

**Antrim County**  
**District 5**  
**Commissioner Dawn LaVanway**  
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**March 2024**

**County Employment Opportunities**

- Antrim County Transportation-Mechanic (FT)
- Juvenile Probation Officer/Case Worker (FT)
- Sheriff's Office-Civil Process (PT) (2 positions)
- Sheriff's Office-Deputy (FT)
- Sheriff's Office-Corrections (FT)
- Antrim County Airport – Field Operator –Rick Durant will begin working on 3/14/2024

Michael Sizen who served as Food service coordinator of the jail for over 27 years received a resolution honoring him by the Sheriff's Office for his dedication and service.

**County Building-**

The final process of the County building project are in sight. From March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup> portions of the first floor hallway will be partially closed as the old flooring will be removed and new tile flooring will be installed.

**Sheriff's Office-**

The sheriff's staff have been relocated out of the Grove Street Annex building to 209 Portage Drive in Bellaire in which the building is now owned by the County and half is rented to the Health Department. The Health Department will remain in the eastern part of the building.

The Probation/Parole employee which is required by the state and the Emergency Services Coordinator will be moving from the Grove Street Annex building into the Sheriff's old office area in the jail in the coming months.

The process for demolition of the Grove Street Annex building has begun. A pre-demolition inspection of the premises was done and a RFP for the demolition is being worked on.

**Public Safety Center (new jail)-**

The Antrim County Sheriff currently operates a 56-bed jail that opened in 1955. Multiple additions have been made to the building over the years. In November 2017, the Board of Commissioners awarded a proposal for an Antrim County Facilities Master Plan to

Byce & Associates. They performed analytics, established space standards and evaluated needs. Data was used to translate and analyze historical data related to population, court caseload, and jail statistics. The plan noted that the jail has limited staff visibility and inadequate program spaces, marginal visiting accommodations, and confusing public access. The Board agreed to the location for a new Public Safety Center and a concept site plan that the Sheriff Department recommended. A bid for a Jail Needs Assessment, which shall include an analysis of Antrim County’s criminal justice system, an evaluation of incarceration alternatives, and programming projections was done and the two bids received were:

- Justice Planners \$71,860
- BKV Group \$67,989

Sheriff and administration created an advisory work group for the public service center. Consensus from the County Board that they would like a recommendation regarding the needs assessment from this group who will be looking at issues to create an efficient public service center. If the voters approve of a new public safety center, the sheriff’s offices will relocate and the 209 Portage building will be repurposed.

**Unified Trial Court-**

The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution in support of a combined District and Probate Court on Dec. 21, 2023 which would mean only one judge for both courts in only Antrim County instead of one for each court shared with Grand Traverse as well as Leelanau Counties. The State Court Administrator Thomas P. Boyd does not support the legislation for a Unified Trial Court in Antrim County. This determination will be made by the Legislature. Senator Damoose, Representatives Roth and Borton and the State Legislative Service Bureau is working together to put a bill together. Once drafted, the County will be reviewing the language.

**Recycling-**

Stats for the District 5 area include:

	Alba/Star Twp.	Elmira/Warner Twp.	Mancelona/Mancelona Twp.
Total yr.			
Pulls	23	6	45
Tons	20.56	3.3	58.5

County total yr.

Pulls	1423
Tons	2503.95

**Glacial Hills-**

A Glacial Hills governing board was put in place to oversee the management decisions for this area as the intergovernmental agreement between the County, Forest Home

Township and the Village of Bellaire states. However, the governing board is limited when it comes to expanding trails or authorizing capital improvements without first obtaining the approval of the owner of the property on which an improvement is proposed. Since Antrim County owns the property that encompasses the Vandermark Trailhead, granting permission for the expansion of the parking lot falls to the Board of Commissioners. The estimated cost of this parking expansion is \$20,000 which Glacial Hills Board will find the funds to complete the project. Moved by LaVanway, and seconded by VanAlstine, that the Board approve the request of the Friends of Glacial Hills Pathway & Natural Area to expand the parking lot at the Vandermark Road Trailhead on parcel #05-07-223-003-00. Motion carried as follows: Yes – Hefferan, Rubingh, VanAlstine, Helwig, LaVanway; No – None; Absent – None.

### **National Day of Prayer-**

The Bellaire Ministerial Association's request for use of the front lawn space between the courthouse and the sheriff's office was approved by the board. Moved by LaVanway, and seconded by Rubingh that the Board approve the Bellaire Ministerial Association's request for use of the front lawn space between the Courthouse and the Sheriff's office to host their National Day of Prayer event on Thursday, May 2, 2024 from noon to 1:00 p.m. Motion carried as follows: Yes – Hefferan, Rubingh, VanAlstine, Helwig, LaVanway; No – None; Absent – None

### **Adult Day Service-**

The County is exploring the possibility of expanding the Commission on Aging to include adult day care service only in Bellaire.

### **Park Department-**

Highlights of 2023

Barnes Park

- New playground equipment installed
- Forest Bathhouse plumbing work completed by Team Bobs
- Talking is Teaching panels installed at playground area which was donated by the Great Start Collaborative & Parent Coalition of Charlevoix, Emmet, and Northern Antrim Counties.
- Improvements to the main parking area (correcting drainage issues, leveling, and compacting gravel)
- Improved the aesthetics of the bathhouses at Barnes Park with fresh paint and repairs to parking areas
- Reinforced the retaining wall and removed debris/overgrown garden outside the Lake Bathhouse with plans to re-plant with native species
  - The Petoskey Stone Festival will be applying to become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. They are still in the early stages of obtaining their status with hope this will become disentangled from the County before the 2024 festival. Beginning in 2025, they plan to hold the festival the week before Memorial Day to alleviate multiple issues, including crowding/parking.

#### Elk Rapids Day Park

- New playground equipment at beach in which the Elk Rapids Rotary Club was awarded a \$1500 grant and the Community Foundation Rotary Endowment was awarded a \$1500 grant
- Repaired and removed debris from the fence with plans to fix damaged fence

#### Antrim Creek Natural Area

- Several educational programs and volunteer clean up events
- Removal of non-native plants from the beach/dune areas
- Installation of new signage and information kiosks
- Installed two vehicle counters, and two trail counters. These will be very beneficial when applying for grants

#### Willow Day Park

- Replaced split rail fencing and picnic tables that have rotten wood and damage
- Repairs to driveway and parking area to correct drainage issues and damage

#### Notewares Landing

- Replaced split rail fencing and picnic tables that have rotten wood and damage
- Cleaned up the brush, debris and dead trees that have accumulated over the years

#### Mohrmann Natural Area

- Repairs to driveway and parking area to correct drainage issues and damage

#### Glacial Hills

- The trails have been groomed several times already, the grooming team needs cooler temps and more snow to continue

#### Antrim Conservation District

- Kyle Williams is the new CAKE CISMA coordinator

#### **Emergency Services Coordinator-**

Matt Adameck, Emergency Services Coordinator for the County will work with Sheriff Hoch to update the County's comprehensive Emergency Operation Plan which needs to be done in 2025. Matt is working with Region 7 to provide the CERT team with equipment to handle a Volunteer Reception Center and a Family Reunification Center. Both facilities will most likely be needed in a mass disaster. Emergency Services also received a Grand Traverse 2% Tribal grant. The grant is to be used to purchase a vehicle and radios.

#### **Veterans Department-**

All three staff are accredited and able to work on and file claims to Veterans Affairs. However, at this time the Director is the only one with a PIV card (Personal Identity Verification) which allows to see a veteran's profile in the VA system called VBMS. It also allows this department to receive the County Veteran Service Fund Grant.

One of the more difficult aspects of this office is getting Gulf war and Post 9/11 veterans engaged and educated on VA benefits. This is a group they want to target for this department this year. Future goals are to continue with claim education for office staff and working with MSU extension with a possible veteran community garden(s) throughout the county, to attend township meetings and create a monthly newsletter

Brunch and Learn: The Antrim County Veterans Affairs Office will be hosting an information session and Lunch & Learn on April 4, 2024 at the Hen's Den Restaurant in Mancelona. The session runs from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Brunch & Learn session will dive into topics such as VA Healthcare, the PACT Act, and caregiver support.

**Website:**

AntrimCountyMI.gov will be the new web address for the County. Domains with .gov signal trust and credibility and has become a standard for counties as an additional security stance. A goal of going live will be the first week in April. The existing domain, AntrimCounty.org, will be set up to automatically forward to AntrimCountyMI.gov for the foreseeable future to avoid interruption of communication and confusion.