



December 30, 2009

# Administrative Update

## In The Last Issue:

- New Director of Senior Services
- Property Appraiser Promoted
- Jail Project
- Progress On Probate/ Family Court
- Medical Care Facility FIDS Project
- Transportation Department Update
- 911 Annual Report

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## New County Transportation Building

Allegan County Transportation (ACT) has a new home located at 750 Airway Drive in the Allegan City Highland Industrial Park. The project started with a plan in 2004 to build a facility that would house transit administration, vehicle maintenance, and an indoor vehicle storage. The administration area includes the Transportation Director, Operations Manager, and Scheduling/Call-takers. The maintenance area can serve both transit and county departments with a fleet of vehicles.

In 2005 ACT was awarded a MDOT/FTA grant to start the process. With significant planning in 2007 the design was developed to meet a 20 year operational need. Phase I construction was started in 2008 and completed in April of 2009. After fiber-optic installation was completed in May, the facility was open for business June 15, 2009.

Phase II is currently under construction and being funded with Economic Stimulus funds. Phase II is planned to be complete in April 2010 and will add an additional maintenance area, bus wash, inside storage for up to 28 vehicles, and additional parking. The total cost is approximately \$3,668,250 (Phase I \$1,942,000 and Phase II \$1,726,250).





**Animal Shelter,  
2293 33rd Street**

*“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”*  
*- Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## **New County Animal Shelter**

On June 25, 2009, the County awarded DVK Construction the bid to build the new Animal Shelter. The ground breaking ceremony took place on August 13, 2009 and in just a few short months, the building was standing. The facility is expected to be completed and operational by mid to late January. Final stages for the sewage lift pump system and phone/computer lines are all that remain to close this project out.

This new 5,700 sq. ft. building will have the ability to house up to 30 dogs, 16 puppies, and 32 cats at the time of opening and will be expandable to double those numbers over time as the need dictates. Services will improve by providing separate rooms to perform spay/neutering, vaccinations and wellness checks. Also, there will be areas for quarantine and an adoption room to better accommodate a stress free area for animals to interact with potential families.

The kennel design and drainage systems will allow for a healthier atmosphere with more efficient means of cleaning. A more adequate air handling system will also reduce odors and potential spread of diseases and other maladies.

A part-time shelter manager position started in September of 2009 and will have office space to improve services to the citizens of Allegan County and manage a corps of volunteers.

## **Medical Care Facility Households - FIDS Project**

After a busy year of hard work, the Medical Care Community Households Project concluded this past summer. The first phase to construct the 10 resident dementia memory care center was dedicated to Perrigos on January 27, for their large donation of \$100,000 to the project. The second phase to renovate the 12 north corridor resident rooms into the Garden view household complete with a separate kitchen and living area was completed on June 27. The special needs unit that was opened in 1998 has been converted into a short-term rehabilitation unit.

This project was originally driven by a County need to renovate from a traditional “medical model” into a “household model” and after learning of a State of Michigan “Facility Initiative Design Supplement” (FIDS) grant program in 2007 that was created to assist nursing care facilities with this transition the County seized the opportunity to make this happen for Allegan County. The construction and renovations project was completed with \$2.25mil expended. Funding the project was also assisted by the generous people of Allegan County through the “Caring for Generations” capital campaign, earning nearly \$500,000 and the FIDS grant is predicted to earn \$650,000.

## Jail Update

The County Board continues to move forward with the Jail project. On July 16, 2009, the Board of Commissioners approved a proposed Construction Management RFP drafted by the Criminal Justice Project Team. The proposals were sent out with only 8 submissions received. After review of the proposals including interviews, a firm was recommended to the Board and on October 1, 2009, the Board of Commissioners awarded the bid to Construction Control, Inc. out of Fort Wayne, IN. The next step was to release a Request for Proposals for Architectural/Engineering services, which was released on December 8, with an expected return date of January 6, 2010.

Once an architect is chosen, the next step will be a design charrette. This will involve the collaboration of project stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan or design.

In more recent events, the County acquired the Haworth property; 22 acres of land on River Street on Tuesday, December 29. This is an exciting move for the County since this site will provide a tremendous cost savings and is in the County seat. This location for the Sheriff Department/Jail will jump start this much needed project.

## Probate Court Renovation Project

On April 20, 2009, the Probate and Family Court personnel successfully moved into their new quarters at the Courthouse. An open house was held showing off the new renovation on June 4, 2009. This project will improve County functionality by having one centralized court building.

The project was a complete success coming in under budget at approximately \$731,531.

New Probate Courtroom,  
Courthouse



*“Change is the law  
of life. And those  
who look only to  
the past or present  
are certain to miss  
the future.”*

*- John F.  
Kennedy*

*“People grow  
through experience  
if they meet life  
honestly and  
courageously. This  
is how character is  
built.”*

*-Eleanor  
Roosevelt*

## **New Director of Human Resources**

Vickie Herzberg was appointed as the new Director of Human Resources on October 22, 2009; beginning her employment with the County on October 26.

An evaluation team consisting of four individuals reviewed 174 applicants and after several weeks of hard work identified Vickie as the best qualified candidate for the position.

Vickie comes to Allegan County with over 20 years of experience in Human Resources and Management in both the public and private sector.

Her leadership and interpersonal qualities will enhance the services the Human Resources Department already provides.



**Vickie Herzberg, Director  
of Human Resources**

## **New Director of Senior Services**

Sherry Torres was appointed as the new Director of Senior Services on October 22, 2009; beginning her employment with the County on November 2, 2009.

She comes to Allegan County with over 7 years of experience working in senior services related positions and administration. She has also been an active participant on a variety of senior services oriented board and committees.

Sherry will complement the Senior Services Department by displaying her passion and knowledge to our County seniors.



**Sherry Torres, Director of  
Senior Services**

## Senior Services employee receives certification

The Board of Commissioners honored Rebekah Walton on October 22, 2009, for completing her Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP) training and receiving accreditation as a MMAP Counselor.

Rebekah has been the Outreach & Assessment Coordinator for Senior Services since April 27, 2009. This accreditation will allow Rebekah to assist people, their families, and caregivers with Medicare; providing them the knowledge to make informed health care coverage decisions.

With this certification, she has been able to assist the public during the Medicare open enrollment period in December with prescription plan D.



Rebekah Walton, MMAP  
Counselor

## Employee recognized for 25 years of service

Dian Liepe will be recognized during a Board of Commissioners meeting on January 28, 2010 for serving Allegan County for 25 years.

In 1984, she was hired as Allegan County's MSU 4-H Program Assistant. Dian's hard work has aided the 4-H program become very popular among the youth of Allegan County. Over the years, Dian has also been recognized with numerous honors by her professional association.

- 1989 - Presidents Citation - Michigan Association of Extension 4-H Youth Staff (MAE4HYS)
- 1997 - Distinguished Service Award - MAE4HYS2006 - National Distinguished Service Award - from the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents
- 2006 - National Distinguished Service Award - from the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents

She has also held various offices in her state professional association and in 2000-2001, Dian served as President of MAE4HYS.

At this time, Dian serves as Extension Office bookkeeper and resident technology expert as well as 4-H program assistant. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Livestock Leaders group and 4-H Clubs Inc. (Camp Kidwell).



Dian Liepe, MSU 4-H Pro-  
gram Assistant



## ALLEGAN COUNTY

3283 122nd Avenue  
Allegan, MI 49010

Phone: 269-673-0203  
Fax: 269-686-5331  
E-mail: Administration@allegancounty.org



[www.allegancounty.org](http://www.allegancounty.org)



**Robert Sarro, Allegan County  
Administrator**

- June 25, 2009—approve County Administrator Employment Agreement
- June 25, 2009—award bid for Construction Management of New Animal Shelter
- July 16, 2009—approve proposed construction management RFP for a new Allegan County Criminal Justice Facility
- August 13, 2009—authorize development/release of RFP for Courthouse Entrance Renovation
- August 27, 2009—renew 911 Operating Surcharge on phone bills on Central Dispatch Authority 2009 Ballot Proposal
- September 24, 2009—accept FY2009-2010 OHSP Secondary Road Patrol and Traffic Accident Prevention Grant
- November 12, 2009—award Jail DVR Project Bid/Information Services
- December 10, 2009—adopt Proposed Final County Budget for 2010

## Administrator's Comments:

Allegan County continues to look forward to a bright future even through these tough economic times. We must keep in mind the economy does not diminish our obligation to continue meeting our facility needs both short and long term. With several building projects coming to a close and more ready to begin, Allegan County remains focused on future growth and development despite all challenges.

By no measure do I suggest that growth is easy during a down economy, however, I see these economic threats as opportunities. They are a means for us to have more focused purpose and find new efficient ways to do business. More than ever we must be dedicated to our mission and make decisions that will enable us to progress and prosper.

In my experience, progressing through these challenging times will require us to bring teamwork to the next level. Every project included in this newsletter could not have been achieved without a strong sense of team. We serve an entire county and that responsibility will always be bigger than one person. It takes all of our collective talents, ideas, and unique differences to achieve success.

I look forward to working together in the new year and continuing to build this county's future with you.