

TUSCOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Report of County Activities (January 2007)
Linking County/Local Government for Efficient Public Services

- Progress continues to be made in implementing the Sirolli method of enterprise facilitation with over \$156,000 in pledges from sources inside and outside the county - the tremendous interest and success of this program has been shown – it is an important component to county economic development – contributors can be seen on the county web site – Of the 35 local units of government in the county, 5 have made annual pledges as follows: Tuscola County \$5,000, City of Vassar \$1,000, Village of Caro \$1,000, Village of Mayville \$1,000, Fremont Township \$600 – additional partnerships and investments from other local units of government and other interests are critical for this program to move forward – economic development and job creation is our number one priority – pledges can be made from the county web site or by contacting your commissioner
- The state bond rating was recently downgraded because of problems with the state economy and overall financial/budgetary instability – the net effect of this downgrade is it will cost more for the state to borrow funds because it is considered higher risk by investors – Tuscola County bond rating was upgraded in 2004 and has remained stable since that point in time – however, with the state downgrade there is now concern the county may not be able to maintain its current rating long term
- Commissioners have sent a letter to state officials pleading that the Dispatch/911 funding problem be corrected – for the last five years, revenue has been falling because of the shift from wire line to wireless telephones – cellular phones are currently taxed much less than wire line phones (cellular \$.29 per month, wire line \$4.00 per month) – since January of 2002 the number of wire line phones has decreased by 5,700 resulting in a decline of annual wire line telephone revenue of approximately \$212,000
- According to the Michigan House Fiscal Agency, the state’s budget shortfall for the October 1, 2006 to September 30 period is \$880 million – the deficit continues to widen mainly because of the continued decline in the automobile industry and housing markets – replacement for the elimination of the single business tax which expires at the end of the current state fiscal year has yet to be determined – state budget deficit problems are projected to continue for at least the next two years – the state is facing some of the greatest economic and financial challenges in its history
- Recently the Board of Commissioners approved the 2007 County Work Program – the work program is a planning tool that enables commissioners to set priorities and have a comprehensive understanding of activities to be undertaken in the upcoming year - many tasks center on advancing economic development work including implementing Community Assessment Team (CAT) report recommendations
- The county jail was overcrowded again, at the end of the 3rd week of January there were 90 inmates in the jail even after 8 were placed in the Huron County Jail (jail capacity is 80) – the cost to house an inmate in another county jail is \$35 to \$40 per day – in 2006 \$19,065 was spent to house inmates in other counties and \$30,000 is budgeted for 2007
- Since 2004, building activity has slowed tremendously in Tuscola County – from 2004 to 2006 the total number of building permits issued decreased by 31% from 5,588 to 3,828 – in terms of permit fees collected the decrease was 23% from \$552,083 to \$426,579

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