



Monday, April 13, 2026

The Beacon is a publication written by the Beacon staff; the editorial views expressed are those of the authors. The Beacon Editor can be reached at Beacon_Editor@gt Dems.org.

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The BOC meets on Tuesday this week. The statutorily required equalization meeting must be on the second Tuesday of April, and the Board did not want to have meetings on two days back-to-back, so the normal meeting was moved to Tuesday.

Preview: Board Expected to Opt-Out of TIF but Negotiate Projects, Potentially Hire Firm for Treasurer

By Bruce Moore

At the Tuesday, April 14 Regular Meeting, the Board of Commissioners will vote on opting out of the East Bay Tax Increment Finance (TIF) proposal. The Board could also review a consulting proposal to help the Treasurer resolve problems with balancing accounts and cashing checks for taxes collected from Townships. The full [154-page packet is available on the County website](#).

The Board will meet in closed session to discuss two lawsuits against the County and one attorney opinion. One lawsuit is a [sexual harassment and discrimination lawsuit in Federal Court](#), while the other lawsuit involves personal injury and was filed in the Michigan 13th Circuit Court.

Because most of the items on the April 14 agenda were previously discussed at the April 8 Study Session, the items will be discussed in this preview rather than as a separate article. A video

recording of the April 8 Study Session is available on the the [Traverse Community Media website](#).

Commissioners Hentschel, Nelson, Morris and Sieffert were absent for the April 8 Study Session.



Figure 1: Four of the nine Commissioners were absent for the April 8 Study Session. Photo by Bruce Moore

East Bay TIF Opt-Out on Consent Agenda

At the April 8 Study Session, Commissioners spent about 90 minutes reviewing the County’s TIF policy and the East Bay Township proposal to use TIF money to finance improvements to the US-31 corridor. It became clear that the Commissioners wanted more time to revise the County’s policy before acting on the East Bay Corridor Improvement Authority TIF. It also became clear that the most important improvement—pedestrian crossings—would not be under the control of the Corridor Improvement Authority; pedestrian crossing construction would be controlled by MDOT. The resolution to opt out of the TIF includes the following additional clause:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Commissioners is committed to engaging in ongoing good faith discussions with the East Bay Township Supervisor and other Township Representatives about future County support of projects within the Corridor Improvement Authority.

Commissioner Hentschel (who represents the district that contains the East Bay Corridor Improvement Authority) was silent during the March 18 meeting where this was first discussed, and was absent for the April 8 Study Session.

Board to Review Consulting Proposal to Help Treasurer

The problems in the Treasurer’s office are more extensive than previously reported. The problems are not limited to reconciling bank accounts; there are also problems in settling (depositing)

checks from townships. At the April 13 meeting, the Board will get an update on the status of Administration’s request to the Treasurer to provide a proposal from the Woodhill Group.



Figure 2: County Treasurer Jamie Callahan presented an update on delays in reconciling the County’s bank accounts. Photo by Bruce Moore

At the April 8 Study Session, Jamie Callahan (County Treasurer) gave the Board an update on the problems in his department. During the 35-minute discussion he indicated that he had contacted the Woodhill Group but had not signed a contract with them. He indicated that he was working with the Gratiot County Treasurer to process tax collection checks from townships.

The introduction to this item for the April 13 packet contains the following:

After the study session, Administration Staff requested the Treasurer to obtain a proposal and cost estimate from this firm. As of the date of this report, the Treasurer has reached out to the Woodhill Group, and they are requesting additional information in order to prepare a proposal. If a proposal is available prior to Wednesday’s meeting, we will forward it to Commissioners.

If Woodhill has not provided a proposal before the April 13 meeting, readers should expect to hear questions on whether the Treasurer has provided Woodhill with the information necessary to prepare a proposal.

Callahan indicated that his office is caught up on 2025 reconciliations in advance of the 2025 audit, but is not current for 2026 reconciliations. Auditors are scheduled to arrive on April 20th.

At the February 11, 2026 meeting, Callahan indicated that two employees had left in the previous week. The [County’s job listing page](#) lists an [opening for Deputy Treasurer](#), with a starting hourly rate of \$22.33, or approximately \$46,500 per year. The [area median income \(AMI\) shown on](#)

the Fannie Mae website is \$101,200. The Deputy Treasurer position would pay 46% of AMI. For comparison, the Treasurer’s compensation for 2026 is \$110,858.

All-Bond Financing Planned for Project Alpha

A resolution for all-bond financing for Project Alpha (911 Dispatch Replacement) is on the consent agenda. At the April 8 meeting, the Board reviewed three scenarios for the best use of cash for the Project Alpha, Jail replacement, and Government Center rehab projects. It was clear that to minimize financing costs, cash should be used for the largest of the projects, the Jail replacement. The resolution reflects this, and envisions 100% (up to \$30 million) bond funding for project Alpha.

BATA, EDC, Brownfield, Northern Lakes, TADL Board Interviews

There are vacancies on several organization boards; the BOC will form ad-hoc committees to interview candidates. The following openings are available. To file an application to interview for one of the boards, use the [County website application form](#).

- (1) Rural Representative on the BATA board, term ending December 31, 2028 (previously held by Joe Underwood). For more information, see <https://www.gtcountymi.gov/344/Bay-Area-Transportation-Authority> for more information.
- (1) Representative on the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA), term ending December 31, 2026 (previously held by Amanda Scott). See <https://www.gtcountymi.gov/376/Brownfield-Redevelopment-Authority> for more information.
- (1) Private Sector Representative on the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), term ending December 31, 2027 (previously held by Leah Moskovitz). See <https://www.gtcountymi.gov/695/Economic-Development-Corporation> for more information.
- (1) General Public and (1) Mental Health Representative on the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority (NLCMHA), terms ending March 31, 2029 (previously held by Dave Freedman and Tony Lentych). See <https://northernlakescmh.com/about-us/board-of-directors/> for more information.
- (1) Representative from District 1, 2, 6, or 8 on the Traverse Area District Library Board (TADL), term ending December 31, 2026 (previously held by Susan Odgers). See <https://www.tadl.org/TADLboard> for more information. For a [map of County Commission districts](#), see the [GT Dems website](#).

Upcoming terms ending:

- (1) Representative on the Hospital Finance Authority (HFA), term ending June 30, 2031 (currently held by Commissioner Rob Hentschel). This seat is appointed by the Chairman.



ACTION FOR THE WEEK
Apply for a board position. Openings include:
BATA Rural Rep Brownfield Redevelopment,
Economic Development Corp,
Northern Lakes Community Mental Health
Traverse Area District Library

East Bay Township has openings for a Planning Commissioner, two Zoning Board of Appeals members, and two Board of Review (property tax) members. For information, go to <https://eastbaytwp.org/government/employment.php>.

Contacting the Beacon

The Beacon Editor can be reached at Beacon_Editor@gt Dems.org.

Helpful Links and Info

BOC meetings are usually held at 9:00 am on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Find a link to the agenda at: <https://grandtraversecounty.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal>.

Watch the livestream of the meetings at: <https://www.tacm.tv/govtvnow.asp>.

The BOC permits public comment for up to three minutes each at the beginning and end of each meeting. Public comment remotely is not allowed. If you wish to make a public comment, you need to attend the meeting.

The BOC has nine commissioners—five Republicans and four Democrats—each of whom represents a district. Find your commissioner at: <https://www.gtcountymi.gov/184/Board-of-Commissioners>.

Recent [airport meetings](#) are available on YouTube.

Email all commissioners at: commissioners@gtcountymi.gov.

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