

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
January 21, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Jerrel Olson. Other Commissioners present were Dwight Nelson, Chad Metz, and Kayla Schmidt. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The agenda was approved unanimously upon a motion by Metz and second by Schmidt. There were no conflicts of interest expressed. The January 7, 2025, Board minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Highway Supervisor appeared before the Board with a department update. Gillespie went over the following projects: CSAH 9 and MCSAH 102, Gillespie will be bidding on these at the same time he bids on our Federal Project on CSAH 15; CSAH 15 has additional Federal Funds from the Protect Program; Dumont full reconstruct with ADA requirements; and CSAH 9 update. Gillespie asked for approval to advertise for the following projects: SP078-615-017 CSAH 15 from CSAH 6 to St. Hwy 27; SAP 078-609-021 CSAH 9 from St Hwy 17 to CSAH 10; and SAP 078-702-003 Dumont MCSAH 102 (Main Street), advertising was approved unanimously upon a motion by Nelson and second by Schmidt. The following resolution was unanimously approved upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz:

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FROM SPONSORING AGENCY**

**WHEREAS**, Up to 12.502 million in AT funding is available, with a minimum of \$50,000 and cap of \$1,000,000 for each project and

**WHEREAS**, Non-State aid cities and townships must have a county sponsor to apply for AT funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wheaton has requested that Traverse County sponsor its application and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wheaton understands that it will be responsible for all costs not covered by AT funding including all engineering and right of way costs and any construction costs over the funding cap; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wheaton will maintain the sidewalk improvements for the lifetime of improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, Traverse County will have the following responsibilities if the City of Wheaton is successful and awarded AT funds.

- Be the fiscal agent on behalf of the community and have funds flow from MnDOT to the county to the contractor
- Request SAP/SP number for the project
- Ensure the project meets milestones and dates

- Assist local agency in execution of a grant agreement
- Review and/or approve the plan
- Submit plan, engineers estimate, and proposal to the DSAE
- Advertise, let, and award the project
- Submit pay requests to State Aid
- Communicate progress and updates with the DSAEs and State Aid Programs Engineer
- Ensure that the project receives adequate supervision and inspection
- Assist with project close out

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IS RESOLVED**, the County of Traverse hereby sponsors the City of Wheaton’s application for AT funding for the sidewalk improvements to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North from 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to 12<sup>th</sup> Street North.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Gillespie went over the following information items, Bridge inspection and reporting on-going, Minnesota County Engineers Conference, DNR proposed statute change for culverts update, the heave at Hall’s Drive is fixed at the County Access, and Wheelage Tax was discussed again, the Commissioners want Gillespie to bring more information on this.

**Region 4 South Mental Health**

Kesha Anderson Trinka, Administrator, appeared before the Board. Trinka gave an informational update on the Region 4 South Mental Health Consortium. It is a Joint Power Agreement between Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, and Traverse Counties. They have a 24/7 response for mental health crises in all 5 counties for adults and children.

**Auditor/Treasurer**

Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. He gave an overview of the beginning of the year duties that need to be done. The Traverse Care Center fund needs a loan transfer of \$153,000.00, this was approved upon a motion by Metz and second by Schmidt. Johnson went over the timeline of the special election to fill the open Commissioners seat. The following resolution was approved unanimously upon a motion by Metz and second by Nelson:

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
TRAVERSE COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
Special Election Resolution**

Motion by Commissioner Metz seconded by Commissioner Nelson, and carried to approve the following resolution for Traverse County to set a Special Election to fill the vacancy in Office of Traverse County Commissioner for District 3.

**WHEREAS**, Traverse County has established five individual Commissioner Districts; and

**WHEREAS**, Scott Schultz had filed for office and was duly elected to the office of Traverse County Commissioner for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District at the November 5, 2024 General Election for a 4-year term expiring

January 2, 2029; and

**WHEREAS**, Scott Schultz has submitted notice that he will not accept his “Certificate of Election” and take the “Oath of Office” on January 7th, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, Minn. Stat. §375.111, Subd. 1, requires that if one year or more remains in the unexpired term, a special election must be held to fill the vacancy in office of a County Commissioner; and

**WHEREAS**, under Minn. Stat. §205.11, Subd. 3a, a special election must be held on the second Tuesday of February, April, May or August, or on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Traverse County Board hereby calls for a special election to fill the vacancy in the office of the Traverse County Commissioner for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in the event three or more candidates file for the open seat, a special primary election shall be held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District on May 13, 2025 and a special general election shall be held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District on August 12, 2025; and

**ITS FURTHER RESOLVED**, alternatively, that in the event two or fewer candidates file for the open seat, a special general election shall be held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District on May 13, 2025; and

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that any proper notices of these special elections shall be given, that the nomination and election of candidates be conducted, and all things pertaining thereto be done as provided by relevant Minn. law.

Olson: Yes  No  I, Kit Johnson, duly elected, County Auditor of the County of Traverse,  
Nelson: Yes  No  State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared proceedings of the  
Metz: Yes  No  Board of Commissioners, Traverse, State of Minnesota at their session  
Schmidt: Yes  No  held on the 21st day of January, 2025, now on file in my office, and have found  
the same to be a true and correct copy thereof.

STATE OF MINNESOTA Witness my hand and official seal at Wheaton, Minnesota, this 21st day of  
COUNTY OF TRAVERSE January, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kit Johnson, County Auditor

Johnson informed the Board that Traverse County received a notice of Tax Court Settlement from the Minnesota Department of Revenue. REMC Assets LP and Nexus Line LLC appealed the Commissioner of Revenue’s valuation of its operating property for the assessment year 2023 and 2024. The Tax Court adjusted the valuation for both years so Johnson will need to adjust those market values.

**Zoning**

Ben Oleson, Zoning Administrator, and Matt Franzese appeared before the Board to go over some questions that came up regarding the Wind and Solar Ordinances. The Board would like to hold one public hearing for both the solar/battery ordinance and the wind ordinance. Schmidt made a motion to have Oleson go through the Ordinances closely and give his opinion prior to it going to the Planning Commission, which was seconded by Metz and approved unanimously. Oleson will use contracted flex hours to get this completed. The following timeline was given: both draft ordinances will be ready and

sent to both the Planning Commission and the Commissioners on February 12; the Planning Commission will meet on February 19 and get their recommendations to the Board; the Public Hearing will be held on March 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Wheaton American Legion, if available.

#### **Jail Rate Discussion**

Commissioner Kayla Schmidt discussed the jail rates. She asked the Commissioners if they would like to increase the daily jail rates for 2025. The consensus was to have Sheriff Wright here for further discussion. This will be tabled until the next meeting.

#### **Per diem for Extension Board**

Commissioner Kayla Schmidt wanted to discuss the per diem rates for the Extension Board members. The per diem is currently \$35.00 a meeting and we have 2 positions currently open. The consensus was to discuss this with the County Extension Committee and bring a recommendation back to the Board.

#### **County Coordinator**

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

COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$5,564.57
DEPT OF HUMAN SERVICES ECPN	\$3,570.55
GALLAGHER BENEFIT SERVICES, INC.	\$9,000.00
GUARDIAN RFID	\$2,333.60
HORMANN, MARK	\$2,200.00
MINNESOTA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION	\$2,623.57
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$2,582.43
NOVA FIRE PROTECTION, INC.	\$3,825.00
PRO-WEST & ASSOCIATES, INC.	\$4,350.79
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$3,920.00
WEST CENTRAL INITIATIVE	\$2,750.00
WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL JUVENILE CT	\$8,021.00
WHEATON EDA	\$2,000.00
LARSON OIL, INC	\$6,561.90
MCIT	\$88,236.00
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$4,123.95
WHALEY EXCAVATING, INC.	\$6,978.75
PLACEMENTS	\$39,669.05
CEP	\$5,767.44
SCMC	\$2,689.68
PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY FOUNDATION	\$7,702.18
COLLABORATIVE SAFETY	\$48,000.00
DHS	\$3,002.57
HEARTLAND MOTOR CO	\$41,332.30
MN STATE AUDITOR	\$2,018.50
NCT/CASEWORKS	\$19,441.00

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 66 in the amount of \$35,067.20.

An Opioid Grant application from Horizon Public Health in the amount of \$11,856.66 was recommended for approval from the Opioid Committee to fund a media campaign to reduce stigma around substance misuse, prevent opioid misuse, delay initiation, and educate the community on the risks of misuse and abuse. Upon a motion by Schmidt and second by Metz the application was approved unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period**

There was one public comment about the appreciation for the sound system.

### **Committee Reports**

Metz attended the Rainbow Rider meeting and they are trying to get a van for the Browns Valley area. And they are in need of drivers for that van and a place to house it. Nelson attended Horizon Public Health, Soil & Water, the Personnel Committee, Primewest, TCC/PVP, Bois de Sioux Watershed and CEC meetings. Schmidt attended the Social Service preplacement, TCC/PVP, Bois de Sioux Watershed and CEC.

Olson adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Jerrel Olson, Chair