

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
May 20, 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. Mark Gail was sworn in as County Commissioner. The agenda was approved unanimously with the following additions: Hiring of one seasonal Courthouse Building Maintenance position to help clean; Health Insurance RFP's; and MN DNR, Do Child Left Inside Grant for Extension, upon a motion by Gail and seconded by Metz. There were no conflicts of interest expressed. The May 6, 2025, Board minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Schmidt.

**Wheaton Area Child Care Team**

Amanda Olson and Leah Krauth appeared before the Board to discuss using the Traverse Care Center therapy room and activity room as space for daycare. Wheaton is in a childcare provider crisis, as of June 1, 2025, there will be 3 licensed in-home day care providers and Little Flock. Since the County owns the Traverse Care Center Building and the lease states that Traverse Care Center will only be used for Skilled Nursing, they need Board approval to continue to look into this space and see if it might work for their needs. Upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Nelson, it was unanimously approved to continue to look into the Traverse Care Center as a family child care location.

**Highway Department**

County Engineer Chad Gillespie and Brian Koch, Highway Supervisor, appeared before the Board with a department update. Gillespie explained that the SAP 078-600-002 project bid of \$188,572.10 came in under the SPRA Grant amount, and the Traverse County park PWA bid came in under the PWA Grant amount at \$383,102.60. Upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Metz, both bids from Joe Riley Construction Inc. were approved unanimously, contingent on DNR updated Agreement and approval. The Board was in consensus that Gillespie move forward with applying for the Federal Land Access Program Grant (FLAP). Gillespie went over the Highway's 5-year Roadway and Bridge Plan. He explained that MSCAH 4 South of Browns Valley, crack filling and single/double seal coating a portion of it, will be held over until 2028. CSAH 16, Culvert Replacement, was sent to 9 contractors. We did not receive any bids last year. The City of Wheaton LRIP project is being advertised, bid opening at 10 am on June 9, 2025. Dust control applications are due by the end of May. Gillespie informed the Board that we received the 2 new Motor Graders based in Dumont.

**Traverse County-Owned Property**

Schmidt made a motion to close the meeting to discuss the selling of a portion of the property at 603 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S, Wheaton, per state statute 13D.05 sub 3c, seconded by Metz and approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Schmidt, the meeting was reopened. The result of the closed meeting was that the Board approved to move forward with a survey and ask for bids for the property.

**Emergency Management**

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager/Solid Waste Manager and Safety, appeared before the board. She explained the OSHA standards required hearing tests that are needed for the Highway Department, Deputy Sheriffs, and the Courthouse Maintenance Supervisor. Siegel got a quote from Sanford, which was \$40.00 per test plus the employee's hourly wage and mileage to drive to Wahpeton or Watertown. The shoebox program is another option and would be more convenient for Traverse County and the employee. The company would provide us with the equipment, and the test can be taken at the County. Siegel would be trained to administer the test. The cost is \$1,300.00 per year. The hearing test needs to

be completed upon hire and annually and the company would keep all the records. Upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Nelson, the shoebox program was approved unanimously.

**Auditor/Treasurer**

County Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. Johnson went over the tax sale that will be held on May 29, 2025, at 10:00 am in the Board room. Those that don't sell at this sale can go back to the method used prior to the Supreme Court decision, beginning with offering to the cities, reducing the price for quick sale, etc., with the exception of the one parcel in Browns Valley that was forfeited before December 31, 2023. Johnson asked the Board who he would want to mow the lots until they are sold. The Commissioners asked that Johnson reach out to Chad Gillespie to see if the summer help can mow. Taxes were due May 15, letters for late payments will be sent out prior to June 1. Johnson asked for approval of the retail tobacco License for Tri-County in Dumont, upon a motion by Gail and seconded by Schmidt this was approved unanimously.

**County Coordinator**

Upon motion by Nelson and seconded by Metz, the following bills and a \$45.00 donation from Ave Maria were approved unanimously.

ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCARE, INC.	\$5,510.08
AMERICAN SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS	\$3,723.59
ANOKA COUNTY TREASURY OFFICE	\$2,375.00
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$5,828.57
DEPT OF HUMAN SERVICES ECPN	\$7,141.10
ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$7,630.90
GAZETTE PUBLISHING, INC.	\$2,845.40
HORMANN, MARK	\$2,200.00
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$2,643.05
OFF DUTY CHIEF, LLC	\$3,500.00
WHEATON EDA	\$2,000.00
TRI COUNTY COOP OIL ASSOC	\$11,269.34
ZIEGLER, INC.	\$378,714.55
COLLABORATIVE SAFETY	\$3,000.00
TRAVERSE COUNTY	\$2,500.00
WESTERN PRAIRIE	\$59,796.36
WESTERN PRAIRIE	\$18,750.00
LSS – ST. PAUL	\$5,349.82
MENDED	\$2,039.63
CEP	\$7,059.66
PLACEMENTS	\$54,492.17

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 57 in the amount of \$23,242.93.

The Commissioners went over the Committee Appointments. There were updates to the committees, and Zahl will get the list updated and sent out to the Commissioners. Zahl asked for permission to advertise and hire for a summer seasonal Courthouse Building Maintenance position to help Chad Klindworth clean the county buildings. Upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Nelson, it was approved unanimously. Zahl explained that last year, the insurance committee recommended going out for RFP's earlier in 2026. Zahl spoke with our health insurance consultant, and he said that with the possibility of losing 10 employees from Social Services that it will have an impact on our rates, so he recommends going out for RFP's again. The quote was \$9,000.00. The Commissioners asked Zahl to find out if we could get Medica's quote for 2026 before the decision is made to go out for RFP's.

Extension had applied for the MN DNR No Child Left Inside Grant through the University of Minnesota, The University told Extension that they would not accept the \$4,784.14 grant. The DNR was contacted, and they said that the County could accept the grant for Extension in place of the University. Upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Schmidt, it was approved unanimously to accept the grant.

#### **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

#### **Committee Reports**

Nelson attended Horizon Public Health, Watershed, Personnel Committee and Special Election Canvas. Metz attended the Soil & Water and Rainbow Rider meetings. Schmidt attended the Western Prairie Technology Committee, Social Services Pre-placement, Watershed and Special Election Canvas.

Olson adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Jerrel Olson, Chair