



Friday June 28, 2024

Brief Report on BOC Special Meeting June 26

by Jim Horn and Linda Pepper

The Special Meeting which was scheduled at least a month ago was less than an hour excluding the closed session. Both Nelson and Jewett were excused and the other 7 commissioners were in attendance. Public Comment was Judge Hamlin thanking the county for their swift action and restoration of function after the cyberattack last week.

The first item considered was introduced by Jason Torrey, the 911 Director. He detailed the successful migration of the county's public safety systems to the cloud. The move, which includes CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch), first responder tools, corrections, and records management systems, was necessitated by the recent cyber incident. Torrey praised the collaboration between Tyler Technologies, the IT team, and his own staff for their swift response, noting that the cloud environment was operational by 2 PM Tuesday April 25th. This transition was described as a significant technical achievement, ensuring enhanced functionality and security for the county's emergency services.

Financially, the cloud migration represents a substantial investment. The county will terminate its existing contract with Tyler Technologies, which would have cost \$185,000 to renew, and engage a new contract for the cloud service at an additional \$115,000 annually. Despite the total figure reaching around \$300,000, Tory assured that most costs would be covered by the surcharge revenue, minimizing the impact on the general fund. Mr. Bott, who oversees financial allocations, confirmed that the increased 911 surcharge revenue should sufficiently offset these new expenses.

Commissioners raised several pertinent questions regarding the accelerated timeline for the cloud migration and future plans for other county services. Commissioner Walter highlighted that the cyber incident expedited a move that was initially planned for a later date. Mr. Dupuy, responsible for IT, outlined that while the immediate focus was on critical public safety systems, other services like BSNA and ONBASE are also slated for future cloud migration. He indicated that proposals for these migrations would come within the next six months to a year, with ONBASE likely moving in 2026 due to its complexity.

Throughout the meeting, there was a strong emphasis on the importance of preparedness and the efficiency of the county's response. Administrator Alger clarified the emergency protocols that allowed for swift decision-making during the cyber incident, explaining the statutory authority granted under state law. Commissioners expressed their gratitude for the rapid and effective handling of the situation, with Commissioner Morris and Commissioner Andrews both commending the team's dedication and responsiveness during the crisis. The meeting underscored the county's commitment to enhancing its technological infrastructure while ensuring the continuity of essential public services.

One question that was never clarified was how this could have been prevented and what is our susceptibility to another cyber-attack.

Also, the "poll" that Administrator Alger did of the commissioners, while understandable, is probably a violation of the OMA (Open Meetings Act). He can make the decision and then inform the board that, because of the possible threat to life from a non-functioning 911 system, he authorized the expenditure. Then it would be ratified at the next regular or special meeting.

The second and most time-sensitive agenda item was approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Leelanau and Benzie counties to write and implement a Regional Materials Management Plan. This starts small with a \$10K grant but will affect recycling and waste management here in Northwest Michigan. They needed this approved and filed with EGLE (Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy) by July 1. There will be a study session on waste management and also on septic systems on July 24.

Commissioner Walter asked again about the study sessions on the Master Plan that were requested starting at the Facilities Master Plan meeting on Feb. 28. We will see if and when any of this happens. Commissioner Walter had asked about these study sessions about a month ago also.

Here is the list:

The output for the study session is a series of meetings focusing on topics and their facility needs.

- Tour of facilities for commissioners ([These tours have been completed](#))
- Discussion of current maintenance projects (already in budget) and the needed upgrades and replacements especially in the Governmental Center
- Discussion of 911 Call Center, Emergency Response office and a centralized storage facility ([This was project Alpha where an RFP for a project manager was proposed at the second meeting in April and I have not heard more about it since then](#))
- Law enforcement and court needs for the foreseeable future.
- How to house the Commission on Aging and MSU Extension -short and long term ([Commission on Aging is now housed with the Area Agency on Aging on Park Dr.](#))
- Security in the Governmental Center and in all buildings open to the public. ([They now have a contract for security personnel on the first floor](#))

These meetings may involve Traverse City and should be completed by when the budgeting process starts. Lots to think about and smart decisions to be made.

The Board then voted to go into closed session. They did not expect to take action when they returned. There was discussion among the audience who are familiar with cyber security that "the cloud" is not automatically a secure environment. Commissioner Sieffert raised concerns about cloud functionality and security several times in the meeting and there was support for his anxiety among computer/internet savvy attendees.

Thank you to Jim Horn for his writing up most of the meeting.

Pavilions Board Meeting June 27

by Linda Pepper

The meeting started with Public Comment by a Certified Nurse's Aide (CNA) from the Pavilions who informed the Board of the difficulties that some homeless are causing around the Pavilions such as approaching staff on entering the building and looking into patient windows. She invited the Board to tour and see all the duties that the nurses and CNA's complete on a shift. They know they are appreciated by the administration but being stretched on every shift wears people down.

The County Liaison, TJ Andrews, informed them that the county was about 70% back from the cyber-attack but they needed to protect their sensitive information as a healthcare facility. She reminded them of the usual annual report but it might need to be delivered in the fall. The Chairman's Report from Mary Marois emphasized the appreciation the Board feels for the loyal and capable staff at the Pavilions.

The Foundation Board has allocated about \$70K to help pay for some residents of the Cottages that are unable to completely pay their fees. The Foundation is also sponsoring an RFP for a Master Plan for the Cottages and several firms have responded and will submit bids. There was a great testimonial from a recent patient who received aqua therapy.

The CEO report shows progress. The census has stabilized at 167-168 for May and most of June. Last fall it was a 135. The Cottages have been up a little from 54 to 57 in June. They are providing respite care. The net income for May was \$178K which is a great improvement. Mr. Bodalski stated that the payroll every 2 weeks is just under \$700K. When asked about who are new patients, he said it is mainly rehab that are inpatient for a shorter time. Numbers do decrease in the summer because of fewer ice-caused falls. Visitors who get injured usually get home for rehab.

The 2025 budget is a new priority. They used a census of 145 to do this year's budget and now are caring for about 168. They plan to also include a capital budget for items such as a new roof or replacing all the fire suppression heads. They are increasing the number of beds open from 182 to 207 as of July 1st. They will gradually try to fill them as they hire sufficient staff.

There are interesting quality measures in the packet. The Pavilions reports directly their data, and the Pavilions staff can see that they are improving their status, but the general public does not see the changes in real time. The general public only sees the one to five stars updated only a few times per year. The staff being able to see progress is highly motivating.

Progress is occurring at the Pavilions. The next meeting is Thursday, July 25th at Garfield at 9 am.

Commentary on the Debate

By Linda Pepper

It was horrible to watch the failed, fraudulent felon on the stage last night. Please read the Heather Cox Richardson column which puts it all in the proper perspective. Joe Biden is a good president; the county is actually doing well and Trump is the worst person ever to run for the presidency.

https://open.substack.com/pub/heathercoxrichardson/p/june-27-2024?r=fzb19&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email

HELPFUL LINKS & INFO

BOC meetings are usually held at 9 am on the first and third Wednesday of the month.

You can find a link to the agenda and minutes at:

<https://grandtraversecounty.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=418>

You can watch a livestream of the meetings and view replays of previous meetings online at:

<http://www.co.grand-traverse.mi.us/184/Board-of-Commissioners>

You will have to attend the in-person meeting in order to make a public comment. The BOC permits public comment for three minutes at the beginning and end of each meeting.

The BOC has nine commissioners – six Republicans and three Democrats – each of whom represents a district. You can find your commissioner at this link:

<https://www.grandtraversedems.com/boce>

You can find contact info for the BOC members here:

<http://grandtraverse.org/184/Board-of-Commissioners>

You can email all the commissioners at this address:

commissioners@gtcountymi.gov