Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
July 7, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Jerrel Olson. Other Commissioners present were Dwight Nelson, Chad Metz, and Kayla Schmidt. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Upon a motion by Metz and a second by Nelson, the agenda was unanimously approved with the following addition: Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager/Solid Waste Coordinator to discuss a Recycling Grant. There were no conflicts of interest expressed. The June 15, 2026, Board of Equalization and June 16, 2026, regular meeting minutes were unanimously approved upon a motion by Nelson and a second by Schmidt. Gail joined the meeting at 9:02 a.m.

Highway Department

County Engineer Chad Gillespie and Highway Maintenance Supervisor Brian Koch appeared before the Board. Gillespie asked for approval to sign the contract for CP 26-01 for the CSAH 5 Graveling Project with CT Sibson Gravel & Crushing Inc. which was approved unanimously upon a motion by Schmidt and a second by Metz. Gillespie went over informational items. They are working on the future replacement of Bridge 8677 on County Road 87 Northeast of Wheaton; the RFP's have been sent out. He provided an update on the CSAH 9 project, stating that the seal coat is scheduled for approximately the middle of July. He also provided a CSAH 6 and Croke TWP Box Culverts Project update, noting that construction is planned to start around the last week of July. He gave a 2026 equipment update, reporting that the diamond side deck is complete and mounted on the 6130R, and the sign truck chassis is estimated to arrive on July 20, with the box build currently in the works. Gillespie informed the Commissioners that the Federal Highway Administration requires traffic count reporting on certain roads. MnDOT is responsible for providing the Federal Highway Administration with this information. The information is used to produce volume, classification, speed and weight data as well as traffic forecasts, vehicle miles traveled figures, reports, maps and analysis. MnDOT contracts with Quality Counts to obtain the data by using video cameras attached to telescoping poles and secured to signs or existing poles.

Law Enforcement Center

Sheriff Trevor Wright was unable to appear before the Board.

Soil and Water Conservation District

District Administrative Manager Sara Gronfeld appeared before the Board. County program updates were provided. There were no new SSTS permit applications. For the SSTS Low-Income Upgrade Grant, all funding has been allocated, and installations are pending. The Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) has a potential project site visit and bridge project delineation preliminary review. Comprehensive Watershed Management updates were provided for the Bois de Sioux–Mustinka Plan and the Upper Minnesota River Plan. SWCD spring fieldwork continues, with some projects completed. Soil Health Grants are available, however, funding is currently limited for cover crops, strip-till/no-till, and other practices. Federal funding contracts are accepting new applications. Regarding the Soil Health Demonstration Project, a field day is scheduled for Saturday, August 8, 2026, featuring Ray Archuleta and the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition.

County Coordinator

Upon a motion by Schmidt and a second by Metz, the following bills were approved unanimously.

ADAVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCARE, INC.	$6,635.08
COMPUTERSHARE TRUST COMPANY NA	$11,540.00
ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE, INC.	$4,799.08
GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP	$3,450.00
HOMETOWN PLANNING	$3,185.00
MARTIN SYSTEMS, LLC	$3,977.58
SEACHANGE PRINT INNOVATIONS	$3,805.93
US BANK	$10,170.00
CHS	$3,257.58
COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION	$2,159.71
CONTECH ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS, LLC	$24,506.00
ERIC'S AUTO AND GLASS	$7,092.07
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	$2,536.17
TWIN VALLEY TIRE OF WHEATON, INC	$11,613.12
MINNEWASKA COMMUNITY HEALTH SERV	$20,538.64

Per M.S. §375.12, there were 45 claims of less than $2,000.00 totaling $18,946.59.

Emergency Manager/Solid Waste Coordinator Lynn Siegel appeared before the Board to seek approval to apply for a Recycling Grant for glass. Steven Hormann reached out to Siegel, he ordered the product, and the grant would help offset the expense. Upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Metz the Board unanimously approved applying for the grant. County Coordinator Lisa Zahl brought forward a quote from CatalystIT through Valley Office Products for a new copier for Extension. The purchase option quote is $5,297.86. This purchase was approved unanimously upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Metz. Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson reviewed MCIT's Cyber Coverage Enhancements. The County has the option to purchase an additional $1 million in coverage. The consensus of the Board was for Johnson to get a quote for the extra coverage. Zahl reviewed the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee grant recommendations. The committee received twelve grant applications requesting a total of $131,324.99 in funding. The committee recommended approval of six grant applications totaling $40,780.00. Upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Nelson, the recommendations were approved unanimously. Zahl asked the Board if they would be interested in applying to have part of Traverse County considered an Opportunity Zone. Opportunity Zones are a community development program first established by Congress in 2017 and reauthorized in 2025. Each Governor is authorized to designate 25% of the eligible census tracts as Opportunity Zones in their state. In Minnesota, this means that the Governor can designate approximately 73 census tracts as Opportunity Zones out of approximately 289 eligible low-income census tracts. If designated as an Opportunity Zone, investors may receive certain tax benefits when investing capital gains into qualified projects located within the zone. The census tract in Traverse County would cover Browns Valley and Dumont. The consensus of the Board was to have Zahl apply for the area to be considered as an Opportunity Zone. Morris Electronics, our IT company, informed Zahl that on June 12, they became part of Trafera. The Board was informed that the county should not notice much of a change with this merger.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Committee Reports

Schmidt attended the Bois de Sioux Watershed District meeting and the Extension meeting. Nelson attended the Western Prairie Executive Committee and Personnel meetings, as well as the Extension meeting.

Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

_____ _____

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator Jerrel Olson, Chair