



## Planning commission will conduct hearing on ordinance revisions

Cass County Board

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Cass County Correspondent

BACKUS - Cass County will conduct the first reading and public hearing for ordinance revisions and comprehensive plan changes before the planning commission this year, with second reading and public hearing to be conducted before the county board.

The planning commission will receive public comment March 19 on revised zoning maps, April 23 on development standards changes, April 30 on technical amendments to ordinances and June 24 on comprehensive plan amendments.

All planning commission meetings are after 6 p.m. at the land department building in Backus. Exact times will be advertised later. County board hearings will be scheduled after the planning commission prepares recommendations.

The county board, to comply with state law, set March 4 as the date to formally select Chief Assistant County Attorney Chris Strandlie to fill the unexpired term of County Attorney Earl Maus, who will become a district court judge.

Cass County Board Tuesday approved another resolution requesting the Legislature and governor approve "a comprehensive and balanced transportation funding package that permanently increases dedicated funding for transportation." This resolution reinforces earlier statements the board has made supporting a gas tax increase.

Cass County Sheriff Randy Fisher Tuesday reported 88 men and one woman successfully completed sentence to serve during 2007. The average crew ran just under five people.

They worked off \$10,357 in fines, completing an estimated \$89,775 estimated market value of projects. At \$5 per hour, the sheriff valued their services as being worth \$43,575.

They completed 8,715 hours of work for Minnesota DNR, the county, cities, townships, other state agencies, the federal government and nonprofit agencies.

Land Commissioner Norm Moody obtained board approval Tuesday to create a computer server room in a portion of the new land department rear hallway.

He told the board he has sufficient funds in his budget to separate the 85-square-foot area into a room.

Besides storing data on-site, offices in the land department building also have data stored as a backup off-site, Moody explained when commissioners asked about security at the building. Moody also said there are security video cameras throughout the building.

Cass County Economic Development Director Gail Levenson reported she provided services to 26 businesses in January. Of those, 16 would be new developments, two relocations, five expansions and one would involve the use of JOBZ incentives.

Nine propose manufacturing businesses, six would provide services, two would be warehouse distribution centers and one each would be a retailer or nonprofit. If all those businesses were created, Levenson said there would be 225 more jobs available in the county and owners would make a \$25 million capital investment.

About 33 Cass County residents per month who did not previously have medication coverage under an insurance plan have gotten about a 23 percent discount on their medications during each of the last four months since Cass County offered the National Association of Counties Caremark discount drug card.

Any resident of the county can obtain a discount card from the Health, Human and Veterans Services office in Walker or through many area participating pharmacies. There are no personal income limits for using the card. Discounts offered with the card cannot be combined with any existing insurance coverage.

If people have insurance coverage, but a specific medication they use is not covered under that plan, it may be covered with the county discount card.

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