



Administrator's Update 6/6/08

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✚ **Airport Security** The Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department is working with the county airport to evaluate the possibility of the county taking over security at the airport. This could be a win-win for both agencies. The County Sheriff's Department would be able to hire additional deputies who could be interchanged and provide additional support for patrol activities. It appears the airport will be able to provide security at their facilities at a reduced cost based on the Sheriff's Department eligibility for reimbursement for this service. Talks continue between the two agencies, but we are hopeful that they'll come to a conclusion in the next few months with a possibility of implementation by October or January.


✚ **Fire Inspections** The Building Code Department and County Administration are working with the Metro Fire Department to discuss possible revisions to the process used for doing fire inspections for all construction in Grand Traverse County. The contract between the two agencies requires a 180-day notice of termination or change. We have had meetings with the Fire Department indicating that fire inspection services in all likelihood need to be returned directly to the responsibility of the fire departments. This is in part driven by the fact that our Building Code Department has seen significant layoffs in the last several years - 6 employees - in addition to a reduction in construction and the revenue losses to the Building Code Department associated with this program.


✚ **Regionalized 911 Services** Grand Traverse County has been approached by Leelanau County to discuss the possibility of regionalizing 911 Dispatch services. A concurrent effort is taking place in Region 7 through Homeland Security where a grant has been received to evaluate the potential for regionalizing 911s. Grand Traverse County has already indicated their willingness to be a part of this. The Chairmen of the County Boards and the County Administrators of Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Benzie have had an initial meeting to discuss the potentials of this for consolidation. We will attempt to mesh this endeavor with the effort of Homeland Security to make sure we are only evaluating this need one time and including other potential participants.


✚ **Boardman Dam** The county continues to look at ways to mitigate the fluctuation of water levels at the Boardman. With the 14-½ foot draw down required by the State of Michigan, a situation has arisen where the fluctuation in water level as a result of rain or snowmelt has increased dramatically. Imagine a funnel that was full to an inch from the top. If you add a quantity of water, it goes up somewhat. If you drop the water level to only an inch from the bottom of the funnel and add the same amount of water, the level of the water raises much more significantly because it is spread across a smaller area of volume. This is what is occurring at the Boardman Dam. The water level now fluctuates between 5 and 6 feet on major rain events. This is causing more erosion on the shoreline,

prohibiting vegetation from taking hold. Grand Traverse County is asking the Department of Environmental Quality to allow us to raise the water level approximately 4 feet in the pond to 10 feet below its normal level. This will diminish the amount of water level fluctuation during rain/snow events. In addition, the county is looking at the possibility of removing equipment from one of the penstocks. Penstocks allow water to run through the dam. Currently, water runs through a single penstock. A turbine sits in the second penstock. We believe that if we can remove the turbine and utilize the second penstock, twice the volume of water will be able to run through the dam, thereby reducing the effects of increased rain/snow melt.

 **Countywide Meeting** The county will hold a meeting with the local municipalities on June 19. Several of the topics to be discussed are: road, Septage Treatment Facility, and solid waste. The County Board has indicated a desire to increase and improve communication with the city, villages, and townships. The county intends to do this, perhaps twice a year with the topics being determined by all parties.

 **Resource Recovery** The County Board at its last meeting authorized the hiring of a Resource Recovery Manager. In the 2008 budget, the County Board eliminated one position from the Resource Recovery Department. They undertook a strategic planning process with the Resource Recovery Council in an effort to understand each other's positions and develop a direction for the program. While not achieving complete agreement, a number of issues were resolved. The County Board now feels it is necessary to hire a manager so that we can work on the major issue that remains. That is funding for the program. Currently, the program is funded through a facility surcharge that is billed to all licensed landfills. That charge is \$9 a ton. The County Board has indicated their reservations about this method and has asked the Resource Recovery Council to evaluate additional options for funding programs. It is hoped that with a new manager we can move quickly to evaluate those options and come up with the most appropriate means of funding the programs.

 **Strategic Planning** Strategic planning in Grand Traverse County continues to move forward. The County Board has completed their 2009 Strategic Plan and I am in the process of meeting with departments to review their strategic plans. The goal is to align strategic plans, department by department, to match the County Board's long-term overall goals for the county. To this date, the Management Team has met with 13 departments. These meetings have been very successful and we have made great progress towards this goal. The 2009 strategic plans for departments will be provided to the County Board along with the 2009 budget requests, which will support the department goals for next year. We are currently analyzing options for implementing performance measurements in the departments. That will be presented to the County Board in the very near future.

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