

TUSCOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – March/April 2009 Activity Report

- The importance of federal, state, county and local unit of government partnerships to rebuild the local economy cannot be overstated – the March 2009 county unemployment rate was 17.1% compared to 13.4% for the state – federal financial assistance has been requested to provide financial resources for the County Economic Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund and the Enterprise Facilitation program – other important economic development initiatives include: wind energy, business incubators, value added agriculture, airport improvements, tourism and industrial park upgrades
- At the request of local veterans groups, the county is pursuing changes to veteran laws so all veterans who have served honorably are eligible for financial assistance from the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund (currently if veterans served during peace time they are excluded)
- The county web site has become a vital tool to local units of government and the public – examples of current available information include: top news stories impacting the county, Board minutes/agendas, election coverage, tax sales, land record searches, county departments/contact information, employment opportunities, financial reports, activity reports, online forms and services – for further information please email the Information Systems Director Steven Lark at: SLark@TuscolaCounty.org
- Jenifer Robb from the Mayville area was recently hired as the Tuscola County Mosquito Abatement Director
- Wind power companies have been studying wind velocity in Tuscola County and have found that significant areas have potential – one of these areas is commonly referred to as the “Ridge” which passes through the northeastern portion of the county – companies have been working with property owners regarding land leases – wind generators are personal property and could generate personal property tax revenue for the county and local units of government – the County Board has approved a grant application with assistance from the Regional Planning Commission to further analyze wind energy potentials in Tuscola County
- Information is available on the county web site and through the county health department regarding Swine Flu
- By mid-June of this year a significant savings in prescription costs will be available to the public – the county will offer free prescription cards through a program sponsored by the National Association of Counties – cards provide 22% reduction in the retail price of prescription drugs and will be accepted by most pharmacies in the county – a future press release will identify where prescription cards can be obtained
- Tuscola Township and the City of Vassar along with certain units of government in Saginaw County have made a grant application to make improvements regarding the Cass River – the project is called “Cass River Greenway” – some of these upgrades include: public access points, fish ladders and walking trails
- The County is bracing for another round of state budget cuts – recent information from the Michigan Association of Counties explains that State Revenue Sharing cuts to cities, villages and townships may occur and the County Health Department, Medical Care Facility and Behavioral Health System operations may experience cuts – a County Financial Planning Task Force was formed to develop recommendations to balance 2010, 2011 and future budgets

