



Administrator's Update 7/10/08

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FERC Permit Application At the direction of the County Board of Commissioners, the county will work with the City of Traverse City to submit a joint preliminary permit application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for the possible operation of the Sabin, Boardman, and Brown Bridge Dams. Private individuals have filed similar applications with FERC. When a firm or individual is granted a preliminary permit, it allows them exclusive right to submit a FERC license application to operate hydropower facilities at a dam for a period of 3 years. No other license applications to FERC can be submitted prior to those submitted by the preliminary permit holder. In that way, the preliminary permit holder controls the process for possible hydro development license application at the dam for the next 3 years. For this reason, the County Board determined that it was in the best interest of the citizens to submit an application on behalf of Grand Traverse County. It is anticipated that application process will be done in early August.


Countywide Meeting The county held a joint meeting with the city, villages, and townships two weeks ago to discuss pertinent issues for the community including road improvements, fire inspections, and solid waste and Resource Recovery issues among other items. One issue that was discussed was the permit fees for inspections for construction in the county. It was the consensus of the group that the fire department should look at the present fee schedule and make adjustments to that fee schedule to align it more with the actual work required to do the inspections. The new fee schedule, once developed, will be presented to all local municipalities for possible adoption. If the local municipalities decide to accept the new fee schedule, the County Board will entertain the possibility of adopting the same fee schedule, thereby allowing fees to be collected in one location - the building code department. This will continue to streamline the process for developers and builders where building codes and fire inspections are done through one agency.


Septage Treatment Plant The Sewer and Water Committee under the Board of Public Works, is charged with oversight of the Septage Treatment Plant. The Board of Public Works and the County Board are exploring the possibility of wind turbine generation to help power the Septage Treatment Plant. This past year, the Septage Treatment Plant had in excess of \$145,000 in electrical costs. As the county and the townships look for more ways to increase revenues and reduce expenses, wind generation to supplement the electrical needs of the facility has great possibilities. Analysis will continue over the next several months with hope of a recommendation for possible implementation in the next year.

The County Board of Commissioners hired URS/Plante Moran to do a business plan and study of the Septage Treatment Facility. That work is underway with an expected completion of September 15. The study will have four main components: 1) financial analysis of the

revenues and expenses and rate structure, 2) a marketing plan, 3) an education plan, and 4) a review of the operation to identify any further efficiencies that could take place. The plan will be presented to the County Board and the Board of Public Works along with the Sewer and Water Committee for possible implementation later this year.

 **Boardman Pond** This past month, the County Board of Commissioners asked the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to consider allowing the Boardman Pond to be raised by approximately 4 feet. The rationale for this request was to reduce down the significant fluctuations in water level that occurs by snowmelt or significant rains. It is not uncommon for the water level in Boardman Pond, over the last 6 months, to raise as much as 5 or 6 feet during a rain event. The DEQ has turned down that request. The County Physical Resources Committee has directed staff to investigate an alternative to reduce down the water fluctuation. That alternative would be to remove the hydro-generating turbine in the second penstock at Boardman Dam and storing it on site. This would allow twice the amount of water to flow through the dam at any given time, thereby increasing the volume that is moved through the dam resulting in a reduction in the water level fluctuation in the pond. Staff will be working with Charles Peterson, owner of the turbine, to open the second penstock.

 **Park Rules** The County Parks and Recreation Board approved a new set of rules for all county parks at their meeting this past Monday. That recommendation will go to the County Board of Commissioners at the end of this month. The new rules for all county parks are designed as overall rules encompassing all parks. Separate individualized sets of more specific rules will be developed by the Parks Committee for each individual county park. It is anticipated that those rules will be in place by the next year.

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