

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
November 21, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Kayla Schmidt. Other Commissioners present were Mark Gail, Dwight Nelson, Jerrel Olson, and Chad Metz. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The agenda was approved unanimously with the following addition: Duffield property tax issue, Browns Valley; Memorandum of Agreement with AFSCME regarding vacation in excess of 210 at the end of the year; Memorandum of Agreement with AFSCME regarding proof of deductible increase for the case-in-lieu benefit, upon a motion by Gail and second by Metz. There was no conflict of interest expressed. The November 7, 2023, Board minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Olson and second by Nelson.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, Traverse County Highway Engineer, and Brian Koch County Highway Supervisor appeared before the Board with a department update. Upon a motion by Nelson and second by Olson the final payment for the CSAH 11 graveling project, CP 23-01, to Hormann Works, LLC in the amount of \$978.33 was unanimously approved. Upon a motion by Gail and second by Nelson the final payment for SP 078-620-020 to Central Specialties for \$23,643.41 was approved unanimously. Gillespie went over a few informational items; Traverse is administering the District 4 Federal Striping Project for 2027. Clearing and grubbing project is complete on CSAH 15. The Highway Department is taking trees out within our Right-of Way that are safety, snow drift, or drainage issues.

**Traverse County Fair**

Josh Behrens and Jim Olson, Fair Board, appeared before the Board. The attendance at this year's fair was up and the fair went well. They ended the year with a profit of \$12,358.42. They are still paying on the loan for the bathrooms and they have to refinance next year so the interest rate will go up. The entertainment at this year's fair was a big expense and they are hoping to do it again next year. There are some additional maintenance needs that they will need to get done so the County's support is still needed.

**Auditor/Treasurer**

Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. The tax settlement will be done this week and the Truth-in-Taxation notices went out. We received the Traverse Care Center bills, that the County is responsible for, for October. They will be given to Johnson once a month and they would like a quick turnaround due to cash flow issues. Johnson asked if they can be paid in an auditor's batch so that we don't have to wait for approval at a regular board meeting. The consensus of the board was to go ahead and pay them in an auditor's batch but they would like a list each month of the expenses. Johnson gave an update on the budget for 2024, since the preliminary budget was set, we have had a few changes that have increased the budget. Johnson said that we will need to set the final budget before the end of the year.

**County Attorney**

County Attorney Matt Franzese appeared before the Board. After a meeting with Olson and Gail, Franzese redrafted the Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance. They removed the registration and licenses and the ordinance now states what they can and can't do in Traverse County. The Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance was approved unanimously upon a motion by Nelson seconded by Olson. The

summary ordinance was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and second by Nelson. Franzese received a letter from BWSR, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, that stated that we haven't gone forward with the enforcement of the Buffers, they want us to have a process in place within 60 days. Franzese met with the Bois de Sioux Watershed as they have a process in place so Franzese plans to do the same process. Franzese explained to the Board that Jody Hook-Hansen, Browns Valley City Administrator, noted that there is a property north of Browns Valley, that in the 1900's was incorporated in the city limits, however at some point, it got coded in a township. There is no documentation that there was a transfer out of the city so they would like to get this ironed out. He would like to get a group together to discuss. Commissioner Schmidt and Commissioner Metz along with Jody Hofer, County Recorder, and Kit Johnson, County Auditor/Treasurer will meet with Franzee. Franzese asked to table Halls Landing and the ordinance regarding Cannabis Use and Sales in Traverse County until a later date.

#### **Recorder**

County Recorder Jody Hofer appeared before the Board with an annual update. Hofer went over the number of documents that her office has recorded so far in 2023. Hofer explained that state statute has been amended to let any individual over the age of 21 register as a civil marriage officiant and may marry couples as long as they file a Certificate of Filing with the County Recorder's Office. Traverse County doesn't charge for this service but other counties do. Hofer requested that they set a fee to file their ordinations and/or Certificate of filing paperwork. Upon a motion by Olson and seconded by Gail it was unanimously approved to set the ordination fee at \$40.00.

#### **Veterans Services**

Veterans Services Officer Jared Lamm appeared before the Board with an annual update. Just started his position in September and he is busy trying to get all his accreditations complete. Currently, they have 19 active Veterans claims which include compensation, pension, and benefits. Since Lamm has started in September they have done approximately 330 open communications between their office and Veterans.

#### **County Coordinator**

Upon motion by Nelson and second by Gail the following bills were approved unanimously.

COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$5,235.36
ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$5,661.29
HORMANN/MARK	\$2,000.00
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$2,073.12
LUCKEN TRUCKS & PARTS	\$3,500.00
WHITE CAP, LP	\$15,032.25
LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES	\$6,475.07
MENDED	\$4,987.52
RURAL MN CEP	\$5,459.19
WESTERN PRAIRIE	\$45,142.91
DHS	\$7,628.26
NEXT CHAPTER TECHNOLOGIES	\$5,000.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY AUDITOR	\$2,500.00
PLACEMENTS	\$11,874.00

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 54 in the amount of \$23,823.32.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator discussed the amendment to the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place lease with Minnewaska. Upon a motion by Olson and seconded by Metz the amendment to the Traverse Care Center and Prairieview Place lease was approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Olson the ECPN, Equitable Cost-Sharing for Publicly Owned Nursing Facilities Program, application that the Traverse Care Center will submit to the State was approved unanimously.

The Traverse Care Center walk-in freezer was discussed. Zahl explained that we did request another quote from Dakota Refrigeration and they also said it is not able to be fixed and it needs to be replaced. The Commissioners discussed other options besides replacement, Zahl will reach out to Minnewaska and discuss other options.

The Lakes County Service Cooperative Membership Agreement was approved unanimously upon a motion by Olson and second by Nelson.

Zahl explained the two Memorandum of Agreements with the AFSCME union. Upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Metz the MOA for vacation leave in excess of 210 at the end of the year was approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Olson and seconded by Nelson the MOA for proof of health insurance deductible amount increase for the cash-in-lieu benefit was approved unanimously.

#### **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

#### **Committee Reports**

Metz attended the Soil and Water meeting.

Schmidt attended the Senate tour at the Courthouse, the Traverse Care Center/Prairieview Place Committee meeting, Horizon Public Health meeting and the Watershed meeting

Nelson attended the Senate tour at the Courthouse, the Traverse Care Center/Prairieview Place Committee meeting and the Sheriff Contract negotiations with Browns Valley.

Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Kayla Schmidt, Chair