

JUNE/NEWS

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with a dwindling amount of property to manage — and shrinking funds to do it — the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corp. is trimming its operation to the bone.

The Commons board has informed executive director Rachel Brady that her position will be eliminated as of Aug. 2 in a cost-cutting move. That will leave the Commons without any paid staff, and it could signal that the end is drawing near for the 12-year-old volunteer group that's fostered the redevelopment of the former state hospital grounds.

The property controlled by the board has shrunk as chunks of the Commons campus have been sold off over the past decade to Munson Medical Center, the Minervini Group, and other local businesses and municipalities. The Commons still owns the 27-acre parcel known as Subarea 3 west of Building 50, although the Minervini Group has an option on that land that Commons officials expect will be exercised by the end of the year.

JUNE 10

Crampton, Casler win

TRAVERSE CITY — On a day marked by low turnout, Traverse City Area Public Schools voters filled two open board seats and approved a Headlee restoration millage.

Unofficial results show that former board member and retired teacher Richard Crampton, 71, regained his seat on the board with 2,130 votes. Crampton had served two terms and was its president in 2002.

Only 6.8 percent of registered voters cast a ballot.

Voters approved the Headlee restoration millage, which calls for 1 mill to be levied for a period of 13 years on non-homestead property, 2,645 to 1,022.

It passed in all 10 precincts

and among absentee voters.

The Headlee Amendment automatically rolls back a millage so the actual increase in tax dollars does not exceed the rate of inflation. The millage restores the total amount levied on non-homestead property to the maximum 18 mills and ensures the district will receive the full amount of state funding.

JUNE 11

Group issues warning

TRAVERSE CITY — On the banks of the Boardman River where the Hartman-Hammond bridge is planned, a state environmental group Tuesday highlighted unique parts of Michigan it says are threatened by sprawl development.

The Boardman River valley south of Traverse City and the cherry orchards of the Grand Traverse region are two of eight "natural feature" areas around Michigan that are "at risk" for shoddy land development patterns. That's according to a report issued Tuesday by the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan based in Ann Arbor, a statewide environmental watchdog group.

Environmentalists blame the state for fueling much of what they term undesirable growth through outdated land-use laws and by using public money for questionable infrastructure projects — among which they include the Hartman-Hammond bridge project planned by Grand Traverse County.

JUNE 11

Rotary celebrates 25 years

TRAVERSE CITY — Rotary Charities of Traverse City celebrated its silver anniversary Tuesday, but its legacy was built on another precious commodity — oil.

In July 1976, developers struck oil on Camp Greilick, the Rotary-owned Boy Scout property. The discovery of "Texas tea" in East Bay Township set off a chain of events that has led to grants for community projects total-

ing almost \$30.8 million.

By 1978, Rotary Charities became a federal income tax exempt charitable organization. Twenty-five years later, it has awarded 532 grants to 218 organizations.

Among its accomplishments was the creation of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation and scores of cultural, environmental, educational and health care improvements throughout a five-county area.

JUNE 12

Developer given 90 days

TRAVERSE CITY — The Environmental Protection Agency is "monitoring" a wetland dispute in East Bay Township and has given a local developer 90 days to resolve the issue or face possible federal sanctions.

The EPA's top enforcement official for the Midwest has informed developer Bill Clous that his recent land clearing on a 300-acre site near Hammond and Townline roads "appears" to have included more than 20 acres of illegal wetland fill.

According to a letter sent to Clous late last month by David Schulenberg, EPA senior enforcement officer, federal authorities are following the state's probe into the site work and may pursue its own set of penalties.

The land clearing, which began last year, prompted an investigation by Grand Traverse County and state.

The county prosecutor's office is looking into possible violations of the county's soil erosion and storm water ordinance.

The Department of Environmental Quality is reviewing potential violations of state and federal wetland protection laws.

JUNE 13

GT Band exec resigns

ACME — The top gaming and economic development executive for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians has

resigned, effective July 15, less than three months after the band bought one of the largest resorts in the Midwest.

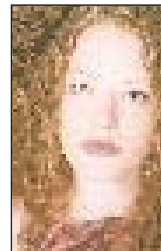
Jeff Livingston, chief executive officer of the band's Economic Development Corp. and its Traverse Bay Entertainment casino business, said he is resigning for personal reasons. He said he wants to "scale some things back, step back and give the band my strengths in another way.

John Concannon, a tribal council member and chairman of the Economic Development Corp. board, said in a statement that Livingston will continue to work with the band as a consultant. A search for his successor has begun.

JUNE 13

Buckley sister off to jail

MANISTEE — One of two sisters who garnered national headlines two years ago after forcing an airplane headed for China to land in



Crystal Mikula

Alaska is going to jail again.

Crystal Mikula, 24, of Buckley, was sentenced Monday to six months in jail and 30 months of probation for the Oct. 4 break-in of

her former boyfriend's Cleo Township home.

A Manistee County Prosecutor charged Mikula with entering the house through an unlocked door and removing a television and stereo equipment.

She also will wear a tether during the first 15 months of probation, serve 40 hours of community service, attend counseling and pay fines and costs of more than \$1,000.

JUNE 14

County launches projects

PETOSKEY — Construction is set to begin on two multi-million-dollar projects that will bring an expansion and

more beds to the Emmet county jail and major improvements to the county fairgrounds.

The first project is a \$5.8 million renovation of the county courthouse and related buildings along Division and Bay Streets in downtown Petoskey. It includes a 32-bed expansion of the county jail, bringing the total number of beds from 69 to 101, said county controller Lyn Johnson. He said the project also includes a new courtroom and district offices.

The second project features a \$3.3 renovation of the Emmet County fairgrounds, including a new 4-H community center, arena, grandstands, barns, fencing, show-ers, restrooms and upgrades to water, sewer, electric and natural gas lines at the 46-acre site on U.S. 31 just west of Petoskey.

Johnson said construction is set to begin next month for both projects and could take up to three years to complete.

JUNE 15

Age not a factor for him

EAST JORDAN — For Tony Cutler, becoming a city commissioner is just another progression in his long history of community service, he said. If that sounds ironic coming from a 20-year-old, Cutler can't help it.

Cutler was recently appointed by the city commission to fill a vacancy created by board member Jeanette Norton's resignation late last month. He will serve until November, when an election will be held to fill the four-year seat.

Cutler said he considered gathering petition signatures to put his name on the ballot for a commission seat last year, but ultimately decided his schooling might get in the way of doing an effective job. Cutler has been studying business at Lake Superior State University and will begin classes this September at Northern Michigan University.

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