



News and Highlights

3rd Quarter 2023

www.co.beltrami.mn.us

Beltrami County Mission and Values: We will strive to be the catalyst to firmly establish a community that promotes healthy families, environmental quality, expanding economic opportunity and a quality of life second to none.

Jail Project—Its Time to Vote!

ELECTION NIGHT PRECINCTS

Registered Voters in Precincts that offer in-person voting on Election Day, will be voting at their normal Precinct on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Nonregistered Voters may register at the Precinct on Election Day with identification and proof of current residency. For a complete list of Polling Places and Hours, please visit the Beltrami County Website at www.co.beltrami.mn.us

MAIL BALLOT PRECINCT

Registered Voters in Mail Ballot Precincts will be mailed a ballot on or about September 28, 2023. Mail Ballots need to be returned by mail or in person to the Beltrami Auditor-Treasurer no later than 8:00 pm on Election Day, Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Nonregistered Voters please contact Beltrami Auditor-Treasurer’s Office either in person or at 218-333-8448.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Absentee Ballots will be available at Beltrami Auditor-Treasurer’s Office starting September 22, 2023, during regular office hours Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. and also during extended hours on Saturday November 4, 2023, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Absentee Ballots are available through the mail by filling out an Absentee Ballot Request Form located on the Beltrami County Website at www.co.beltrami.mn.us Absentee Ballots need to be returned by mail or in person to the Beltrami Auditor-Treasurer no later than 8:00 pm on Election Day, Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

~Submitted by: Auditor/Treasurer, JoDee Treat

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION

To the Voters of Beltrami County in the State of Minnesota.

Notice is Hereby Given, that a Special Election will be held on Tuesday, the Seventh (7th) day of November 2023, for the purpose of selecting the funding source of the new Beltrami County Jail to be constructed.

Locations and Voting Hours are attached.

Beltrami County
County Ballot Question

Dated August 23, 2023

Beltrami County Auditor
Beltrami County Minnesota

Local Option Sales Tax Ballot Question

Beltrami County is building a new jail to replace the deficient facility currently operated on the County’s downtown campus. To fund the new jail, the County received legislative approval to conduct a referendum on a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST). The LOST would be a five-eighths of one cent (0.625%) tax on eligible sales. The tax would not apply to clothing, groceries, cars or general services/labor costs. If voters opt to not implement the LOST, the cost of the project would likely shift to the property taxpayers in the County. Many communities have a LOST to fund large projects. The LOST can be described as a minor sales tax increase preventing a major property tax increase.

The County did extensive research and planning while considering a new jail and how to fund it. The University of Minnesota Extension Service provided a research-based analysis to community leaders on the impact of implementing a local option sales tax increase. It estimated that half of all taxable sales would be made by non-residents. This means that potentially half of the \$80 million dollar project would be paid for by non-residents. This seems fitting because as many as 40% of the inmates in the Beltrami County Jail are not Beltrami County residents.

Beltrami County’s tax rate is similar to neighboring counties, many of which have implemented a LOST over the years. The LOST is projected to add 50 cents to every \$80 in taxable purchases. The LOST would be in effect for only as long as it takes to pay for the project, estimated at 30 years. Similarly, if the LSOT fails, it is estimated that at least a 20% levy increase for the same amount of time would be imposed on property taxpayers – that is on top of any other necessary levy increases. The Beltrami County Jail is being replaced, the decision is up to the voters in how to fund it.

On the 2023 ballot, the question will appear as follows:

“The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners has voted to construct a new County Jail at an estimated cost of \$80 million. Taxpayers have a choice as to how to fund the project. Shall Beltrami County establish a five-eighths of one percent (.625%) sales and use tax to pay for constructing and financing the new jail?

-A **YES** vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through the sales and use tax which would remain in effect for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.

-A **NO** vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through increased property taxes for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.”

~Submitted by: Public Information Officer, Chris Muller

Why is a New Beltrami County Jail Needed?

Beltrami County has faced increasing challenges in the operation of the jail for several years. The current facility opened in 1989 and at the time met the needs of the County with a capacity of 81 inmates. Remodels and operational changes increased the capacity to nearly 170 in 2004. Thirty years after the opening, it was becoming increasingly evident that significant remodeling would be needed to ensure staff and inmate safety. Due to staffing challenges and the way the current jail is designed, the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) ordered the population be reduced to only 80 inmates, about half of what it was at its peak capacity. This resulted in the County having to house inmates in other counties. It is estimated that the County will be spending \$1.3 million in 2023 paying other jails to house our inmates. That doesn't include the cost of staff time, vehicle wear and fuel costs transporting inmates hundreds of miles.

In 2021 the Beltrami County Board approved the hiring of a project management consultant to help the County coordinate, facilitate and manage the jail project. The consultant provided seven options to address the jail concerns: 1. Maintain the status quo; 2. Operate as a 36-hour holding facility; 3. Renovate the existing detention center; 4. Expand the detention center; 5. Build a new detention center; 6. Build a regional detention center; 7. Close the detention center.

Maintaining status quo does not address the current issues and has the possibility of the DOC ordering the facility to close or forcing it to become a 36-hour holding facility. Turning the jail into a 36-hour facility would be incredibly expensive as inmates would need to be transported and housed in other jails. Renovating the jail would address the core systems, but no additional bedspaces would be added. There is the possibility of losing beds, offices and property storage. Expanding the current jail would require eminent domain of residential and commercial properties as well as closure of a city street. The current jail cannot be built up and would require significantly more staff. Building a new jail would address all concerns and have adequate capacity based on thirty year estimates. There was consideration to build a regional jail that would have required participation from other counties and could have increased revenue for the County, but there was not enough regional interest. The last option was to close the jail. This would require inmates to be housed in other jails, costing the County millions of dollars annually.

The recommendation from the consultant was to replace the jail and the County Board evaluated all of the options, and decided to follow that recommendation. Working with the consultant and engineers, design and operations planning of the new facility is underway. The new jail will meet the needs of the county for years to come and is being built as a 242-bed facility, which is the projected need 30 years from now based on population growth. The new jail will be a single level structure that requires a larger footprint but enhances the safety of staff and inmates by improving line of sight while safely operating with fewer employees. Beltrami County has award winning programming that focuses on reducing recidivism. These programs benefit inmates by providing support during their time in custody and assist them in planning for when they are released. Additional space is needed to conduct successful programming as well as expand chaplaincy access, cultural ceremonies and studies.

Site Selection of the New Beltrami County Jail

As soon as the decision to build a new County Jail was made, identifying a suitable location for the facility began and specific criterion was developed for site selection. A complicating factor is the requirement by Minnesota State Law the County Jail must be located in the city limits of the county seat.

More than 15 properties were initially looked at during the site selection process using the criterion established. The County employed criterion that was more stringent than what is required, putting an emphasis on community and residential impacts. On June 1st, 2023 the County announced its intent to purchase property on the southwest side of Bemidji. After significant public feedback and zoning concerns, the county withdrew the offer and began looking at other properties. A recently imposed moratorium of jail construction on residentially zoned property by the Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board narrowed possible sites. Following suggestions from the public, the County put more emphasis on neighborhood impacts, looking farther than adjacent properties.

Additional properties were identified and evaluated. Some were disqualified for various reasons, including an unwillingness of owners to sell. Two final properties were selected, the Nymore/Crown Property and another property known as the 'Quello Property' located approximately three-quarters of a mile south of the Nymore/Crown Property on the north side of Carr Lake Rd SE at the intersection of Fenske Ave SE. The Quello Property would have required deforestation and significant leveling. A public hearing was held on August 15th for public input on the two locations. There was significant opposition to the Quello Property and no opposition to the Nymore/Crown Property. On August 23rd, the Board of Commissioners held a special meeting to discuss the properties, and unanimously voted to accept the Nymore/Crown Property. The 9.2 acre property location near the Industrial Park on the north side of Pioneer Street SE west of Railroad Street SE, has access to two different roads, utilities are easily accessible, the property is completely flat, has only a couple of trees and is nearly shovel ready. When the owner of the property learned the County was having difficulty finding a location for the new jail, they offered to donate the property to the County. This donation has saved the County hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In reference to the donation, Commissioner John Carlson said, "I want to thank John Fankhanel and family for their generous donation." Commissioner Joe Gould added, "I would also like to thank staff for going above and beyond lately, our Administra-



tor, consultants, Sheriff, staff, and everyone who has been part of the process... it has been a lot of work for a lot of people. Thank you to the citizens for coming forward and letting us know their thoughts and opinions and offering suggestions." Commissioner Tim Sumner remarked, "The current facility does not have adequate space needed for programming and special religious ceremonies. My hope is with the new jail we can provide some of these programs and cultural programming.."

~Submitted by: Public Information Officer, Chris Muller

Clip and Mail

Your opinion and feedback is important to us... tell us how you feel and return this clip to:

Beltrami County Administration
701 Minnesota Ave NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

OR e-mail to: webmaster@co.beltrami.mn.us

1. Did you find the information in this Newsletter helpful?

2. What would you like to see in future issues of the Beltrami County News and Highlights?

3. A question I have of the County Board is:

4. A suggestion I have for the County Board is:



Clip and Send

Senate Capital Investments Committee Visit

On Thursday, August 17th, 2023 representatives from Beltrami County welcomed the Minnesota Senate Capital Investments Committee as they toured the Beltrami County Jail. The Capital Investments Committee was touring projects across Minnesota that have requested state funding. Beltrami County has requested \$50 million in funding from the state for the new County Jail. Normally projects have a 50% match, but Beltrami County's designation as one of the poorest counties in the state allows it to request a higher bonding amount. If bonding is successful, Beltrami County would commit \$30 million towards the project. Several factors lead Beltrami County to pursue the funding request for the jail project. The County remains the second poorest in the State with a poverty rate that has been hovering around 20% for decades. The County provides services to the third largest geographic area in the state but only 30% of the land in the County is taxable. The County supports two federally recognized tribal nations in housing inmates that also necessitates County assistance.

Eleven Senators and staffers joined the Beltrami County Sheriff, Commissioners and County staff for a tour of the existing facility that has been deemed insufficient to meet the County's needs by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC). DOC regulations, staffing challenges and the age of the building have drastically reduced the County's ability to house inmates. The County is estimated to spend \$1.3 million housing inmates in other jails in 2023 alone. If nothing is done, the Beltrami County Jail may be forced to close, resulting in all inmates being housed in other counties. Housing inmates in other counties would impoverish the County which is why replacement is necessary. The House of Representatives Capital Investments Committee will be visiting Beltrami County in September for the same purpose.

Beltrami County Sheriff Jason Riggs said, "It was a great opportunity to visit with the senators, especially those who don't know our unique situation and relationship with our Indigenous populations and neighbors. Our goal is to enhance our jail programming to reduce recidivism and expand services that decrease the possibility of inmates being reintroduced to our jail." Beltrami County Administrator Tom Barry added, "We know our facility needs to be replaced, the Department of Corrections has made that clear. The County has a responsibility to safely house inmates as well as ensure our staff have a safe working environment. The current facility simply doesn't provide for that." Commissioner Joe Gould said, "We have award winning programming that cannot fully support our inmates because of the physical limitations of our facility. That is a disservice to the staff and inmates. We want to emphasize correction rather than detention. We have the staff, but need the space."

Regardless of the success of the bonding request, a new Beltrami County Jail must be constructed. Citing DOC inspections, the current facility has been described as 'aging ten years in only one year'. It has significant challenges which pose issues for staff and inmate safety. The County also has award winning programming concentrating on reducing recidivism that is limited due to lack of available space in the current jail to effectively offer these services. In November, voters will have a say in how to pay for the new jail. Ideally, the County will be successful in gaining state bonding, however the remaining \$30 million or the entire \$80 million will be up to the taxpayers to foot. A referendum vote will take place for a five-eighths of a percent (0.625%) Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) which would fund the jail at the \$80 million amount in November. A University of Minnesota Study concluded that half of the revenue collected would come from non-residents if the LOST is approved. If the LOST is not approved, it would result in property taxpayers in the County having an estimated 20+% levy increase for the next 30 years.

~Submitted by: Public Information Officer, Chris Muller



County Commissioners, Sheriff, County Attorney and staff



Beltrami County Administrator Tom Barry welcomes the Senate Capital Investment Committee prior to their tour of the Beltrami County Jail.

Beltrami County Public Health

Programs and Services

Did you know that the Public Health division strives to “Prevent, Promote, and Protect” the “Community Health” through the services provided at the clinic located at 616 America Ave. NW in Bemidji, Minnesota. In addition, the Beltrami Public Health division and Community Health Board collaborate and engage with community members and a variety of organizations to improve health outcomes, address health equity, and tackle social determinants of health. With recent changes in our Health and Human Services organization, it is essential to our HHS leadership team that we provide our community with a clear picture of the work that has been done, current programs and services, and our future plans.

Immunizations:

Did you know that on Mondays, at the Family Health Clinic, you do not need an appointment to receive immunizations? This service allows individuals or families to stop by 616 America Ave NW, Suite 130 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and a nurse will be available to administer immunizations. This service is available for all ages. If you’d prefer to make an appointment or have questions, call 218-333-8140. If you’d like to do some research, here are some helpful links:

- www.immunize.org
- www.cdc.gov/vaccines/
- www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/index.html

Family Home Visits:

The staff provides the residents of Beltrami County with in-home visits and has a variety of programs to offer. One of the programs is our Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Family Home Visiting program (FHV). MCH promotes and supports the well-being of mothers, children, and children with special needs. Our use of Evidence-

Based models are designed to assist individuals and families in promoting health outcomes for pregnant women, their infants, and children up to 3 years. Our team uses a wholistic approach to assess the health needs, in evaluating physical, social and emotional needs, providing referrals, and helping create a safe and healthy environment. Through consistent and planned home visits, parents and caregivers learn how to improve their health and provide better opportunities for their children. Programs supported by Evidence Based Family Home Visiting Program include: Families First, Supported by a HRSA grant, Healthy Families of America, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Yet to come:

In our next edition you can look forward to learning about Car Seat education, Emergency Preparedness, and an overview of Public Health. In addition to learning about our programs we will be providing an update on the Opioid Settlement Funding and our Family Health Clinic Remodel.

Public Health utilizes its primary funding sources, state and federal grants, to best serve our community. If you have an interest in providing input or sharing your ideas, please reach out and our Public Health Director would be happy to meet with you.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve our county.

~Submitted by: Public Health Division Director and Community Health Board Administrator, Amy Bowles, RN, BSN, MSN 218-333-8116



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Your Local Health Department

Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force

The Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force (PBDF) was established in 1988 to provide coordinated joint investigation of controlled substance violations, gang activity and other felony-level criminal activity within a jurisdictional boundary of greater Minnesota. PBDF currently includes the counties of Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, Koochiching, and Mahnomen; the Cities of Bemidji and Park Rapids; and the Reservations of Leech Lake and White Earth.

Poor social-economic conditions combined with other factors have led to high substance abuse and addiction rates in our area. While opioids may not be the most abused drug in the area, the impact that it is having on our communities appears greater than any other type of drug.

Beltrami County is a major regional hub for transportation and commerce in northern Minnesota. Likewise, it has also become a hub for individuals seeking to profit from the trafficking and distribution of opioids in the region. This is attributed to the high demand and high retail prices obtainable for these substances in an outstate market.

The opioid epidemic took a drastic turn for the worse in Beltrami County in 2019 due to the rise of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid that can be lethal in doses smaller than 2mg. (Imagine a small amount of powder on the tip of a #2 pencil).

In 2019, PBDF responded to 20 suspected drug-related overdose incidents, 5 of which were fatal. Fast forward to 2022, PBDF recorded 142 suspected overdoses, 28 of which were fatal. Statistically, that is a 710% increase in overdoses and a 180% increase in overdose deaths.

PBDF is committed to community-based strategies in combating the opioid crisis; helping those struggling with addiction while holding those fueling the crisis accountable. In 2023, the Beltrami County Attorney’s Office successfully prosecuted 2 individuals from PBDF investigations for 3rd degree murder for distributing fentanyl resulting in death. We are happy to bring some sort of justice to the friends and families of those who paid the ultimate price during this epidemic. We expect to see more of these convictions across the PBDF area soon.

Anyone with information on these types of crimes, or other violent crime is asked to submit an anonymous tip online at <https://mobile.catapultems.com/drug-taskforce/sites> or use this QR code:



~Submitted by: PBDF Commander, David Hart

The Future of Construction Debris Disposal

A Regional Approach



A 9 County Group completed the Feasibility Study in June of 2023, that was mentioned in the February article. The 9 Counties involved in the study are: Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard, Marshall, Mahanomen, Norman, Polk and Red Lake Counties.

Why did we do this study? The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has said they are not going to permit anymore Unlined Landfills. The state is also actively going through the Rule making process, to no longer allow unlined landfills as an option to dispose of Construction Debris within the State Statutes and Rules.

The study looked at the following Criteria:

1. Cost of Closing and Maintaining our landfills for the minimum 20 years before the State will accept them in the Closed Landfill Program.
2. Cost for each County to have their own landfill.
3. Regional Hub and Spoke System where there are 2 Lined Landfills and Several Spokes (Transfer Sites) located in the 9 County Group.

Results from the study also computed projected Tip Fees per Cubic Yard (CY):

Current Rate: \$17.00 CY

Option 1: Build our own Lined Landfill, estimated Tip Fee would be \$151.00 CY

Option 2: Build a C&D Transfer Facility and ship waste to Lined Landfill, estimated Tip Fee would be \$77.00 CY

The 9 County Group has applied for a State and Federal Grants to offset the cost of Option 2. Option 1 is not grant eligible. If we receive the grants, the State of Minnesota could pay up to 75% of the cost of the infrastructure and equipment. This would reduce the projected Tip fee for Option 2 to around \$55.00 per CY.

When would this happen: We would build the system in 2025 and 2026 and start to phase out the unlined landfills after the new system is built. Within the 9 County Group, our landfill permits expire between 2026-2029.

This is not projected to increase any Solid Waste Fees on our residential property taxes.

We have also told the state we can't do this without state funding.

~Submitted by: Solid Waste Division Director, Brian Olson

Understanding the Limitations of Property Boundary Maps on Mobile Devices

You may have heard of smartphone apps like onX, HuntStand, HuntWise, LandGlide, Parceled, Regrid, and others. Like me, many of you reading this probably use one or more of them. You may also see advertisements for these products about how they claim they have the most accurate property boundary and ownership maps. It's important to understand more about what that means, how accurate those property boundary maps *really* are, and how confident you should be about relying on that information in certain situations.

Where do the maps come from?

First and foremost, onX, HuntStand, HuntWise, LandGlide, Parceled, Regrid, and others do not have their own teams of land surveyors that have gone across the country and surveyed every property boundary before putting it on a map. Instead, they get their property boundary details primarily from county government offices because counties are usually the authoritative source for land records. If you have used county parcel maps like the ones on the Beltrami County website, you will notice that they always have disclaimers stating that the information is not a survey of property boundaries, and we cannot provide the end user with any guarantees about its accuracy. If the app developers get their information from the county, then ultimately the same disclaimer holds true.

How is a parcel or property boundary map created?

The process of creating today's GIS-based parcel or property boundary maps is complex and filled with a lot of technical details. Understanding how a map like this is created requires a basic understanding of the underlying framework of property boundaries. Most of the land in the United States was divided into a grid of townships and sections. To define the boundaries of a township or section, crews of land surveyors working for the federal government over a hundred years ago (even more in some parts of the country) ran measurements and set physical markers, or monuments, at the corner of every section. To create an accurate, modern day property boundary map, we first need to know exactly where every one of those corner monuments is located. However, the United States Global Positioning System (GPS) wasn't initiated until 1973, 126 years after the original government land surveys began in Minnesota. So, the problem is this: many counties did not have GPS coordinates of every section corner when they developed their GIS-based parcel maps. If the precise location of the corner could not be mapped with GPS coordinates, its location was estimated using a variety of other methods ranging from interpretation of old aerial photos to proportional measurements. We had to make educated guesses based on the best information available at the time. As time goes on and we obtain

more GPS coordinates for those corner locations, we sometimes find that our estimations were off by hundreds of feet! In general, that's a pretty extreme example. However, it's important to realize that it *is* possible for maps to be that far off. This potential for inaccuracy carries all the way through to the app on your phone.

How accurate is your smartphone's GPS receiver?

Another factor is the GPS accuracy of your phone. Your device's accuracy can vary greatly depending on the age of your phone and its internal technology as well as environmental and atmospheric factors. Typically, smartphones can be accurate to within about 16 feet under open sky. Research indicates that the newest smartphone GPS receivers are getting more accurate and may soon be capable of achieving GPS accuracy of about 3 feet in ideal conditions. Although that's impressive, it's still not nearly as accurate as the equipment and technology used by land surveyors. And if the map is off in the first place, the accuracy of your phone doesn't really matter.

Efforts to improve Land survey crews now use expensive, high accuracy GPS equipment to capture coordinates at each corner location, and many counties then incorporate those GPS coordinates into their maps. This gives us a new level of precision that we did not have to begin with. Beltrami County has painstakingly remapped about 1,200 sections covering about 764,000 acres. Every time onX and others refresh the data that they obtain from us, their map gets more accurate. However, it still won't be the same as a survey, and we still won't be able to assure you that the data is perfect in every way. As mentioned before, it's a complex and challenging process to accurately represent every parcel of land on a map across an entire county, state, or nation.

What we recommend In general, be cautious about using an app on your phone for locating property boundaries, especially in situations that might require a high degree of confidence about a boundary location. In those situations, you should always do additional research, pay attention to signage, fences, monuments, and other physical indicators of property boundaries, involve land surveyors to mark or verify boundary lines and corners, and be respectful towards other landowners before making assumptions about which property you are on or where the boundaries of your own property are located. When in doubt, talk to us here at the county to see if any survey records are on file for a property, or talk to a land surveyor.

~Submitted by: GIS Director, Kevin Trappe

note: Beltrami County neither endorses nor discourages readers from using any app

Farwell to Human Resource Director Linda Tran

After 22 years of dedicated service to Beltrami County, first as a Payroll/ Finance Technician and then for 14-1/2 years as Human Resources Director, Linda Tran is embarking on a well-deserved retirement.

We are so grateful for Linda's leadership, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to our employees and celebrate not only her remarkable accomplishments but also the countless lives that she has touched along the way. She leaves behind many achievements, innovations, and services that will benefit both the County and our staff members as we move forward. We wish Linda adventure and joy as she enters the next chapter of her life.



Welcome Ann Schroeder



Ann Schroeder is the new Human Resources Director for Beltrami County. Most recently Ann worked for the City of Prior Lake where she served as the HR Coordinator. In that role, she provided employee support and HR functions for all employees, on-call firefighters, seasonals, councilors, election judges and advisory members. Ann managed the city's benefits program and led the employee council and wellness committee. Prior to that she worked as a Branch Administrator for AVI Systems where she managed the daily duties of the administrative and warehouse staff. She also developed a Central Customer Service department for customers in divisions nationwide. Ann holds an Executive Assistant associate degree as well as a bachelor's degree in Business Management and is a Certified Professional with the Public Sector HR Association. Originally from south central Minnesota, Ann is looking forward to exploring the local area. She is eager for this opportunity, and as she attempts to memorize the names of her 400+ new co-workers, Ann will direct and coordinate the day-to-day business of the Human Resources Department at Beltrami County.

Commissioners can be contacted by phone or e-mail:

District 1 Commissioner Craig Gaasvig

218-766-9699

cgaasvig@paulbunyan.net

District 2 Commissioner Joe Gould

218-259-4342

Joe.gould@co.beltrami.mn.us

District 3 Commissioner Richard Anderson

218-467-3275

richard@paulbunyan.net

District 4 Commissioner Tim Sumner

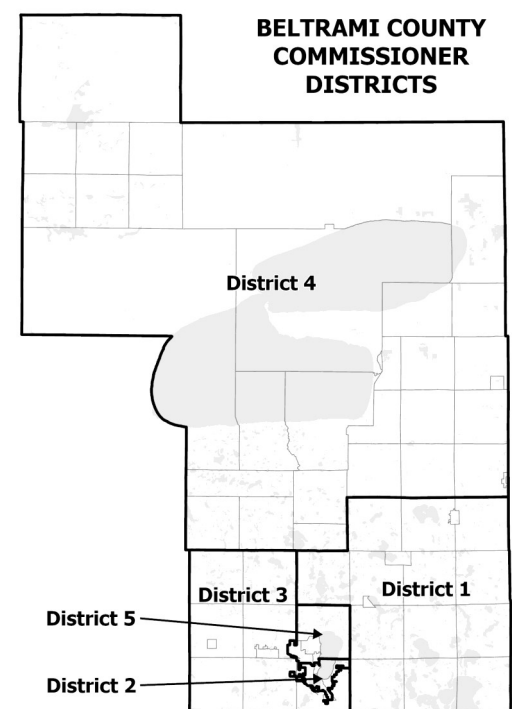
218-407-7589

tsumner15@gmail.com

District 5 Commissioner John Carlson

218-766-5010

John.carlson@co.beltrami.mn.us



For additional information and detail, visit the County Board of Commissioners at www.co.beltrami.mn.us/Government/Board_of_Commissioners.html

Focus on Total Wellness for County Employees

Beltrami County hosted their first annual 'Summer Solstice Health and Wellness Expo' on June 21, 2023 for Beltrami County Employees. Beltrami County Management and Administration has focused on total wellness by establishing a Health and Wellness Committee which is comprised of employee volunteers from many different county departments. The goal of the committee is to promote total wellness for employees. The Theme for the 2023 Beltrami County Employee Health and Wellness Expo was 'MIND.BODY.SOUL.'

Total wellness represents all types of "Health" including physical, social, mental, financial, culinary, environmental and overall well-being. Many participants, attendees and vendors commented that the event was enjoyable, well attended and were looking forward to the next event.

Beltrami County employs nearly 435 individuals, who serve the residents and visitors of Beltrami County.



2023 Road Construction Update

Beltrami County has had a very busy construction season this summer. There was approximately \$20 million in construction projects that we have been working on. The larger projects included the reconstruction of 6 miles of CSAH 20 (Birchmont Beach Rd) east from the State Park entrance, the reconstruction of CSAH 15 (Irvine Ave) in Bemidji including a roundabout at the Anne St intersection, the re-surfacing of CSAH 15 (Irvine Ave) from Nebish south 11 miles, the reconstruction of CSAH 57 (Sandpiper Rd, Bittern Rd, and Island View Dr) from Turtle River south 3 miles, construction of turn lanes on CSAH 21 (Bemidji Rd) at CSAH 59 (Glidden Rd) and CSAH 57 (Island View Dr), replaced a bridge in Shotley Township, and chip sealed 48 miles of various roads around the county.

Beltrami County urges motorists to slow down and drive with caution when traveling in and around all work zones. Please help keep construction workers safe. Obey posted speed limits, drive undistracted, move over and away from workers, never enter a road blocked with barriers or cones, and be patient.

For more information on any of these projects please contact the Beltrami County Highway Department at (218) 333-8173.

~Submitted by: Highway Engineer, Bruce Hasbargen



Trash Talk

Beltrami County Solid Waste—Remote Transfer Sites

Please read the and comply with all the Rules that are posted at our 5 Remote Transfer Sites, and 3 Recycle Drop Off sites located in Beltrami. We try very hard to keep these sites operational, and clean for all residents in Beltrami County.

The 5 Remote Transfer Sites are only for Household Garbage, and Recycling. Examples of acceptable Household Garbage would be items you would put in your trash can under your sink “as a rule of thumb nothing bigger than a 5 gallon pail”. Household Recycling includes: Paper (no text books), Cardboard, Type 1 and 2 Plastic Containers, Glass Food/Beverage Containers, and Metal Food/Beverage Containers.

We also have a Battery Drop off Container for Lithium and Rechargeable batteries at all of our Transfer Sites. Help prevent fires at our Waste Facilities by separating these batteries from your normal trash!

Unacceptable items at our Transfer Sites: (these items can be brought to either the Bemidji or Blackduck Transfer Stations).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| No Hazardous Waste | No Infectious Waste |
| No Car Batteries | No Furniture |
| No Flammable or Toxic Material | No Appliances |
| No Electronics | No Demolition Debris |
| No Commercial Refuse | No Scrap Metal |

We understand that if these sites are not operational it is an inconvenience to you and your neighbors, and if there is a mechanical failure we try our best to get them up and operational as soon as we can once the issue has been identified. The compactor units are very reliable, as long as there is power, and they are used as intended. Almost all mechanical failures at these sites have been caused by customers miss use.

A lot of times nothing is wrong with the compactors when garbage is placed on the ground. Someone starts piling their garbage on the ground, and everyone else just starts to add to the pile.

“Please don’t be part of the problem”

If a site is not operational or there is garbage on ground please don’t add to the problem. Be part of the solution. Try and operate the compactor and clean the site up if the compactor is working, or call the Solid Waste Operations Coordinator at 218-333-8187 for “help”, the number is also posted at our Transfer Sites.

Visit the Beltrami County Website, Solid Waste Department, for more information. www.co.beltrami.mn.us

~Submitted by: Solid Waste Division Director, Brian Olson

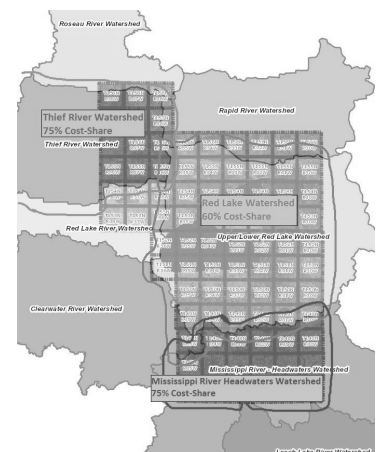
Ten Lake Rural Site 23170 Power Dam Rd NE	Fourtown Rural Site 68030 Hwy 89 NW	Island Lake Rural Sit 8530 Lumberjack Rd NW
Pinewood Rural Site 16909 Grange d NW	Waskish Rural Site 56162 Waskish Rd NE	NEW SITE COMING SOON! in Port Hope Township

Forest Stewardship Cost-Share Available County-Wide

Over the years, the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has continued to evolve its forest stewardship programs. If you have 20 or more forested acres in the County, there is a cost-share for you.

The cost-share will reimburse either 60 or 75 percent (depending on where your property is located) of the total cost of a forest stewardship plan. Since a forest stewardship plan is written by a forester, the plan provides you with direction to help you see what you want with your woods. The plan is created with the landowner in mind. Beyond the recommendations included in the plan, you become eligible for one of two incentive programs to put some extra money in your pocket.

If you are interested in this opportunity, or want to learn more, contact the Beltrami SWCD at 218-333-4158 to get started.



Jail Replacement Facts



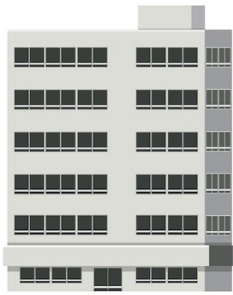
HOW MUCH WILL IT COST & WHO WILL PAY FOR IT?



The new Beltrami County Jail will cost \$80 million. The County received Legislative approval to pursue a Local Sales Tax (LST). The LST would be 5/8 of a penny or 0.625% which equates to 50 cents for every \$80 of eligible sales. The tax would not apply to clothing, groceries, cars and general services/labor costs. A LST would reduce resident costs by 50% because 50% of the revenue would come from visitors living outside the County. The LST will be on the November ballot for voters to decide in a referendum vote. If voters choose not to approve the LST, the project will continue but the project costs will have to come from property taxes, possibly increasing the levy over 20% for the next 30 years.

WHY A NEW LOCATION?

The question frequently comes up why the jail can't just be remodeled. Simply put, the footprint of the existing facility is far too small. The new jail will be a one level structure, enhancing line of sight and making for a safer environment for inmates and staff. Adding more levels to the jail is not cost effective. Additional floors would require significantly more staff than a single level structure. The new jail is required to be built within the Bemidji City Limits which posed challenges. In addition to needing accessibility to arterial highways, utilities and emergency services, the County took into consideration neighborhood impacts and accepted a donation of land near the industrial park in the City of Bemidji.



PROGRAMMING NEEDS & SAFER ENVIRONMENT...



Beltrami County offers several programs for inmates within the jail to provide support during their time in custody and assist them in planning for when they are released. These programs include the Jail Reset Program and the Beltrami County/Sanford EMBER (Embrace, Motivate, Belief, Execute and Remedy) Program. These programs focus on connecting inmates to resources to reduce recidivism and provide mental health care, peer support and other resources while in custody. Additional space is needed to conduct successful programming as well as expand chaplaincy access, cultural ceremonies and studies.

WHY A NEW FACILITY?

The current Beltrami County Jail opened in 1989 with a capacity to house 81 inmates. In 2001 the capacity was increased to 106 by double bunking inmates. After a remodel in 2004, capacity was increased again, allowing another 60 minimum security inmates. Due to significant changes in Department of Corrections regulations, an increase in violent offenders and staff challenges, the capacity of the jail was decreased to a maximum of only 80 inmates in 2023. Beltrami County is estimated to spend \$1.3 million housing inmates in other jails. A new jail is needed for inmate and staff safety and wellbeing as well as reducing our out of county housing of inmates.

THE NOVEMBER BALLOT QUESTION...

This is what Beltrami County voters will see on the November 7th, 2023 ballot:



“The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners has voted to construct a new County Jail at an estimated cost of \$80 million. Taxpayers have a choice as to how to fund the project. Shall Beltrami County establish a five-eighths of one percent (.625%) sales and use tax to pay for constructing and financing the new jail?”

-A YES vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through the sales tax which would remain in effect for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.

-A NO vote means that the majority of the costs would be financed through increased property taxes for 30 years or until the bonds are retired, whichever comes first.”

OUT OF COUNTY HOUSING...

Due to the current status of the Beltrami County Jail, inmates are needing to be housed in other counties. This is a tremendous cost to the taxpayers in Beltrami County. In 2015 Beltrami County began paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to house inmates out of county, in 2023 we are on track to spend over \$1.3 million. Not included in that amount are the expenses related to staff time, gas and vehicle wear. This also keeps inmates away from their family, home resources and beneficial services from our award winning initiatives in our jail.



INMATE POPULATION...

The number varies, but on average 40% of the population in the Beltrami County Jail are not residents of Beltrami County. They have committed a crime in Beltrami County and spend their pretrial or sentence in our jail. If the Local Sales Tax (LST) option to fund the jail is approved, everyone who visits Beltrami County and makes a taxable purchase will contribute to funding the new jail. If the LST is not approved, funding would then move to the property tax and would solely fall on the property taxpayers in Beltrami County.



www.co.beltrami.mn.us

Board of Commissioners

District 1—Craig Gaasvig218-766-9699
 District 2—Joe Gould218-259-4342
 District 3—Richard Anderson218-467-3275
 District 4—Tim Sumner218-407-7589
 District 5—John Carlson218-766-5010

Administration Building

701 Minnesota Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Administrator—Thomas Barry 218- 333-4109
 Assessor—Joe Skerik218-333-4116
 Auditor/Treasurer—JoDee Treat.....218-333-4175
 Environmental Services—Brent Rud218-333-4158
 Facilities Manager—Steve Shadrick218-333-8475
 Geographic Info Systems (GIS).Kevin T. 218-333-8457
 Human Resources—Ann Schroeder218-333-4155
 License Center218-333-4148
 Mgmt Info Systems (MIS)—Kevin W. ... 218-333-4151
 Natural Resource Mgmt—Dick Moore ..218-333-4210
 Real Estate & Tax Services.....218-333-4138
 Recorder—Charlene Sturk.....218-333-4170

Community Service Center

616 America Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Health & Human Services—Director Anne Lindseth
 Social Services - Director Jeff Lind218-333-4196
 Economic Assistance Division
 Director—Curt Anderson.....218-333-2242
 Public Health - Director Amy Bowles.... 218-333-8140
 Veterans Services Shane Gustafson 218-333-4177

Law Enforcement Center

613 Minnesota Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Sheriff Jason Riggs218-333-9111
 Bemidji Police Chief Mike Mastin.....218-333-9111

Judicial Center

600 Minnesota Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Attorney—David Hanson.....218-333-4219
 Court Administration.....218-333-4120

County Jail

626 Minnesota Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Main phone number.....218-333-4189

Public Works Department

2491 Adams Ave NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Highway Engineer—Bruce Hasbargen...218-333-8173

751 industrial Park Dr SE

Solid Waste Director—Brian Olson218-333-8187

County Extension

7223 Fairgrounds Rd NW, Bemidji MN 56601

Extension Secretary218-444-5722