

County Administrator's Digest

June 29, 2012

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TWO NEW COUNTY PARKS DEDICATED (John Scholtz)

The Parks and Recreation Commission dedicated two new county park facilities within the past month. Most recently, Eastmanville Bayou on the Grand River in Allendale Township was dedicated on Thursday, June 14. Prior to that on May 23, Olive Shores County Park in Port Sheldon Township was dedicated. Summaries of both events are provided below:

Eastmanville Bayou

The 4 p.m. dedication ceremony was followed by refreshments, nature hikes, kayak demonstrations and kids fishing activities. Speakers at the dedication included Bobbi Jones Sabine, Parks Commission President; Jerry Alkema, Allendale Township Supervisor, Greg DeJong, County Commissioner; Al Vanderberg, County Administrator; and John Scholtz, Parks Director.



The Eastmanville Bayou Open Space was acquired as part of the Grand River Greenway Initiative, an effort to preserve lands with natural and cultural significance within the river corridor and provide recreational access. The 157 acre Eastmanville Bayou site was acquired from four different property owners between 1997 and 2008 at a total cost of approximately \$1,160,000. A grant from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program contributed \$187,500 to assist with land acquisition with the balance coming from county park millage funds.

Eastmanville Bayou offers 1.77 miles of riverfront and is part of a contiguous public riverfront of overall six miles including the Bass River Recreation Area (Michigan DNR Parks and Recreation) and Riverside County Park.



Construction of site improvements began in July, 2010, but permit delays stalled the project for a year. Construction was substantially complete in late 2011 and final touches were finished in the spring of 2012. In addition to trails for hiking and cross-country skiing, the open space site provides a 40 car parking area, a small boat launch ramp accessing the bayou, picnic facilities, interpretive displays, rustic toilets, and a universally accessible canoe and kayak launch on the Grand River. Total cost of improvements was \$250,000 with funding from the county parks millage.

A future goal is to provide a paved multi-use trail along the river corridor linking Grand Haven and Grand Rapids. The proposed trail would run through the Eastmanville Bayou site along the riverbank and under the Eastmanville Bridge.

Olive Shores

The Olive Shores dedication, held May 23 prior to Memorial Day, featured a dedication ceremony and ribbon cutting followed by an opportunity to explore the new park. Speakers at the dedication included Bobbi Sabine, Parks Commission President; Phil Kuyers, County Board Chair; Howard Baumann, Jr., Port Sheldon Township Supervisor; and John Scholtz, Parks Director.



Olive Shores was acquired because it was one of the very few remaining locations in Ottawa County where a significant stretch of undeveloped natural land existed along the shoreline. The 20-acre property, with 738 feet of Lake Michigan frontage, was purchased by Ottawa County Parks from three different landowners between 2001 and 2009 with assistance from a \$2- million grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund plus \$1.8 million from the County Parks millage.

In late fall of 2011, a \$730,000 improvement project began with funding from a \$365,000 grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, matched by \$365,000 of County Parks millage funds. Olive Shores now has a paved parking area, modern restrooms, picnicking areas, a barrier free trail loop, boardwalks, and stairs to access the beach. Interpretive signs along the boardwalk highlight the natural features of Mt. Olive, and explain how the property was used to film a scene from the Tom Hanks movie, "Road to Perdition", filmed in 1999.

CONTINENTAL DAIRY EXPANSION (Josh Spencer)

Continental Dairy Products, Inc. Announces Potential Expansion to their Coopersville Facility

In 2010, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners allocated \$31,045,000 in Recovery Zone Facility Bonds to Continental Dairy Products, Inc. (Continental Dairy). The funding was provided through the County's 2009 allotment of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Recovery Zone Bonds. It is important to note that the Board allocated private activity bond capacity to Continental Dairy and not grant funds or cash.

Continental Dairy utilized the Bonds to renovate an abandoned manufacturing facility (former Delphi plant) in Coopersville, Michigan. The facility is utilized to convert fresh milk into products with longer shelf-life such as butter, cream, condensed milk, and milk powder. The \$100 million project was projected to create 70 full-time jobs. Renovation of the new facility began in June of 2010 and the company has since created most of the jobs originally anticipated.

Recently, officials from Select Milk Producers, a partner of Continental Dairy, announced they are considering expansion of the Coopersville plant to add bottling and packaging capabilities for their milk-based products. The two phase expansion would cost approximately \$128 million and lead to the creation of 133 additional jobs. The company is currently working with the City of Coopersville to secure financial incentives for the new expansion. A final decision regarding the expansion is expected within the next few weeks.

GARY SCHOLTEN RETIREMENT

The Board of Commissioners presented Gary Scholten with a retirement resolution at their regular meeting Tuesday. Scholten is retiring as Register of Deeds after 40 years of service with Ottawa County that also included many years as Executive Director of Michigan Works! We wish Gary the very best in his retirement years.

DIGITAL COUNTIES SURVEY AWARD (Dave Hulst)

Digital Counties Survey 2012 Award

For the fourth time in five years, Ottawa County was recognized as a winner of the Digital Counties Survey award by the Center for Digital Government. The Center for Digital Government is a national research and advisory institute providing government, education and industry leaders with decision support, research and educational services to help them effectively incorporate new technologies in the 21st century.

In 2012, the survey focused on outcomes (the results achieved through the use of technology). Top-ranked counties will receive the Digital Counties Survey award and will be honored at a reception during that National NA-Co annual conference on July 16. Additionally, winners will be featured on govtech.com, in *Government Technology* magazine and the Center's best practices and thought leadership white papers.

This award recognizes the County's strategic planning effort and the County administration's policy initiatives and specific goals, and the Information Technology actions taken to address the specific stated policy goals. Some of the major achievements over the past year include upgrading the phone system, implementing a Call Center and Voice over IP phone capability, expanding our Virtual Server environment, adding six new online services to the County website, implementing Electronic Payroll Hours Entry and Judicial Docket applications, upgrading the Health and Mental Health Systems, meeting Meaningful Use requirements, expanding Enterprise Content Management automated workflows and implementing E-Filing for the Courts.

In the population category of 250,000 to 400,000, eleven Counties were recognized this year due to a tie. In addition to Ottawa County, the following Counties made the list.

250,000-499,999 population

Dutchess County, NY
Washoe County, NV
Dakota County, MN
Douglas County, CO
Chesterfield County, VA
Clackamas County, OR
Loudoun County, VA
Hamilton County, IN
Washtenaw County, MI
Anoka County, MN

SUPREME COURT DECISION – UPHOLDS HEALTHCARE REFORM LAW

The stunning decision of the U.S. Supreme Court on the matter of the Healthcare Reform Law was released yesterday and we will be evaluating the impact of the decision on the County with our health insurance agent, Gallagher Benefits. We have been attempting to stay abreast of the developments with the law but as we all know the regulations are currently being written so while we know some of the general impact there are more specifics to come.

I copied the following facts from a subscription that the HR Department receives called HRLaws.com. The Court also looked at four main Healthcare Reform Act Issues:

The Individual Mandate, upheld this provision which starting in 2014 will require most individuals to obtain health insurance or pay a fine.

The Anti-Injunction Act. The justices determined that it wasn't too soon to decide the case because of the Anti-Injunction Act, a federal law that requires a tax to be collected before it can be challenged in court.

Severability. The justices heard oral arguments centered on whether the individual mandate could be severed from the rest of the law if the Court found it unconstitutional. Since the Court upheld the mandate, it didn't have to make a decision regarding severability.

Medicaid. Finally, the Court determined that the ACA's expansion of Medicaid is lawful as long as the government doesn't penalize states that decide not to participate in the new program by taking away their existing Medicaid funding.

GVMC DIRECTOR WEISS UPDATE

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

**Lt. Governor to Attend June****Board of Directors Meeting**

Our June Board of Directors meeting will be held at 10:30 on Monday July 9th at the Prince Center. Lt. Governor Calley will be joining us at 11:15 for a round-table discussion of issues along with an informal question and answer period. It is my goal whenever possible have our speakers available to meet directly with our Board to discuss the issues members feel are most important. The Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors will also join us at that time.

We will have a busy agenda for the meeting. Prior to the arrival of the Lt. Governor, Brian Donovan, City Manager of East Grand Rapids and Chairman of LGROW will make a brief presentation about LGROW and the many activities they are working on. We will also have the three contracts that were tabled at the last meeting for reconsideration. Brian has explained these contracts in detail to the Executive Committee and your approval is requested.

We will also be presenting for your approval the Unified Planning Program for 2012-2013. The Program is the basis for the majority of our budget. This document has to be delivered to MDOT for their review in July and then to the Federal Highway Administration. The

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Unified Planning Work Program has been previously approved by the Transportation Policy Board and the GVMC Executive Committee. The good news is that for the second year we have frozen Transportation dues and will be able to accomplish our work program without an increase in cost to our members.

Reorganization Focused on Strategic Initiatives

In order to provide greater focus and staff resources on our Strategic Initiatives to Manage Emerging Issues, Encourage Collaborative Service Sharing and Nurture Regional Economic Development Partnerships, I along with the Executive Committee have begun the process of reorganizing some of the non-transportation functions of GVMC. As you know, Jay Hoekstra is retiring from GVMC on Friday. Andy Bowman will also be leaving GVMC on July 6th. Andy may be available to consult on specific planning projects or assist us when necessary. We all wish Andy the best in the future.

**Fireworks Ordinances****Available Online**

We have posted on our website copies of sample ordinances regarding the new state fireworks law. You can find a Fireworks Ordinance Portal located at www.gvmc.org.

If your community has adopted a new fireworks ordinance we would like to add it to our website as well. Please email a copy to me at your earliest convenience.

Nominating Sub-Committee

Michael Young City Manager of Rockford and Al Vandenberg, Ottawa County Administrator are the Chair and Vice Chair of the Human Resources Committee. They along with a Nominating Sub-Committee will be making a recommendation to the Board of Directors for the appointment of a new member of the Executive Committee to replace Mayor Richard Root.

If you are interested in serving on the Executive Committee or would like to nominate someone, please feel free to contact Michael or Al before July 9th. We will have the Nominating Sub-Committee recommendation on the July Board Agenda.

Please Email Your Community's
Programs and Ideas for
Cooperation!