



January 24, 2008

Special points of interest:

- **County Website is more accessible and user-friendly.**
- **Economic Development discussions begin.**
- **Facilities Management Director Seeks New Opportunity.**
- **Dispatch Supervisor Promoted to Training Coordinator.**

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Administrative Update

County Website is Redesigned

The County Website continues to be a vital tool for accessing information and conducting business. The County is committed to continuously improving this resource for our citizens. Months of internal programming work, conceptual designing and collaboration has yielded a more robust, up to date and user friendly site. The new design focused on two key concepts, ease of use and cross-

connectivity (i.e. ability to drill down to other areas of the site without having to start from the main home page each time).

The site has been proudly redesigned internally through our Information Services Department. The department realigned resources last year to place more emphasis on our web technologies. This was based heavily on feedback both internally and from the community.

Feedback on the site has been very positive. Please

visit the new site and let us know if there are any changes or improvements that need to be made.



New County Site

Economic Development Workgroup Held First Meeting

Economic Development has been selected as a top issue by many County leaders. However, what exactly the role of the County is in the County-wide Economic Development picture still needs some research. There are many models throughout the State but it is important to choose a structure that meets the specific needs of Allegan County.

In an effort to gather input from Community stake-

holders, County Administration has sought the assistance of a representative workgroup to begin discussions on County-wide Economic Development needs and the role of the County. The workgroup includes Kevin Ricco, Allegan County Parks and Tourism Director (Project Leader); Steve Schulz, Allegan Township Supervisor; Theresa Bray, Executive Director, Allegan County Community Foundation; Fritz Spreitzer, Planning Commission; Julie

Cowie, Casco Township Clerk; Eric Wilson, Plainwell City Manager; Deborah Nier, Wayland City Manager; Sara Busfield, Allegan Chamber of Commerce ; Nora Balgoyen-Williams, AAESA (Michigan Works Manager); Cathy Burton-Snell, ACISD – Director of Technology; Eric Trevan, NEPG; Valdis Kalnins, Allegan County LIS Director; Paul Wylie, MSU Extension; Sandra Lauer, Allegan County Planning Commission/ Economic Development.



Through collaborative planning efforts the County has begun to align its resources to achieve results.

“The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can’t blow an uncertain trumpet.”

Theodore M. Hesburgh



Brett Butler, Allegan County Facilities Management Director

County Strategic Planning Begins to Show

Last year the County began to do business differently and commit to an on-going planning philosophy. While the process itself continues to be refined, the results are already helping to lead the County. The process incorporates input at all levels of the organization.

The top three issues were identified by the Board as:

1. County Jail Project—The

Board has begun to allocate capital funds for this project, selected a site, initiated geo-technical review of the site, and has recently approved two workgroups focusing on funding models and professional services.

2. Economic Development—The Board authorized a workgroup to identify the needs through the County and explore the role of

County Government in the Economic Development picture. The Allegan County Parks and Tourism Director was chosen to spearhead this team for 2008 as well as covering other Economic Development activities.

3. Facilities Planning—The Board authorized funding and a project team to evaluate our current and future facility needs.

Animal Shelter Task Force

In 2007 the drainage issues of the current Animal Shelter worsened. In response the Board of Commissioners responsibly authorized a task force to consider the issues tied to the existing building and operations and recommend the appropriate course of action. The task force has been focusing on the cost

comparison of repairing the existing building versus the cost of new construction. A lot of effort has gone into evaluating the needs for a facility and investigating ways to ensure that the dollars spent on this project are maximized. The task force will be presenting findings to the Board in February or March.

The task force consists of the following representatives: Veterinarian Jim Connell of Allegan, Animal Control Officer Tim Halstead, Under Sheriff Jim Hull, Dept. of Agriculture Veterinarian Wendy Osman, Local Volunteers Janet & Ken Masher, County Administrator Robert Sarro, Facilities Management Director Brett

Facilities Management Director Seeks New Opportunity

After over 10 years of excellent service to Allegan County, Facilities Management Director Brett Butler has accepted an opportunity with another organization. At their January 24, 2008 Board Meeting, the Allegan County Board of Commissioners presented Brett with a recognition award that highlighted some of his accomplishments throughout his tenure with

Alleган County. Some projects he was instrumental on were the Complex Tree Beautification Project, Facilities Master Plan, Facilities Emergency Plan, Courthouse Security, Jail/Juvenile Detention Facility Committee, Probate Court Renovation Project, and the County Historical Photographic Preservation Project. As a member and Chairman of the Allegan

County Building Authority on projects such as the Medical Care Facility Special Needs Unit Project, Human Services Building Project, Human Services Terrace Level Build Out Project, 911/Central Dispatch and Emergency Management Building Project, and most recently the Households FIDS Medical Care Facility Project. Brett’s official last day with the County is January 31, 2008.

2007 Budget

It is that time when we begin to close out the previous fiscal year; however, there are several factors that need to take place before the final numbers can be established.

Appropriate 2007 payables will continue to be recorded through mid-February. Revenues will continue to be recorded through the end of March. Around the beginning of April, the official audit will begin and will take place

through June. Once the audit is complete we can release the final numbers for 2007.

Of course, prior to the official numbers, we always get inquiries on where we think we will wind up. Based on preliminary assessment it is likely that we will be approximately 1% over in our revenues and 1% under in our expenditures. This represents about \$600,000. With a \$30,000,000 budget this re-

flects a very narrow margin and demonstrates very judicious spending and accurate budgeting.



2007 financial numbers will be officially released in June 2008.

Central Dispatch Implements Training Coordinator Position

On January 21st Ms. Sarah Taylor enjoyed her first day as the new Allegan County Central Dispatch Training Coordinator. Ms. Taylor was hired by the County in March 2000 as a Dispatcher. She was promoted to Supervisor in July 2006 prior to this latest promotion.

The Training Coordinator position is a newly created position funded through 911 surcharge funds. The Central Dispatch Team had requested this position during the 2007 budget. It has been designed to address the increasing demand for efficient and effective training aimed at providing more fo-

cused training for new hires and on-going training for all staff and related agencies. In her new role, Ms. Taylor will be improving our already excellent dispatch services by:

- Eliminating the need for the staff to train at the console, reducing the time it takes to train a new dispatcher because trainees will not have to work with a dispatcher who is taking calls and dispatching,
- Meeting with all shifts to review new policies and procedures and train the staff on new technology

or processes in dispatch

- Training multiple staff at the same time

Dispatch Centers throughout the state will be keeping an eye on the success of this concept. This approach to training and quality assurance will likely become a model based on preliminary feedback.



Ms. Sarah Taylor, Allegan County Central Dispatch Training Coordinator

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

John Quincy Adams



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Recent Board Action

January 10, 2007

Administration— approve budget adjustment for organizational structure change.

Health Department—approve Amendment No. 1 to the 2007/2008 CPBC Agreement.

Health Department—renew MDEQ Services Agreement 2007/2008

Transportation—approve Transit Facility site land purchase Option Agreement

Transportation—approve Transit Facility site plan/authorize bid document preparation

Board of Commissioners—laptop Internet access; approve additional appropriation.

Ban on Phosphorus Ordinance—set timeline, approved verbiage and separate fine schedule pending legal review.

Administrator's Comments:

Your Feedback Makes a Difference



**Robert Sarro, Allegan County
Administrator**

As I continue to acquire feedback from all of our employees, there has been a consistent request for information in a newsletter format. The discussion has raised awareness of the tremendous amount of information that is available through our websites; however, the need for a more direct medium still exists. This update/newsletter is a step towards addressing that need. I will be combining the concept of the conventional Board update with a newsletter format and providing the information to everyone in the organi-

zation. Due to limited resources the content will be limited to factual and business oriented information; however, I am hopeful that it will be enjoyable to read. In effort to make this successful I will need your help. While I will already be incorporating the quarterly updates that the administrative departments provide into these updates, I need all of your assistance in providing information to report that you believe is important. In particular I want to focus on the changes taking place that support the visions of increas-

ing communication, ways that we are continually improving our services, and the development and achievements of our employees (training, promotions, community involvement, etc.).

Perhaps more important than this update itself is the nature in which it is being created...a result of your feedback. Each and every employee brings value to this organization, lets continue to share ideas and motivate each other to succeed. Thank You.