



Administrator/Controller Report

April 2013

Animal Control

- A proposed agreement with the Cherryland Humane Society to provide animal shelter services is headed to the Ways and Means Committee meeting next week. The agreement will allow the county's two Animal Control Officers to spend an additional 3-5 hours per day out in the field. In addition, the public will have access to lost or adoptable animals six days per week in a single location.

Boardman Dams

- The Department of Natural Resources has approved six Dam Management Grant Program projects statewide, including a \$357,725 grant for Phase II of the Boardman Dams Removal project. The funds will help fund the next steps in the removal of the Boardman and Sabin Dams. The Implementation Team is beginning the process for selecting a firm to oversee the design and engineering for the project.

Vacancies on Boards and Commissions

- The County Board is currently looking for individuals to fill vacancies on the Building Authority and the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Board. The Building Authority vacancy is for a member of the general public to fill the remainder of the six year term ending 12-31-15. The CMH vacancy is for a Mental Health Professional for the remainder of the three year term ending 3-31-14.

Central Dispatch

- **Grand Traverse Social Media** - Facebook now has almost 9,500 followers and we continue to get very positive feedback. Captain Ayling of the Traverse City Police Department contacted us to post information for them on our page. We welcome any information that benefits our community and can assist law enforcement. Not only does it assist them in their investigations, but it keeps our page fresh and encourages people to follow it.
- **School Lock-Down Drills** - One of the outcomes of our internal strategic planning was the suggestion that we get involved in school lock-down drills. Select dispatch staff will be participating in some of the upcoming school lock-downs to help staff understand exactly what is taking place inside the

schools. They will also be a part of the discussion after the lock-down, and bring back what they have learned to the rest of the staff.

- **Smart911** - We are working with both the Implementation and Marketing Teams from Smart911. Jason is heading up the technical aspect and bringing that team together. Jamel brought in representatives from law enforcement, fire, and EMS to be part of the marketing team. We've also identified many local agencies and groups to target. Many of them are already aware of this project, and have posted information about Smart911 on their own websites. We've also been asked to do Smart911 presentations to some groups, and those are being scheduled.

As part of the Smart911 Charter50 group, a representative from our agency is invited to attend an annual workshop in Boston. The costs are covered by Smart911 with the exception of some of the airfare. They provide a \$250.00 allowance for airfare but anything over that must be paid by our agency. One of our Supervisors, Leah Hornacek, will represent us at the workshop. Leah is very passionate about public education and has taken a lot of initiative to start building a local program, so we are confident that she will be an outstanding representative for our 911 Center.

Commission on Aging

- **Collaboration with Meals On Wheels** - The Commission on Aging will be collaborating with Meals on Wheels (with help from Lawton Gallagher Group) on yet-to-be-named projects to show we're working together. Projects may include educational and fund raising events.
- **Hardship Fund** - The COA has an endowment fund held with the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation (non-County funds). The spendable revenue (\$6,286) from this endowment will be received in March as part of the Foundation's annual spending policy payout. These funds will be used to assist clients unable to pay their bills as a result of the increase in fees in 2013 (pending COA board approval).
- **Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) BBQ** - Each year, the COA coordinates, packages, and delivers NMC home-delivered BBQ meals to homebound senior citizens who are no longer able to attend the BBQ. This is done entirely with volunteers and donated food from Oleson Grocery Stores (Brad Oleson). We're again looking for volunteers to help. The BBQ is Sunday, May 19, 2013, at the NMC College campus. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the COA office.
- ❖ **National Volunteer Month/Week** - April is National Volunteer Month. In addition, National Volunteer Week is April 21-27, 2013. The GTCOA (Senior Center Network) will be hosting a celebration in honor of all our volunteers,

including board members, on April 25, 2013, at the Traverse City Senior Center. This celebration is being held in collaboration with Northwest Michigan United Way, and will include Presidential awards.

- **Poland Trip** - The Senior Center Network is hosting a trip to Poland April 5-13, 2013. Ten people are going on the trip, which is escorted by Mayflower Tours. (Mayflower Tours has worked with the SCN for many years.)
- **Leadership Grand Traverse** - Deputy Director Hollie DeWalt is participating in the 2013 Leadership Grand Traverse program. She was awarded a scholarship of \$500 to help defray the cost of the program.

Finance

- The auditors have been conducting the 2012 audit over the past few weeks, which included a review of our systems narratives and control activities documents as they relate to our accounting procedures and internal controls.
- The Director is working with MuniCast to load all of the county's financial data into the new financial projection software. We will be evaluating numerous assumptions to and developing worst case, best case, and likely budget scenarios. In addition, however, the software will allow us to see the relative impact of specific financial decisions.

Equalization

- The March Board of Review process has been accomplished. Overall, the comments from assessors indicate that the taxpayer appeals at the meetings were down. Since the commercial and industrial classes are allowed to appeal directly to the Michigan Tax Tribunal, the total amount of possible appeals remains to be seen.
- East Bay March Board of Review proceedings were typical compared to other units. During the two days of hearings there were periods of no traffic. The efficiency of the assessing staff, as they provided the Board of Review Members with information and documentation, aided the process. It was the shortest March Board of Review in recent memory.
- Equalization is compiling all the assessor databases to tabulate the overall county totals. These totals will be used in the Equalization Report to the Board of Commissioners on April 9 for county equalization. April 3 is the last day for local units to deliver the completed assessment roll to the county Equalization Department.
- After county equalization is complete the Millage Rollback Calculations will commence, and occupy equalization's main focus for a few weeks.

Facilities

- **Governmental Center** - Bids for the replacement of the roof of the Governmental Center were due on April 3rd and are being evaluated. The information and recommendation will be coming to the Ways & Means Committee meeting next week.
- **Lafranier Health Services** - We are still settling in to the new location. Warranty issues for minor carpet, sewage pump, and boiler operations are being addressed.
- **Civic Center/Howe Arena** - ICE completed its season on March 13. Staff quickly turned things around to have everything operational for the Hunting and Fishing Show on March 15. Almost every weekend thru May will involve set-up and tear-down for a different vendor.
- **Civic Center** - New display board was installed in the lobby. This unit is ultimately a means of advertisement, but also includes displays for the daily activities at the Civic Center.

Health Department & Emergency Management

➤ Environmental Health Division

Grand Traverse County Coordinates Horse Cruelty Investigation Workshop: The Grand Traverse County Health Department/ Animal Control in conjunction with the Michigan Partnership for Animal Welfare (MPAW) coordinated a Horse Cruelty Investigation Workshop in Traverse City for more than 30 law enforcement and animal welfare professionals from 19 counties across Michigan on February 27th. The workshop brought experts in horse welfare to provide training in evaluating equine health and behavior; as well as how to conduct investigations and working with prosecutors. Representatives of the Grand Traverse County Health Department, Animal Control, Sheriff's Office and Prosecutor's Office were in attendance at this training.

Holding Tank Wastewater Disposal Concerns: The Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD) and the Department of Public Works have been working together along with the Board of Public Works to identify wastewater holding tank systems within the County that have not been pumped for a significant amount of time. It has been estimated that 45 out of 380 known holding tank systems within Grand Traverse County show no record of being pumped for over a two (2) year period. The GTCHD has sent letters to the 45 property owners along with an "owner response form" to determine the reason for the lack of pumping frequency for these holding tanks in order to insure that waste from these holding tank sites is being

properly disposed of at the Grand Traverse County Septage Treatment Facility. The GTCHD has received all but 11 responses, with the majority of responses indicating little or no use of the residence in recent years and the remainder has indicated they have installed septic systems. Staff will follow-up with the remaining property owners and legal action could be taken against those property owners who are found to be illegally discharging holding tank waste.

➤ **Emergency Management & Preparedness Division**

WebEOC Training: The Grand Traverse County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) hosted a WebEOC training on March 19th. This training is essential for any agency that may be represented at the EOC during an actual event. Over 20 participants from many area agencies participated. Staff will be coordinating 1-2 additional WebEOC trainings in the future to ensure that 2-3 representatives from each agency are ready if there is an event. These agencies will be participating in the Pandemic Flu with Civil Unrest regional exercise on April 25th.

➤ **Community Health Division**

Directly Observed Therapy - By law, any citizen that is diagnosed with active Tuberculosis who is at risk for being non-compliant with taking medicine must complete a 6-9 month course of treatment in which a nurse directly observes the patients taking the medicine. By doing this, the Health Department ensures that no one else in community is at risk for contracting this contagious disease. Communicable disease staff has also been collaborating with Leelanau County Health Department to assure a homeless gentleman completes his medication for Tuberculosis. This case has been challenging due to many factors, but the collaboration of the health departments, medical providers, law enforcement and housing entities has resulted in consistent medicine intake for the past seven months.

Noro Virus Outbreak - Communicable disease and environmental health staff has been collaborating with District 10 Health Department on an event held in Grand Traverse County that resulted in residents of five different counties contracting the Noro Virus. The event was a private party with no food establishments involved, but to be on the safe side, we did have the facility do special deep bleach cleaning to stop transmission to any others. The state regional epidemiologist that we house at GTCHD also assisted with the coordination of the investigation.

Safety Day Training - GTCHD's annual safety day took place on March 19th. Staff received training on the following topics: blood borne pathogens, electrical safety, ergonomics, severe weather/fire drills, AED, HIPPA, slips, trips and falls, MSDS/Hazard communication, limited English proficiency,

stress reduction, CLIA, and civil rights. Many of these trainings are required for our clinical program staff and benefit the entire agency.

Human Resources

- The Violence in the Workplace Policy has been revised and published.
- Currently recruiting for 12 positions County-wide.
- ❖ An employee recognition presentation was provided to the BOC on February 27th, during which a new Employee recognition program called “Making a Difference” was launched. This program encourages employees to nominate their fellow co-workers for the great things they do in the workplace every day. All nominations should include the name of the employee that is being nominated and a brief description of why they are being nominated. All submissions will be reviewed by the Employee Recognition team and the employee that has made the biggest difference will be selected to receive 4 hours of paid time off!
- The nationally-recognized “Public Service Recognition” will occur May 5-11th. More details to come but please mark your calendar to recognize all public service employees this week.
- ❖ The County hosted a blood drive on March 5th at the Governmental Center and Public Services buildings. A total of 32 people donated blood including 24 employees and 8 members of the public. American Blood was very happy with the results. Thanks to the donors and to Cheri Tuller for assisting and promoting drive.
- ❖ Joanne Tuck did a great job updating the HR web site based upon the suggestions received from the Website Committee.
- We are currently accepting nominations for our Volunteer of the Year award. This award is given out each year to an employee who has performed unselfish and dedicated acts of service to the community through volunteerism and who have made a significant difference, positively representing Grand Traverse County in the community. Deadline to nominate an employee is April 18, 2013. For additional information, see http://www2.co.grandtraverse.mi.us/Welcome/Enhancement_Teams/ERSA/VolunteeroftheYear.htm
- The Wellness Committee held a “lunch ‘n’ learn” for all employees on March 13th. This “lunch ‘n’ learn” was to learn about the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Through this program every week you can receive fresh, local fruits and vegetables. Additional details can be found on the March 15 County Communicator (p.7). Deadline to sign up is April 30th.

- The Wellness Committee rolled out the 2013 Wellness Scorecard program. The goal of this program is to encourage wellness in all areas of your life, including diet, exercise, nutrition, and preventative care, such as flu shots and regular dental and eye exams. The program will run from April 1st to July 31st. http://www2.co.grandtraverse.mi.us/Welcome/Enhancement_Teams/Wellness_Team.htm

Information Technology

- **GT/Leelanau High Speed Connection** - A high speed 1 gigabit wireless connection has been configured and is up and running between Grand Traverse and Leelanau counties. The wireless connection was funded by a grant and will provide for backup 911 sites for each of the Counties. The connection is also utilized by the Leelanau courts to access court applications and document imaging hosted at Grand Traverse. Leelanau already had a 10Mb fiber connection to Grand Traverse which is now configured as a failsafe connection if the wireless connection should go down for any reason.
- **Web Editor Training Session** - The first Web Editor Training session for employees who edit the County web site was held March 20. The training was conducted by Sarah Adams of Administration and Liana Wilson of IT and covered beginning editing and editing existing web pages. This was the first county-wide training offered to employees after the County switched to our current web site in 2006. The training was attended by 30 employees representing 22 departments. Additional training sessions are scheduled for the future.
- **County Provides WiFi Access to Public** - The County guest wireless network has been upgraded to allow up to several thousand wireless devices to connect to the network. The guest wireless acceptance page has also been removed which makes it easier for devices to automatically connect to the network. The guest wireless network provides free WiFi hotspots for employees and the public at most County facilities.
- **iPads** – The Board's iPads have been ordered and we are reviewing available application alternatives for the Board's needs. Distribution and training will occur within the next month.
- **Internet Service Bids** - A request for proposal has been issued to renew/upgrade the County's Internet service. Bid responses will be presented to the Board in May.

MSU Extension

- **Personnel** - MSU has posted a position of Extension Educator – Fruit Production to be housed at the Horticultural Research Station in Leelanau County. This is a full-time, fixed-term, academic staff position with

responsibility for several counties. Anyone interested is encouraged to apply online at <http://www.hr.msu.edu/hiring/msujobs.htm>.

Parks & Recreation

- A group has been meeting to discuss the development of a new Community Recreation Center at the Civic Center. We are working on a Rotary Charities Grant to determine the programming and indoor recreational needs of Grand Traverse County Residents
- A business development team has been meeting to develop business plans for Power Island.
- The grant applications approved by the Board last month for the improvements to Maple Bay have been submitted.
- The Parks and Recreation Network website at www.gtrec.org went live on April 1, 2013.
- Grand Traverse County's 2013-2018 Community Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan has been approved by the MDNR.
- GT County's Parks and Recreation Director Jason Jones was awarded the 2013 Commitment to Excellence Award by the Michigan Recreation and Park Association (MRPA).

Planning

- Grand Traverse County's Housing Trust Fund will be a partner in the new Depot neighborhood being developed by the Traverse City Habitat for Humanity and Homestretch. The Housing Trust Fund has committed \$295,000 to the project. \$195,000 will be provided by the Fund through its HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant. The remaining \$100,000 will be provided by the Fund through a loan that will be revolved back into the Fund. This essential commitment will help to ensure the affordability of the homes.
- At its March meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed the draft Master Plan for Grand Traverse County. The draft Plan will soon be coming to the Board of Commissioners for review. Staff is currently working with Land Information Access Association to provide an interactive website for the Plan. The draft Plan and website will be unveiled at a summit of all planning commissioners on May 23.
- Hotel Indigo Traverse City is hosting an Open House to celebrate the start of the project. Site demolition has already commenced. The Open House will

be on Friday, April 12 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the InsideOut Gallery at 229 Garland.

Prosecuting Attorney

➤ ***Contract Drafting and Review***

- Central Dispatch: one contract
- Parks and Recreation: one
- Resource Recovery: two
- Animal Control: one

➤ ***FOIA Coordination***

In 1997, the County Board of Commissioners designated the Prosecuting Attorney as the FOIA coordinator for Grand Traverse County. As the coordinator, we ensure that the various county departments are complying with Michigan's FOIA law including determining whether the requested information should be exempt from disclosure. Over the past month, we reviewed **32** FOIA requests, and provided advice and consultation to the following departments:

- Administration
- Animal Control
- Sheriff
- Health
- Central Dispatch

➤ ***Board of Commissioners/Staff Questions***

Part of our duties as Civil Counsel involves answering questions and preparing opinion memoranda for the Board of Commissioners and County staff related to a wide variety of issues, ranging from compliance with state and federal statutes to advising on exposure to liability. Over the past month, we prepared **five** memoranda for the Board of Commissioners and various departments including:

- Human Resources
- Clerk
- Central Dispatch

➤ ***Ordinance Drafting***

As you know, under MCL 46.11, a county board of commissioners has the authority to adopt ordinances related to county affairs. One of our responsibilities is to prepare, amend or repeal ordinances when requested by the Board of Commissioners. We did not prepare any ordinances in the past month, although assistance was provided to several townships regarding development of and/or adoption of storm water control ordinance within those townships.

➤ **Litigation**

- *Britten v County Drain Commissioner et al.* Plaintiff filed this action pursuant to Michigan's Land Division Act, in the Grand Traverse County Circuit Court seeking to vacate a private roadway and amend the Plat of Prospect Park. Plaintiff has named over twenty individuals, businesses and other entities who may have an ownership interest located in the area of the plat to be amended. The Drain Commissioner is named as a party. He has no objections to vacating the roadway and amending the plat. We have filed an answer stating the same. On February 25th we filed with the court a pretrial statement as required by the court. This statement gives the court an indication of the issues that are in dispute, the likelihood of settlement, the need for discovery, and the need of a jury trial or bench trial. In the pretrial statement for this case, we again reiterated that the Drain Commissioner has no objections to vacating the roadway and amending the plat. The case is still pending.
- *In the matter of the Petition of the Grand Traverse County Treasurer for Foreclosure of Certain Parcels of Property (2010 Unpaid Property Taxes).* If real property taxes are unpaid, Michigan's General Property Tax Act, MCL 211.78 et seq, permits the County Treasurer to commence a tax foreclosure action in circuit court requesting that the Court transfer ownership of the property to the County. MCL 211.78 allows the Treasurer to obtain a judgment of foreclosure after a hearing and notice to the affected property owners. By law, the hearing occurs three years after delinquent taxes are due. The three year period allows the property owner to redeem the property or enter a payment plan with the Treasurer. On February 11th, Judge Power conducted a hearing and granted the Treasurer's request for a judgment of foreclosure. One property owner did appear at the hearing. The Treasurer resolved the owner's tax liability issues by allowing him extra time to make payments. This case is now closed.

➤ **Miscellaneous**

In addition to the items discussed above, we assist the Board of Commissioners and County Departments in other ways. Some items of note include:

- Continued discussions with the City of Traverse City regarding assisting the City and other Townships with tax appeals;
- Assisted Commissioner Inman with issues related to NWMCOG;
- Continued advice and consultation regarding Munson/Pavilions remediation;

- Meeting with representatives of the Sheriff's Department to discuss streamlining FOIA review;
- Meeting with Commission on Aging and County Board representatives to discuss roles and responsibilities of COA Board, County Administrator/Controller, and County Board with objective to be drafting of rules and regulations to guide future relations between these entities.
- Provided Open Meetings Act, FOIA, Ethical Considerations and Parliamentary Procedure Training for the Board of Commissioners, appointed officers and other local officials.
- Provided MCOLES Certification Training in Legal Update to all Peace Officers employed with the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Office and Traverse City Police Department (over 32 hours of instruction)
- Meeting with Township Zoning and Planning Officials to discuss current County policies and procedures regarding storm water control and soil erosion and sedimentation control issues.
- Meeting with Health Department and Sheriff to discuss plan for dealing with animal abuse and neglect cases.
- Meeting with Traverse Area District Library Director Metta Lansdale and Attorney Chuck Judson to discuss issues related to conduct of persons at the library with intent to provide policy and procedure guidance.

Resource Recovery

- Staff met with our new Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) vendor, Environmental Recycling Group, to review the layout for our upcoming HHW collection events at the DPW Garage. They were provided a map of the building that identified traffic flow, sorting areas, temporary container storage, building drains and emergency wash stations. Emergency response, training and safety protocol were also discussed.
- In cooperation with the City of Traverse City and Traverse City Light and Power, the following Earth Day events are scheduled to be held at the Sara Hardy Farmer's Market (Union and Grandview Parkway) in downtown Traverse City:
 - **April 20, 2013 - Seedling Giveaway** - 2013 marks the 25th year Traverse City Light & Power (TCL&P) has celebrated Earth Day with a seedling giveaway. Free eastern white pine (pinus strobus) seedlings will be distributed beginning at 8 a.m. until gone.

- **April 20, 2013 - Compost Giveaway** - Courtesy of the City of Traverse City & Grand Traverse County Resource Recovery Department free compost will be distributed on a self-service, self-haul basis beginning at 8 a.m. - noon (or until gone). You must bring your own shovel and container.
 - **April 15 thru April 21 - Clean Out Your Files Week** - American Waste is donating the use of a recycling container to help downtown businesses recycle unwanted paper material. Accepted material includes newspapers, magazines, old files, office paper, and unwanted mail.
- **Keystone Brush Site** - Weather permitting and if site conditions permit, the Keystone Brush site will open **Saturday, April 6, 2013**. David Jameson is returning for a second year as the gate attendant. Grinding of brush will start as soon as site conditions allow American Waste to get equipment on-site.
 - Staff submitted a grant application for public recycling bins to the Keep America Beautiful organization, but the grant was not awarded. However, information was also provided to Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation, Traverse City Parks Department, Traverse City State Park, and Interlochen State Park about an upcoming Keep America Beautiful recycling bin grant for Michigan City, County and State Parks. Try, try again!
 - Staff attended the February, 2013 Whitewater Township Board meeting and provided a brief presentation on the current resident recycling program and offered alternative options for recycling.
 - Staff attended the March NWMCOG, Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) meeting. Officers were elected for the 2013 calendar year.
 - Staff contacted United States Patent and Trademark Office for the necessary paperwork and procedure to maintain the registered service mark for "RecycleSmart".