



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY Administration/Board of Commissioners

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Grand Traverse County provides mandated and necessary services that ensure safety and add value to our community.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New G.T. County Senior Center Network Director Named

December 7, 2015

Traverse City – Starting January 1, 2016, Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Director Kristine Erickson will assume the additional responsibility of the County’s Senior Center Network directorship.

According to County Administrator Tom Menzel, who announced the appointment to County Commissioners in an e-mail on Saturday, December 5, the connection between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Senior Center Network makes sense. “Many of the programs developed by parks and recreation departments are geared to the ever-increasing senior population.” Menzel explained that combining both departments’ resources under one director also makes financial sense, because it creates savings totaling \$22,600 for the county’s general fund, an amount that otherwise would have been allocated to the Parks director’s salary and benefits.

“This is a perfect fit for Parks,” said Erickson. “The recreational and educational possibilities are endless, and truly aligned with Parks and Recreation’s mission to ‘enhance community and quality of life through people, parks, and programs.’”

“I love the plan,” said Senior Center Network Manager Lori Wells who, along with Erickson, views the merge as a win-win.

“Our Parks Board will be thrilled to support and help expand our senior programs, and our county parks and facilities can be used even more for those programs,” said Erickson. She also said the Parks-Senior Center relationship “has the potential to make our community even more recreationally rich and attractive to every age group.” Erickson expressed hopes that the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA will join the mix to further expand wellness and recreational opportunities beyond the Y’s commitment to operating the County’s pool in 2016.

Erickson was hired by Grand Traverse County in April 2013 as the Parks and Recreation Department’s office manager, then appointed to serve as the department’s director in September 2014. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in English from Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a minor in journalism from Lake Superior State University in Sault St. Marie, Michigan. She worked twice, for a total of 19 years, at the National Association of REALTORS®’ headquarters in Chicago in education, policy and, most recently, as a marketing manager. Erickson was certified with the REALTOR® organization as a mediator. She has paralegal experience, managed a real estate and construction firm in Traverse City for several years, and has consulted for over 25 years as a writer, editor, project manager, and instructional designer.

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