

**TUSCOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Monthly Report of County Activities (September 2005)**  
**Linking County/Local Government for Efficient Public Services**

- The Tuscola County Board of Commissioners, MSU Extension—Tuscola County, Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation and other leading economic development agencies/organizations have launched a significant economic development initiative aimed at rebuilding the local economy. In the coming days, a letter will be sent to Township Supervisors/Clerks, Village/City Managers, Village Presidents, and Village/City Clerks providing an update on economic development accomplishments and plans underway. Economic development success hinges on collaborating at all levels of government and the private sector. Each local unit of government will be asked to identify a contact person to receive/relay information with your township or municipality as we move forward with this important initiative.
- Renewal of the telephone surcharge that funds 911/dispatch will be requested in a November 2005 election - current surcharge is \$3.10 per month - final bond payments for the building and equipment will be in 2006 which may enable reduction in the \$3.10 per month - the county only assesses what is needed to operate 911/dispatch - the surcharge is fair because it is based on telephone lines and not land values - questions can be directed to the 911/dispatch director (Robert Klenk) 989-673-8738.
- With current financial constraints, the Board has been unable to earmark funds for capital needs in recent years, but was able to do this in earlier years. Projects completed include: \$1.2 million new heating and cooling system in the 73-year-old courthouse, construction of a \$500,000 24 bed expansion to the county jail, remodeling to make all county buildings barrier-free compliant, partial funding for the construction of the County Health Building, asbestos removal, various building remodeling, technology investments, etc. This proactive financial approach has enabled these projects to be completed without increased tax burden.
- Remaining capital funds are far less than the capital needs of the county. Examples of current capital needs include: aging and overcrowded County Jail, economic development, funds to match grants, office and storage space, Human Services Building remodeling, etc.
- Over the next five-years, nearly \$2 million will be needed just to conduct normal maintenance on facilities. Over a twenty-year period, these maintenance costs could exceed \$5.6 million. Normal maintenance includes such items as: roof replacements, parking lots, tuckpointing, window replacements, painting, heating/cooling systems, sidewalk replacement, plumbing, electrical, floor coverings, etc.
- After many years of excellent leadership, the Director of the Tuscola and Huron County Human Services Departments will be retiring October 28, 2005. Steps are underway to hire a replacement.
- The County has begun a partnership with the Michigan Association of Counties for certain grant writing services.
- Payments for state-owned land in the County (Payment-in-Lieu-of-taxes PILT) were reduced by 4.5% after earlier assurances from the State these funds would not be cut.

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