

## BI-Weekly Update from County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, 2/27/14:

### **Health Department to Implement New Strategic Plan**

The Calhoun County Board of Health met on February 24 and approved the health department's **recently finalized Strategic Plan**. Public Health Officer Jim Rutherford introduced the new plan and thanked the Board members, County Commissioners, health department staff and numerous community partners who were involved in this collaborative approach to planning. Commissioner Kathy-Sue Dunn serves on the Health Board on behalf of the County Board of Commissioners. The Michigan Public Health Institute and health department managers presented the new plan, which states its purpose as "redefining the health department's short- and long-term priorities, and aligning its efforts with nationally recognized standards for public health practice." Five essential strategic directions were identified and now all have detailed action plans to be implemented starting immediately. There was good discussion about the inclusiveness of the process used in creating the strategic plan, the importance of measurement tools to gauge its success, and the role of the health department as just one partner in a county-wide system of those focused on health and well-being. A copy of the health department's strategic plan will be posted soon on the county's website at [http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/government/health\\_department/](http://www.calhouncountymi.gov/government/health_department/). The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for March 24 at 8:00 a.m. in the Health Department Administrative Conference Room at the Toeller Building in Battle Creek.

### **Veterans Affairs Committee to Undergo Strategic Planning**

The Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Committee met on February 12, with Assistant County Administrator Brad Wilcox attending to discuss suggestions for format and facilitation of future planning for the Veterans Affairs Office. Commissioner Steve Frisbie also attended the committee meeting. The County is currently evaluating proposals for **strategic planning** consulting, and will hear from selected candidates at the next Veterans Affairs Committee meeting, scheduled for **March 12 at 2:30 p.m.** at the County's VA Office in the Toeller Building in Battle Creek.

### **Road Department Updates**

On February 19 a **new phone system** was installed at the Calhoun County Road Department to replace an outdated, limited capacity system. The new system is part of the County's phone and voicemail systems, and will greatly improve customer service because of its enhanced messaging and other features. The phone system integration is another example of the County's continued efforts to consolidate services formerly managed separately by the Road Commission, in order to save administrative costs and increase efficiency. The County's Information Technology department and Road Department staff should be commended for working together to ensure the change in phone systems went smoothly, with minimal communication disruption. Although the new system is now set up for direct dial, phone tree and call forwarding options, the main phone number of the CCRD remains the same, at **269.781.9841**. The public is encouraged to select the front desk option when calling to report potholes and other road issues so that they may be tracked and addressed timely through the Road Department's service request system.

Managing Director Jerry Peterson and County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott attended on February 21 a **meeting of area-wide school superintendents**, to update them on the Road Department's winter operations and future plans, and to seek input on how the County can better meet the transportation and communication needs of the school districts. General areas of concern included difficulties with navigating intersections, challenges when regularly scheduled road crew work shifts don't match up

with the timing of snow events, and the need for clarity as to who to call for information on road conditions when deciding on school closures. Follow up steps will include future meetings with each district's superintendent and transportation director once the winter weather breaks.

On February 26 the Road Department hosted their monthly **Township Supervisors meeting**. Road Department staff reported on the upcoming **seasonal weight restrictions**, now delayed for at least another week due to continued frost levels still in the ground; and the **new local road project match policy** requiring 70% township match for resurfacing projects as approved by the County Board of Commissioners on February 20. The next Township Supervisors meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 19, at 9:00 a.m.** at the Road Department Office in Marshall.

County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott mentioned that Board Chair Art Kale was not able to be at the meeting because he was attending legislative committee meetings in Lansing including hearings on **Senate Bill 608**, which as approved by the Senate would allocate \$100 million of surplus dollars toward winter road repairs. As proposed, Calhoun County would receive over \$500,000 of the additional funding, which comes from the Roads and Risks Reserve created for the current budget year. This funding is designed to help us locally with the rapid deterioration of roads as a result of one of the coldest and snowiest winters in Michigan history. On Wednesday the House Appropriations Committee added another \$115 million in road project funding to the \$100 million for winter maintenance as the Senate proposed, with the supplemental appropriations bill now going to the full House for approval. This would be welcomed relief to the Calhoun County Road Department's winter maintenance budget, that is already 34% overspent due to the extreme conditions in January and February.

There was also continued discussion at the township supervisors meeting about strategies for longer-term solutions to road funding, including a county-wide road millage. Administrator/Controller Scott reported that no formal Board of Commissioners action had been taken to initiate a road millage ballot question, but that informal discussions continue and the input and support of local governments and our residents throughout the county will be absolutely critical before any such millage proposal could succeed.

#### **Care Here Employee Health & Wellness Center Now Open**

On February 18 County Commissioners and staff participated along with City of Battle Creek, Toyota Tsusho and Care Here officials in a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Health and Wellness Center open to City of Battle Creek and Calhoun County employees and dependents, as well as those of Toyota Tsusho America's Battle Creek plant. The clinic opened on February 19 for appointments, which can be made by employees themselves through Care Here's online portal. Employee feedback has been very positive and is an early indication of the tremendous success the County expects from our latest public-private collaboration. More information about Care Here can be found on their website at [www.carehere.com](http://www.carehere.com).

#### **FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board Receives Annual Check**

The FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB) received its annual "Net Win" payment from the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi at a check distribution ceremony on February 14. This year's check was in the amount of **\$5,266,401**, an increase of approximately \$300,000 from last year's and the first time the payment has topped the \$5 million mark. Art Kale, County Board Chairman and Chair of the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB), thanked the Tribe and Casino

Management for the opportunity to share in the ceremony, and highlighted some of the projects county-wide that benefitted from last year's payment. The County is proud to be part of this intergovernmental collaboration and anticipates another successful distribution process this year. The next meeting of the FLRSB is scheduled for **March 14 at 8:30 a.m.** at the Calhoun County Building in Marshall. The agenda will focus on hearings from eligible local governments that have submitted requests for reimbursement of increased costs associated with the operation of either the casino or the Tribal reservation in Athens Township.

#### **Calhoun County Planning Commission Elects New Officers**

The Calhoun County Planning Commission met on February 24 and elected new officers for 2014. County Commissioner Blaine Van Sickle will serve as chair; Terence Lunger, Superintendent of the Calhoun County Intermediate School District (CISD) is the new vice-chair; and Robert Bolton, Pastor of the Albion Free Methodist Church, remains as secretary for this year. Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott serves on the Planning Commission on behalf of the County Board of Commissioners, along with Commissioner Van Sickle. The Commission also voted to nominate the following three individuals to fill three of the six membership vacancies: John Coulter, CEO of the Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance (MAEDA) ; Angie Kline, Calhoun County's Highway Engineer; and Sarah Kelly , the County's Solid Waste & Recycling Coordinator. The County Board of Commissioners is expected to confirm these appointments at its meeting on March 6, and work will continue to select residents to fill the remaining vacancies in the upcoming months.