



Administrator's Update 12/21/09

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✚ **Child Care Fund** This past week, the County Board received a report from Dean Bott, Finance Director, indicating that the Child Care Fund budget is expected to be balanced for the year 2009. Early in the year, we projected as much as a \$200,000 shortfall in this fund. This fund is unusual in that the expenditures are strictly a result of court orders, of which the court or the County has very little control. A state ward that is committed to the state institution can cost anywhere from \$250 to \$300 a day. Some are there for months or even possibly years. The Board was aware of the fact that early in the year we anticipated this shortfall. Throughout the year, things improved and the year ended balanced, which is very positive for the County. I want to extend a special thanks to the court, Judge Stowe, Greg Brainard, and staff for their diligence in monitoring the expenditures in this fund.

✚ **2% Grant Applications** Last week, the County Board reviewed 2% requests to be submitted to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The County Board - for the final time - agreed to pass on all requests to the Tribe. The County is working on criteria to evaluate proposals in the future and anticipates prioritizing proposals to the Tribe along with recommendations of programs that the County Board feels are most in need of funding. The criteria will be finalized in the first few months of 2010, to be implemented in the first round of grants to the Tribe in May and June of 2010 and then again in the second round, which comes at the end of 2010.

✚ **Boardman River Dams** The Boardman River project continues to develop. You will recall that the County Board and the City both indicated direction to remove Boardman, Sabin, and Brown Bridge Dams and remodel and improve Union Street Dam. In the next few weeks, the County and City will be considering a letter to the Army Corp of Engineers asking them to undertake the engineering and design of the dam removal and reconstruction project. That will also indicate that if we move forward with the actual deconstruction, the County and City will accept 35% responsibility for funding of the project. It is anticipated that 35% will be made up of other grants, foundation awards, and in-kind services. It is difficult to be exact at this time, because we do not know the full scope of the deconstruction projects.

✚ **Police Services** The County Board has directed the County Administrator to work with the City Manager in determining exactly what services the City feels are being inequitably provided by the County. We feel at this point that there appears to be a request to have the County pick up the cost of police records for which the City is currently paying about \$190,000 a year. We understand they would also like to discuss police services in terms of alleviating some of the costs of police services for the City as well as possible accommodations of detective bureaus. There may be other things that have yet to be identified by the City. Once the City has identified all of their concerns, I will bring that back to the County Board for direction and proceed to discuss this with the City to see if there are any ways to bring about greater efficiencies of service delivery.

✚ **Cross-Deputization** The County Sheriff and I met with tribal representatives this past month to hear their request to have a cross-deputization agreement between the Sheriff and tribal police. We were told that several counties around us have similar agreements, as does the Michigan State Police. Grand Traverse County has not had such an agreement in the past. Sheriff Bensley has agreed to look at the issue and evaluate the cost benefit of such an agreement. We anticipate meeting with the Tribe sometime in January to see if this issue can be further addressed.

✚ **Construction Code** There is good news and there is bad news. For several years now our Construction Code department revenues have been down significantly as a result of the downturn in the economy. As a result, the County has laid off eight staff in that department because of the reduction in workload. The good news: November was the best November, we've had in the last four years in terms of permit application revenue according to Bruce Remail, Construction Code Director. While this is very good news, the somewhat bad news is this is the result of primarily two projects: the building at the corner of Front and Park and the new parking deck being built for Hagerty. It appears that residential building is still at its lowest level in recent memory with very little indication of improvement.

✚ **Third Floor Remodeling** Construction on the third floor continues. Central Dispatch is now moved into their quarters, which are expanded and significantly improved. The County Commission took a tour of the facility in its final stages of construction and met with members of the staff who indicated their pleasure with the new facilities. We are now in Phase II of the third floor remodeling, which includes removing everybody from the north end of the building into the completed offices in the south end so that the north end can be remodeled. Once that is complete, those departments will be moved back and Human Resources and County Administration will move upstairs so that construction on a multi-use classroom and conference area can be completed in the area currently occupied by County Administration and Human Resources.

✚ **Merry Christmas** Finally, I hope everyone has a safe, happy, and blessed holiday season. This is truly a time to be thankful for the many blessings we have and to keep those who have less in our thoughts. As I have done in the past, I've made a donation in honor of County employees and the hard work that you do to help those in need. This year, my donation was made to the Father Fred Foundation on behalf of Grand Traverse County employees. Father Fred is a well-established and well-known agency that has served those in need for many years in our community. They represent what is truly great about this area. Again, have a very Merry Christmas!



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