommendations to the county and city on the disposition of the dams. It is anticipated that the county and the city will work through the first part of next year on making final determinations. The Boardman River Dams process has been the most open public process that I have been involved in and I am confident that it is one of the most public processes that have taken place in the State of Michigan. It has been done by the local community in conjunction with the Army Corp of Engineers. It is hoped that the end result will give the County Board the information that it needs to make a determination on its disposition.

✚ **Human Resources** Grand Traverse County is in the middle of labor negotiations. There are currently seven (7) contracts open and negotiated with six (6) more contracts coming due in 2009. Brenda Hinds, our Human Resources Director has recently announced

her resignation effective September 12th. I will be taking over the negotiations on behalf of Grand Traverse County at that time. We are in the process now of advertising to hire a Human Resources Director to replace Brenda. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brenda for her three (3) years of work with Grand Traverse County. We have accomplished much during that time, and the advancements that we have made in the Human Resources area are particularly attributable to her efforts. Thank you Brenda.

 **National Children's Study** This past week we were notified that Grand Traverse County has been selected to participate in the National Children's Study. The National Children's Study is the largest long-term study of children's health and development ever to be conducted in the United States, involving 100,000 children from before birth to age 21. The study aims to better understand links between the environments in which children are raised and their physical and mental health and development. By looking for relationships between environments and children's physical and mental progress, the study seeks to find basic causes of many of today's major childhood diseases and disorders and to determine not only which aspects of the environment are harmful, but also which factors are harmless or helpful to children's health and development. Grand Traverse County is the fifth area, and the only rural area in Michigan to be studied. Grand Traverse County was selected because of the community collaboration and health infrastructure that is in place that will help monitor this 21-year study. The study will be led in Grand Traverse County by the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension (MSUE) and the Grand Traverse County Health Department.

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