

Bi-Weekly Update from County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, 3/27/15:

Annual County Equalization Session is April 14

The County Board of Commissioners is scheduled to meet only once in April, and that meeting will be held on *Tuesday, April 14, at 7:00 p.m.* in the Board Chambers. State law requires our annual equalization session to be held in April each year and on a Tuesday. At the meeting the Board is expected to accept the 2015 Equalization Report showing real and personal property valuations throughout the county, and how they've changed from 2014 values. Additional items slated for the agenda include eight Road Department bid awards; the annual authorization for Treasurer Christine Schauer to issue delinquent tax anticipation notes use to fund cash settlements with local taxing units for the 2014 delinquent real personal property taxes outstanding; and a new lease for the Substance Abuse Council (SAC) to occupy space on the 3rd floor of the County's Toeller Building in Battle Creek. Calhoun County also recognizes **April as National County Government Month** with this year's theme according to the National Association of Counties (NACO) (www.naco.org) "Counties Moving Forward: The Keys are Transportation and Infrastructure." County Board meeting agendas and minutes are available online at www.calhouncountymi.gov.

BCATS Amends 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Battle Creek Area Transportation Study (BCATS) Policy Committee met on March 25 and approved a 7th Amendment to the **FY2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**. The group also discussed the FY2016 work plans, and approved a very positive performance review of Executive Director Pat Karr. The BCATS Policy Committee consists of elected and appointed officials representing the cities of Battle Creek and Springfield, the Calhoun County Road Department, the Charter Townships of Bedford, Pennfield, and Emmett, the Township of Leroy, the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners, and the Michigan Department of Transportation. Commissioner Steve Frisbie and County Highway Engineer Angela Kline represent the County on this decision-making body of BCATS. County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott and Road Department Managing Director Christopher Bolt also attended the meeting on behalf of the County. Details of the FY14-17 TIP Program, as well as BCATS meeting agendas can be found online at www.bcatsmpo.org.

County Planning Commission Hears Annual Report

The Calhoun County Planning Commission (CCPC), chaired by Commissioner Blaine Van Sickle, met on March 23 and heard a draft of the **Planning Department's 2014 Annual Report**, presented by Planning Consultant Jen Bomba. Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott also serves on the Planning Commission, consisting with representatives of important segments of the community in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Highlights of the CCPC's 2014 accomplishments included acting upon 6 township zoning text and/or map amendments, 13 Farmland and Open Space (PA116) Enrollment Applications, and one township master plan review. The Commission also assisted the County with decisions related to the sale and lease of two county-owned properties, and our planning department was instrumental in working with Community Development and GIS staff to develop a new 5-year Parks and Recreation Master

Plan. CCPC meetings are open to the public and are held on the *4th Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m.* in the Calhoun County Building in Marshall.

Highlights From Monthly County-Wide Leadership Meeting

Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott facilitated a monthly leadership meeting with elected officials, court administrators, and department heads invited to share updates and discuss common initiatives. Below are some highlights from our March 17 meeting:

***Community Development Educator Ingrid Ault** reported on this year's inaugural **Youth Leadership Program**, a partnership of our Michigan State Extension Office, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, and the County. A group of middle school and high school students are given the opportunity through this program to learn about how Tribal and County governments work, and to visit the State Capitol, and then report their observations, comments and recommendations back to the governing boards for their consideration.

***Treasurer Christine Schauer** reported that *March 31 is the deadline* to pay **delinquent 2012 property taxes** to avoid foreclosure.

***Senior Services Director Carl Gibson** announced that the **6th Annual County Senior Fair** will be on *April 9* from 10:00-1:30 in the Marshall Middle School gymnasium. The event is free and open to the public. The County is also planning to host the **3rd annual Centenarian Lunch** on *June 23* at Schuler's in Marshall, with invitations to all county residents who have reached their 100 year birthday. For more information about these events, call the County Senior Services Office at 269.781.0846 or visit our website at www.calhouncountymi.gov.

***10th District Court Administrator Kate Ambrose** relayed plans to **relocate District Court Probation** from the 1st floor of the Justice Center to the 3rd floor where the courtrooms are, allowing for better workflow and efficient service to those who interact with the courts. She also announced that the County received a planning grant from the State Court Administrative Office to develop a **new Mental Health Court**, which will be the newest specialty court in Calhoun County, complementing Sobriety Court, Drug Court and Veterans Court.

***Sheriff Matt Saxton** noted that construction on the **new Marshall Regional Law Enforcement Center** is moving quickly, with estimated completion in August.

***Juvenile Home Director Mike Gillum** announced the **16th annual Jayhawk Open golf outing**, planned for *June 12* at Alwyn Downs Golf Course in Marshall. All proceeds from the outing support the County Juvenile Home's youth incentive program. For more information about the event, contact the Juvenile Home office at 269.781.0920 or email Mike at mgillum@calhouncountymi.gov.

Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott* gave **preliminary financial results for the County's 2014 fiscal year ended 12/31/14, noting that the annual audit is in progress. She reported General Fund revenues slightly less than \$40 million, which are \$1.1 million less than budget due primarily to shortfalls in the Charges for Services category, which includes court costs, department fees and jail boarding revenues. The revenue shortfall is expected to be fully covered by savings on the expenditure side, with the projection that the County will show a small addition to its \$4.2 million fund balance in its audited financial statements. Most of the expenditure savings was attributable to salaries and benefits costs, through managing personnel vacancies and a **25% drop in employee health insurance costs from 2013 to 2014**--a positive \$800,000 budget impact that demonstrates continued success from several long-term strategies the County has put in place to control expenditures in light of reduced revenues.