

County Administrator's Digest

July 20, 2012

Alan G. Vanderberg, County Administrator

County of Ottawa
Administrator's Office
12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, MI 49460
(616) 738-4068
avanderberg@miottawa.org
www.miottawa.org

MARIE WAALKES RETIREMENT

Though the news has started to percolate through the County organization, I'm sure there are those that haven't heard that Marie Waalkes is retiring from her position as HR Director effective September 15th. Marie is in consideration for a high level commission position in Lansing which would allow her to continue her career in HR but with a lesser time commitment.

When Marie told me of her plans we reminisced about the interview process and our first meeting together after she was hired. Marie committed to tenure of 3-5 years as HR Director and hit the 5-year mark in May. Marie led the major transformation of Human Resources Department to a department that has proven to be a trusted employer representative, employee resource, and developer of employees. HR is also a trusted partner for departments and employees while meeting all other legal obligations that an HR department must meet.

I am grateful to Marie for her years of service and she will be missed. Part of her plan for the HR Department was to develop succession capability and a talented department and she was successful in this regard as well.

The HR Director position has been posted and we hope to have a replacement named by her final day on Friday, September 14, 2012.

I'm arm wrestling Marie over what I can do to recognize her on the way out and she really insists that I do nothing. If you wish to express appreciation to Marie for her excellent service as Ottawa County HR director please don't wait for an open house in case she wins the arm wrestling match.

DB/DC CONVERSION RESULTS

The Board of Commissioners voted in 2011 to place new hires into a MERS defined contribution pension plan thus closing the MERS defined benefit pension plan to new members at the same time. Subsequently, 16 of 17 County employee pension groups agreed to the change. The defined contribution plan for new hires in the Group T, Unclassified, and Commissioners groups began on January 1, 2012 and existing employees had the option during a successive six-month window to



decide whether to stick with the defined benefit plan or move their assets to the new defined contribution plan. I reiterate that the only groups at this time that were eligible to convert during the open window period (which is now closed) were Unclassified, Group T and Commissioners. A total of approximately 520 employees were eligible, and eleven expressed an interest in moving their pension assets to the new defined contribution plan including five in Group T, five in Unclassified, and one Commissioner.

We plan to transition new hires for possibly all but at least for as many of the rest of the County employee pension groups that we practically can on January 1, 2013.

The change from defined benefit to defined contribution is projected to save the County and its taxpayers a net \$30 million over 30 years with the majority of the savings realized in the latter part of the 30 year timeframe.

SBIR TRAINING (Mark Knudsen)

The Ottawa County Planning Commission is hosting a seminar to inform entrepreneurs and small business owners about federal grants that are available for technology-related business ideas. ([click here to view the flyer](#))

Each year, Congress funds the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs to support the research and development of new technology-related products or innovative new services. These programs are the federal government's largest small business research and development (R&D) grant programs with over \$2 billion being awarded to entrepreneurs and small businesses annually. Over \$1 million can be awarded per business to develop new technology ideas.

The Ottawa County Planning Commission is hosting a seminar to inform entrepreneurs and small business owners about the availability of these funds which will include a review of the following: eligibility requirements, strategies for developing a successful grant proposal, recent congressional changes to the SBIR and STTR Programs, and resources available in Michigan to help entrepreneurs and businesses prepare a SBIR/STTR application.

The seminar integrates with Ottawa County's current effort to study the feasibility of establishing a business incubator to provide mentoring, training, facilities, and other forms of assistance to entrepreneurs who have new business ideas. A business incubator helps improve the long-term survival rates of new businesses when compared to other business start-ups that do not receive incubator assistance. Ottawa County's incubator would specifically target entrepreneurs who have technology-related business ideas that are focused on one of the County's greatest strengths – Agriculture.

This seminar will focus primarily on grants that are available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for entrepreneurs and small businesses with an agriculture-related technology idea. However, information will also be presented on all 11 federal agencies that distribute SBIR and STTR grants. The seminar will be conducted by Jim Greenwood, a nationally recognized expert in the SBIRSTTR Programs. Other program experts

will also be in attendance to answer questions about any of the 11 federally funded programs and provide direction about future grant applications.

The seminar will be held on Wednesday, August 8, 2012 from 4:30 pm - 9:00 pm at the Hemlock Crossing Nature Education Center located at 8115 West Olive Road, West Olive, MI 49460. The cost for the training is \$10/person which includes a box-meal. Space is limited so pre-registration is required. Registrations must be received no later than Thursday, August 2, 2012.

For more information about the seminar, or to obtain a Registration Form, contact the Ottawa County Planning Department either by phone at 616-738-4852 or by email at plan@miottawa.org. Participants can also obtain information about the seminar, register for the event, and pay online at http://www.miottawa.org/CoGov/Depts/Planning/Economic_Development.htm.

If you know of a business that may be interested in this training, please feel free to distribute the attached seminar brochure.

QUARTERLY MEETING BETWEEN OTTAWA COUNTY AND OTTAWA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION (Keith Van Beek)

Members of the Board of Commissioners and Road Commission continued their tradition of meeting quarterly on Wednesday, July 18, 2012 to share and discuss items of interest. Following is a recap on the subjects of discussion.

- 1 – MDOT representatives were present at the meeting, they discussed the M-231/US-31 timeline and distributed a handout which is included in the next digest article below.
- 2 – The Study Committees for both the Road Commission and Public Utilities Department were discussed. Resolutions for both the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners and the Ottawa County Board of Road Commissioners to agree to the process were reviewed and should be included on Board agendas for approval soon.
- 3 – Commissioner Disselkoen reported on a recent conference where he attended a session on rural safety.
- 4 – Brett Laughlin reported that due to the heat they are having problems with the chip seal and also other buckling issues.
- 5 – The Board Application process was discussed and will start up again in September including two position openings for Road Commissioners.
- 6 – Health Insurance for Road Commissioners was discussed; this is something the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners plans to look at in a future Work Session.
- 7 – Due to savings in the Road Commission Budget, two road projects were able to move up to this year's list.

8 – The Road Commission to this date has put out five “Understanding” flyers. These have been received extremely well.

M-231 BYPASS UPDATE

MDOT project staff Dennis Kent and Vicki Wiersma attended the quarterly meeting with Road Commission officials to update the group on M-231 progress. The project is on schedule which follows below. MDOT was also kind to provide five photos of the M-231 interchange construction at I-96 and 112th Street and the pictures follow the construction schedule.

M-231/US-31 Ottawa County/Project Phasing

Proposed Construction Plan —February 2012 Update

2010

- Final Environmental Impact Statement signed by Federal Highway Administration Grading & Clearing - Sleeper Street north to The Grand River

2011

- M-231 over North Cedar Drive - construction started Project Design, Permit and Right-Of-Way (ROW) Activities — ongoing

2012

- M- 104 from west of 124th Avenue, east to I-96 - construction
- I-96 at the 112th Avenue Interchange - construction
- I-96 (Cross-Overs and Shoulder Work for FY 2013 Projects) - construction Project Design, Permit and ROW Activities — ongoing

2013-2015

- M-231 over The Grand River (approximately 3900') - construction
- M-231 over The Little Robinson Creek - construction
- M-231 from The Grand River north to M- 104 - construction
- M-231 at the I-96 Interchange - construction
- I-96 from west of Abandoned RR Bridges to east of 112th Avenue - construction

- M-23 1 from M-45 north to The Little Robinson Creek — construction Project Design, Permit and ROW Activities — ongoing

2016-2018

- US-31 from Lakewood Boulevard north to Quincy Street - construction US-3 1 from Franklin Street north to Jackson Street — construction

Note: The new M-23 1 route will be open to traffic when all segments are completed, between M-45 and I-96/M-104.



PARK PROJECTS UPDATE (John Scholtz)

GRAND RIVER GREENWAY

Connor Bayou: Work along the waterfront has been permitted by the MDEQ but is delayed as we await final approval by the Corps of Engineers. Other aspects of project are nearing completion and should be ready by the original project completion date of mid-August. The park is expected to open on August 18 for the Greenway Celebration Community Picnic and remain open to the public thereafter. Major items completed in the past month include installation of the irrigation system, seeding, and widening of the entrance drive. Work on the bayou overlook deck and entrance boulevard is in progress. The fishing dock and boardwalks related to the waterfront trail will be delayed until the Corps permit is issued.



Cabin entrance area



View over main lawn area



Barrier free walkway



Widened entrance drive



Bayou overlook deck framing



New crushed stone path

Eastmanville Farm Memory Grove: Construction is complete. Some minor corrections to the interpretive signs are in progress. These signs interpret the history of the poor farm.



Grand River Open Space Site Improvements. Planning is underway for basic access improvements to this recently acquired open space land in Tallmadge Township off of Linden Drive. Initial design work to realign a portion of the existing entrance drive, install a new gravel parking area, and add amenities including a rustic toilet and kiosk has been completed. A permit to work in the floodplain is being prepared. The goal is to complete construction by early October prior to waterfowl hunting season since the site will be open to all types of hunting and is expected to be a good place to hunt waterfowl.

Grand River Park Boat Launch. The project is substantially complete to completely renovate the boat launch at Grand River Park. The contractor has done a commendable job in keeping plants and grass growing through drought conditions.



PIGEON RIVER GREENWAY

Pigeon Creek Lodge Expansion. The Lodge is being expanded to better accommodate the large numbers of skiers and sledders using concessions, ski rental and warming house. Concrete foundations and masonry have been completed. Framing and other carpentry will begin soon.



Construction area



New masonry foundation wall



Transformer relocation

MACATAWA RIVER GREENWAY

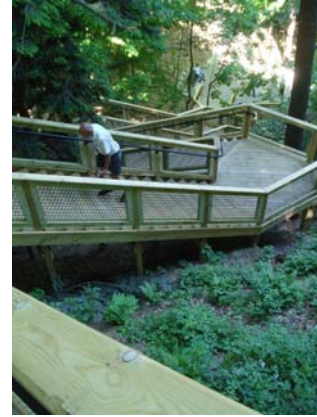
Upper Macatawa Natural Area Greenway Path. The Parks Commission is waiting on notification as to grant award for the paved pathway that will connect to the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail through the Upper Macatawa Natural Area linking to exist pathway on Adams Street. Additional information requested by the MDOT grant coordinator has been submitted. Indications remain positive for funding the project, although the changes in the new federal transportation bill significantly reduce trail funding and could impact this project.

Holland Country Club. Three boardwalk sections have been completed in existing wetland areas on the south side of Noorderloos Creek. Boardwalk work and major excavation along and north of the creek and the Macatawa River began earlier this week. Work on more a detailed layout of the disc golf course is in progress. Final completion of all work is expected by late fall with recreational use to begin in the spring.



LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL GREENWAY

Olive Shores. The project is complete and park dedication was held on May 23. Some minor corrections and a couple of additions are in progress. The park is receiving significant public use.



Ottawa Beach Waterfront Walkway. This project will link the east and west park improvements along Lake Macatawa with a hard surface pathway. A Trust Fund grant has been approved and we are awaiting appropriation of grant funds by the Michigan legislature. Topographic survey work will be completed in the next couple of months to be ready for the planning and design phase. Consultant selection will also occur over the next couple of months so that design development, permit applications, and construction drawings can begin in the fall pending final funding approval.

OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS

Musketawa Trail Extension/Connector. The project is nearing completion. Paving is almost complete. The berm next to our trail neighbor has been enlarged and fencing along the edge of the new trail ROW is in progress.

GVMC DIRECTOR WEISS UPDATE

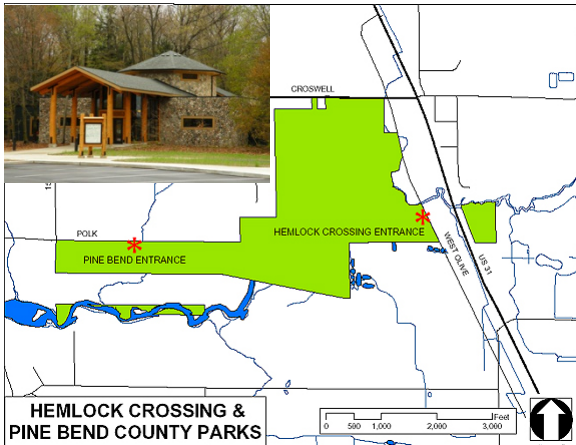
[Click here](#) to read the latest weekly update from GVMC Executive Director John Weiss.

This Training is made possible through the support of the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners:

Phil Kuyers, Chair
Jim Holtrop, Vice-Chair
Joseph Bauman
Greg DeJong
Donnald Disselkoe
Jim Holtluer
Robert Karsten
Jane M. Ruitter
Roger Rycenga
Dennis Swartout
Stu Visser

In Cooperation with the Ottawa County Planning Commission:

Jim Miedema, Chair
Bill Miller, Vice Chair
Joseph Bauman
Greg DeJong
Adam Kantrovich
Roman Wilson
Doug Zylstra



Hemlock Crossing Nature Center

8115 West Olive Road
West Olive, MI 49460

Ottawa County Planning and Performance Improvement
12220 Fillmore Street, Room 260
West Olive, Michigan 49460



Entrepreneurs & Small Business Owners

Learn How to Develop a Successful Proposal to Obtain Federal Funds For Your Technology-Based Business Idea

August 8, 2012

4:30pm – 9:00pm
Hemlock Crossing Nature Center, West Olive, MI



SBIR and STTR Seminar – Federal R&D Grant Opportunities

What is SBIR and STTR?

Each year, Congress funds the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs to support the research and development of new technology-related products or innovative new services.

These programs are the federal government's largest small business research and development (R&D) grant programs with over \$2 billion being awarded to entrepreneurs and small businesses annually.

The SBIR and STTR grants are the best source of early stage risk capital available to help fund the development of promising new technologies and can serve as a pathway to equity financing. More than \$1 million can be awarded per business to develop new technology ideas.

What are the Minimum Eligibility Requirements to Receive SBIR and STTR Grant Funding?

- Be a for-profit business with 500 or fewer employees
- Independently owned and operated and have its principal place of business in the U.S.
- Be at least 51 percent owned by U.S. citizens or lawfully permanent resident aliens
- The primary employment of the principal investigator must be with the small business



What Will You Learn at the Seminar?

- Types of projects funded by different participating grant funding agencies (emphasis on USDA)
- Strategies for developing a successful grant proposal
- Recent Congressional changes in the SBIR and STTR Programs
- Resources available to help businesses that are preparing a SBIR/STTR application

Need More Information?

Please contact the Ottawa County Planning Department either by phone at 616-738-4852 or by email at plan@miottawa.org



This seminar is being provided to entrepreneurs and small businesses by the Ottawa County Planning Commission and the USDA.

The seminar is being conducted by Jim Greenwood, of Greenwood Consulting Group, Inc. Jim is a nationally recognized expert in the SBIR and STTR Programs.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider

Register and Pay Online at
www.miottawa.org/OnlinePaymentCenter/

Or

Complete and Return the Registration Form Below:



Seminar Registration Form

Registration Deadline is August 2
Space is Limited
Cost is \$10/Person (includes meal)

Name: _____

Business: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

A Box-Meal Will be Provided
(includes sandwich, drink, fruit, pickle, and cookie)

Please Select Meal Option

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Sandwich | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuna Salad Sandwich |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ham Sandwich | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Salad Sandwich |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roast Beef Sandwich | <input type="checkbox"/> Veggie Supreme Sandwich |

Return the completed form with payment to:

Ottawa County Planning Department
12220 Fillmore Street, Room 260
West Olive, MI 49460

Please make checks in the amount of \$10
payable to Ottawa County



July 13, 2012

Lt. Governor Calley Meets with GVMC Board and Record Setting Quarterly Luncheon

On Monday, Lt. Governor Brian Calley met with the GVMC Board and was the guest speaker at our record-setting Quarterly Luncheon. The meeting was a collaborative effort between GVMC and the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce.

At our Board Meeting prior to the luncheon, the Lt. Governor discussed many of the Snyder Administration's goals for future and the agenda for the revitalization of Michigan's Economy. In a very casual format, he was able to speak directly to the Board Members and answer a variety of questions.



His comments spoke directly to the work being done to improve Michigan economic climate and many of the critical issues facing our state. For example, the revenue implications of the expanded casino proposal and dangers in-

involved in the multiple ballot proposals to amend Michigan's Constitution were discussed in addition to the true economic impacts of the International Trade Crossing.

The Detroit/Windsor crossing is one of the most important trade crossings in the world. As an example, Chrysler moves over 1,300 component shipments; ships over 2,000 cars and trucks; and makes over 1,600 customs entries every day in Detroit.

Al Vandenberg, Ottawa County Administrator commented after the meeting, "It is refreshing to work with a Governor's Office that respects and works with the bottom line in the same fashion that counties, cities and townships must do each and every day."

Following the Board Meeting the Lt. Governor was the speaker at our July Quarterly Luncheon. The lunch was attended by 170 GVMC and GR Chamber members and set a new record for attendance. He spoke in more detail about the November ballot issues, PPT reform, the International Trade Crossing Agreement and the proposal for a state-run health care exchange program.

He praised West Michigan business and governmental leaders for their role in improving Michigan's tax climate. He said with

the Governor's ever positive approach, Michigan has moved from "49th best" in the nation to "7th" best.

GVMC chairman and Grandville Mayor Jim Buck said of the meeting, "It was a great way to build a partnership with the Grand Rapids Chamber." Alpine Township Supervisor Alex Arends commented, "Whether you were Republican or Democrat, you could not have left the presentation without feeling a whole lot better about Michigan and its leadership. I liked his suggestion that we should explore partnering not just with other municipalities but other entities as well. It was great to see so many people in attendance." Walker Mayor Rob VerHeulen added simply, "It was great".

Focus on Cooperation

Fireworks Portal

One of our most critical emerging issues is the new fireworks law. We are receiving many visitors to our website to view the Fireworks Ordinances available online. Please feel free to review the ordinances we have posted at www.gvmc.org If your community has adopted a new ordinance and you have not already forwarded a copy to us, please do so and we will post it online to share with others.