

SPECIAL MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: David Heeres, Melissa Zelenak, Karen Bargy, Ed Boettcher, Bryan Smith, Brenda Ricksgers, Dawn LaVanway, Christian Marcus.

Absent: Commissioner District #8

The Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag.

Invocation offered by Commissioner Zelenak.

The Chairman requested Public Comment. Joe Short addressed the Board on behalf of a large informal group of people vested in both Antrim County and Village of Bellaire and read a letter composed by group of Bellaire local business owners, Bellaire DDA, Village of Bellaire and concerned citizens containing comments and a proposal for Board consideration. (see pages 3 and 4) Public comment closed at 6:12 p.m.

The Chairman, Ed Boettcher opened the meeting thanking the community for attending and that their feedback is important to the Commissioners. The purpose of meeting is to **discuss review** and establish the direction of the Antrim County Facilities Master Plan for the current and future needs of Antrim County government facilities **and begin to discuss how to proceed with implementation**. Byce and Associates was hired to provide an assessment of the needs and the study resulted in many recommendations and identified several immediate and long term needs. The immediate needs being identified as the most serious and having the greatest potential for liability were the Antrim County Jail and Law Enforcement Facility Centers. While the Administration Building/County Building has many issues that are not compliant with the Americans Disability ACT (ADA), and security needs which began the initial study and lead to the hiring of Byce and Associates.

- Additional meeting with Byce and Associates: Discussion followed.
- Additional public meeting with Byce and Associates: Discussion followed.
- Preferred Option: Discussion followed.
 - Prisoner Transport Costs
 - Antrim County Jail: Remote Jail – Byce and Associates Courthouse Transportation Analysis
 - Remote Jail – Antrim County Sheriff Transportation Analysis
 - Undersheriff Pratt addressed the Boards questions on the proposal/analysis of the Sheriff.
 - Animal ~~Shelter Control~~-site buildability
- Security at existing building: Discussion followed.
 - Address immediate needs at the Administration Building/County Building
- Establish a final decision timeline on preferred choices: Discussion followed.
- Review entire facility master plan timeline: Discussion followed.

- Establish direction. Discussion followed.

The Board is not ready to commit to any option at this time as further research and evaluation of those preferred options shall be addressed:

Option H

Option F

Option G replaced with Village proposal: Option W-W

The Board agreed by a majority to direct the County Administrator, Peter Garwood to request the following quotes from Byce and Associates as following:

- Review Village proposal: W-W Option with cost.
- ~~For an Draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) to address immediate needs of the Administration Building/County Building Security Plan. to bid out.~~

The Board agreed by a majority to direct the County Administrator, Peter Garwood to gather information and cost involved to request a quote for an engineering study of the County owned property at the Animal ~~Shelter Control~~ to determine if the site is buildable.

The Chairman spoke of the three (3) preferred options and that careful consideration will be given to those options. The Board will continue to provide open communications with all stakeholders that are interested. The Board has not committed to any option as this project is still in the beginning stage, and will continue to gather public input, option assessments, option values and financial avenues by reaching out to various entities and their resources. He spoke that the request to form an Ad Hoc Committee to be considered and added to the Board Agenda at the next regular meeting.

The Chairman requested Public Comment. Bradley Keiser, Village of Bellaire Public Works Department spoke on the resources the Village has to assist the County with exploration of the Animal ~~Shelter Control~~ site. Louise Wensel spoke on future partnering with Master Plans and Bill Thompson spoke on the Jail and Sheriff Administration location. Public comment closed at 7:41 p.m.

The Chairman addressed the vacancy of Scott Kruger, Commissioner District #8 due to his resignation dated October 11, 2018 with option to appoint **for the** current term which ends ~~ending~~ December 31, 2018. Discussion followed.

The Chairman requested that the Board agenda address the vacancy of Commissioner District #8, following the General Election on Tuesday, November 6th with two (2) write-in candidates and certification of the Board of Canvassers.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Edgar Boettcher, III, Chairman

Sheryl Guy, County Clerk

**ANTRIM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING, October 29, 2018**

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND A PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION

We are a large informal group of people who are invested in both Antrim County and the Village of Bellaire, representing a diverse range of interests and perspectives. We recognize and support the need for major changes to upgrade the critical operations of a wide range of Antrim County Government operations. We are also appreciative of the work, time and fiscal resources the County Board of Commissioners and the Village of Bellaire have invested thus far. As a result, there are now a number of possible plans with related costs to consider. It is our understanding your meeting tonight is to determine how to proceed from this point forward so that within a reasonable time period a specific plan, budget and implementation plan can be adopted.

We support this intent. However, we are united in our strong belief that more time and work is needed with additional stakeholders brought into the next step of the planning process to achieve a plan that will have wide support. At present, sufficient support for building a new jail and investing significantly more money over time into the current downtown Bellaire governmental complex does not exist.

There exists a growing swell of support for the following next steps:

1. Hold off on any commitment of additional funding at this point
2. Develop an ad hoc group to work with you to develop a final plan that best meets the intended goals
3. Use a facilitator for this process that has both the experience with and knowledge of our specific northern Michigan economic and community context. Suggestions would include Northern Lakes Economic Alliance or Networks Northwest.

What we are proposing has been requested in several of the recent occasions where people invested in this county and in Bellaire have had the opportunity to ask questions and express their views. If this is done, we believe the process itself will help expand plan support so that the final plan has the broad-based support needed to successfully move to adoption and implementation.

Proposal: The Antrim County Board of Commissions will develop an ad hoc workgroup that includes county commissioners as well as representatives from key stakeholder groups who will be impacted well into the future by whatever plan is moved forward. County commissioners and stakeholders share a desire to support a healthy, vibrant county where a diverse range of people can work, play, learn and enjoy support from family, friends and community. However, accommodating the wide range of what this means to different people is the challenge. We believe a workgroup that includes some of these stakeholders provides the strongest possible way to reach a plan that:

- Improves the facility and work environments for the involved county operations to the level where optimal functionality, staff support, safety and the capacity to meet all applicable laws and regulations is optimized
- Maintains and improves economic growth opportunities and quality of life going forward for both Antrim County and the Village of Bellaire
- Is attainable in a fiscally responsible manner by demonstrated cost efficiency and effectiveness within the overall cost parameters

Workgroup Charge: Develop recommendations for a master plan that meets the above criteria and is based on the work to date by both the CBOC and the Village, particularly including proposals G and Win-Win.

Ad Hoc Workgroup: The workgroup members would be selected as having the experience and/or expertise to represent the stakeholder and/or knowledge base needed to contribute to completing the charge to the group. Suggested participants include:

- County Commissioners
- Bellaire Village Council President
- Existing businesses (2-3, possibly two from Bellaire where the most impact will be felt, as well as a business representative who is located in Antrim County but not necessarily Bellaire)
- Economic development expertise (with knowledge of our northern Michigan economic environment, as well as familiarity with Antrim County and Bellaire)
- Commercial development expertise within the northern MI, Antrim County context
- Bellaire residents (who likely own a home here, but not a business, who are invested in community life here)
- Bellaire Chamber, as well as another Chamber within Antrim County

Timeframes: To be determined. Major process steps that need timeframes would include:

- Selection of the workgroup participants
- Determination of a reasonable amount of time for the workgroup to do its work and prepare its recommendations
- Presentation to the CBOC, including any additional revisions needed at that time
- Community Forum/s, input incorporated
- CBOC adoption, along with necessary activities to move to implementation (“the plan to implement the plan”)

This plan, once begun and put in place, will impact the functioning of county government, the Village of Bellaire, and Antrim County as a whole many years into the future. As David Schultz astutely noted during his presentation at your last meeting, the Village of Bellaire is a part of Antrim County. He also went on to say that the reverse is also true—the County, with all its many programs and functions, is a member of the Village. It resides and works 24/7, every day of the year, as a very visible and interactive member of the Village of Bellaire. There exists a reciprocity and a need to share support and responsibilities between the County and the Village in a very real way that is exclusive to Bellaire. No other community in Antrim County will be impacted by these changes in the way Bellaire will be.

For Bellaire, the outcome will define the future of the town. As you know, the Village is concurrently doing its own strategic planning. Both its plan and the county government plan must be implemented within the same few square miles. It is to no one’s advantage if being the seat of county government is a liability rather than an asset. It would reflect poorly on the county itself if that were the case. As a village and as a community, we have always been proud to have the courthouse and county operations here. We strongly believe it is not only possible, but necessary to align these two plans. Each is part of the other. Each can bring resources the other cannot to an aligned plan that works for both.

We urge you to continue to work together with us in this critical next step of developing the ultimate plan to present to voters and to the citizens of Bellaire and Antrim County. When government, the private sector, and communities work together, solutions and resources are found that none of the players can provide on their own. It is the approach that values our democracy, and each of us within it. We can do this—together. We urge you to support this proposal in your meeting tonight.