

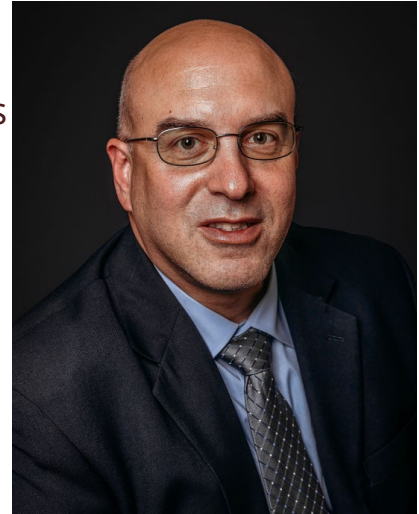


Administrator's Digest

November 15, 2023

A Note From the Administrator

On Saturday, November 11, 2023, we observed Veterans Day. County services were closed on Friday, November 10. Allegan County currently has 5,200 Veterans. On behalf of the County, I want to express deep gratitude to all Veterans and family members by saying **thank you for your service!** I encourage each Veteran to contact our Senior and Veteran Services Team to see if benefits are available to you and your family at (269) 673-3333. Assisting you with any benefits available is just one way we can support you, and we are honored to be able to help.



On Monday, November 13, 2023, we reached a major milestone in Allegan County. Allegan County and 123NET kicked off implementing the County-Wide Broadband Infrastructure Project. We are grateful for the internet services that have grown over the years in the county; however, over 12,000 locations remain without affordable broadband access. At the kick-off, the first household to receive service under this county project (and statewide under the ROBIN grant) went live with their new connection. The County was so pleased to see firsthand the immediate impact of high-speed internet on citizens. The remaining locations will have access over the next 18-24 months. This was a great day for all of Allegan County and the improvement of quality of life throughout. For more information on the project, please access www.123.net or www.allegancounty.org/broadband.

Thank you for taking the time to review this Digest.

Sincerely,
Robert J. Sarro

IN THIS ISSUE:

11th Annual Veteran Stand Down,
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Social Media Merge,
Current Open Positions,
Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion Project
And MORE!

Services

11th Annual County Veteran Stand Down – The County, in partnership with the Veterans Administration, served over 80 veterans through a free community event held on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at the First Baptist Church in Allegan. A Stand Down event features local, state, and federal resources and nonprofit services for veterans and their families, such as 25 service vendors, a hot meal, a military surplus, and great comradery. The 2024 date is being determined and will be shared once available. Cheryl Wynsma, Allegan County Visiting Veterans Service Officer, Vietnam Veterans of America is shown in the picture to the right. For more information, please contact Jen Garcia, Director of Senior and Veteran Services, at (269) 686-5144 or jgarcia@allegancounty.org.



Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Social Media Merge – The two separate social media accounts, 1) Parks & Recreation and 2) Tourism, have merged to streamline. Citizens can now visit one social media page on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) (click included links). Allegan County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism use these to share information about county-wide parks and recreation areas to promote tourism and events. For more information, please contact Brandy Gildea, Parks Manager, at (269) 673-0378 or bgildea@allegancounty.org.

Community Service Organization of the Year – On October 26, 2023, the Plainwell and Otsego Chamber of Commerce held its annual recognition dinner. County Transportation was awarded the 2023 Community Service Organization of the Year for its unswerving bridge, spanning miles and uniting hearts. For more information, please contact Whitney Ehresman, Transportation Director, at (269) 686-4529 or wehresman@allegancounty.org.



Pictured above (left to right): Dawn Sellars, MTM General Manager; Whitney Ehresman, County Transportation Director; Stacy Todd, County Transportation Program Coordinator; and Gail Dugan, County Commissioner – District 5.



Services

Fall Transportation Outreach – Allegan County Transportation held several engagement events in October:

- Otsego Trail for Treaters on October 31, 2023. All who entered and went through the bus were offered candy. This is an annual event with over 1,500 participants with a steady flow of trick-or-treaters from 3:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.
- Fall Color Ride was a success. Three Saturdays in October, groups enjoyed the fall colors of Allegan. These were open to the public and stopped at Crane’s Pie Pantry in Fennville with 17 passengers.
- The Fall Color Pop-up Event was held at Heath Township Park due to interest. Residents from Grand Ravine (Allegan) requested to stop at Heath Township Park as their destination. Coffee, donuts, cider, and apples were provided to the group enjoying the park that day. 11 people enjoyed the Fall Color Ride from Grand Ravine.

For more information, please contact Stacy Todd, Program Coordinator, (269) 673-0206 or stodd1@allegancounty.org.



Pictured above (front to back): Stacy Todd, County Transportation Program Coordinator; Teresa Dreyer, MTM Driver, Dawn Sellars, MTM General Manager.

Public Health Newsletter (Last updated 10/26/23) – Public Health shares bi-weekly e-newsletters with the community. These community newsletters include information from community partners, community spotlights, public health news/related topics, and COVID-19 topics like wastewater surveillance, testing information, and other preventative education/tools. The most recent Community Newsletter was published on 11/8/2023.

Previous Community Newsletters can be found at www.allegancounty.org/health/health-department-news. For more information, please contact Lindsay Maunz, Planning, and Preparedness Manager, at (269) 686-4515 or lmaunz@allegancounty.org.

Animal Shelter Transition – County Administration has been working with Wishbone Pet Rescue for a smooth transition to County operations to continue the necessary level of care for the animals in the shelter. Proactively, existing job descriptions were reviewed and converted to determine County wage rates. During the week of October 16, several meetings occurred with Wishbone to provide application packets and discuss the transition of temporary County employees through the 1st quarter of 2024. All Wishbone employees submitted applications except one who was expected to leave before the transition. Job offers were sent, and all applicants accepted. Staff began their first week on November 6. The County Executive Director of Services has been working with Wishbone leadership to identify supply and equipment needs, vendor contacts, and suppliers of medicine and food. There were two public meetings (town halls) hosted by Wishbone Pet Rescue on October 25 and 26, which County Administrator Rob Sarro attended on behalf of the County. The County is still on track for a formal transition on December 7, 2023. For more information, please contact Dan Wedge, Executive Director of Services, at (269) 686-5235 or dwedge@allegancounty.org.



Engagement



23

CURRENT OPEN POSITIONS

Position	Department	Current Status
Administrative Assistant/Receptionist	Public Defender	Unfilled
Administrative Assistant	Senior & Veteran Services	Candidate previously identified withdrew
Administrative Specialist	Sheriff's Office	Unfilled
Deputy Sheriff	Sheriff's Office	Unfilled
Deputy Sheriff Township Main	Sheriff's Office	Unfilled
Assistant Prosecuting Attorney	Prosecuting Attorney Office	Unfilled
Community Services Officer (PT32)	Sheriff's Office – Corrections	Unfilled
Detective (2)	Sheriff's Office	Promotion anticipated in December
Drain Maintenance Technician	Drain Office	Unfilled
Legal Specialist	Public Defender	Unfilled
Telecommunicator (2)	Central Dispatch	Unfilled
Youth Specialist	Youth Home	Unfilled
<u>Boards & Commissions Openings:</u>		
911 Operational Policy & Procedure Committee	City / Village Government Representative	
Economic Development Commission	Private Sector Representative	
Economic Development Commission	Healthcare Representative	
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Media Representative	
Solid Waste Planning Committee	Five (5) Representatives	



For more information, please contact Lyn Holoway, Human Resources Manager, at (269) 673-0537, holoway@allegancounty.org.

Engagement



Employment (Last Updated on 10/26/23)
2023 as of Quarter 3:

TURNOVER/RETENTION (Regular FT & PT Only)	Q1	Q2	Q3
# of Terminations (includes Retirees)	13*	9*	18*
Average length of tenure of terminated REG employees	11.69	9.1	7
Turnover % of new REG employees (<=1 year)	13.6%	13.64%	33.33%
Turnover % of REG employees	3.16%	2.15%	4.22%
Total average number of REG Employees	411	419	427
Notes: # of terminations due to retirement	*5	*1	*5
RECRUITMENT	Q1	Q2	Q3
Jobs Posted	23	24	12
# of Days to Hire (KPI)	57.85	66.13	74.5
# of New Hires	22	38	28
# of Promotions or Transfers	19	9	24

CURRENT NUMBER OF ACTIVE REGULAR FULL-TIME AND REGULAR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:

432



For more information, please contact Lyn Holoway, Human Resources Manager, at (269) 673-0537, lholloway@allegancounty.org.

Engagement



2 NEW HIRES

Position	Department
Assistant Prosecuting Attorney	Prosecutor's Office
Public Health Specialist	Register of Deeds

1 PROMOTIONS/TRANSFERS

Position moved to	Department
Assistant Public Defender	Public Defender's Office

4 LEFT EMPLOYMENT

Position	Department
Corrections Officer	Sheriff's Office
Deputy Sheriff	Sheriff's Office
Assistant Prosecuting Attorney	Prosecutor's Office
Telecommunicator	Central Dispatch

2024 Employee Benefits Enrollment – Open enrollment is from November 6 to November 28, 2023. Virtual benefits meetings have been underway, with the last scheduled for November 13. Scheduled one-on-one appointments will also be available with the Human Resource Manager. More information can be found on the Allegan County Employee Portal. The main portal page has a news item titled Open Enrollment 2024 – November 6 – 28, 2023.



For more information, please contact Lyn Holoway, Human Resources Manager, at (269) 673-0537, holoway@allegancounty.org.

Operations

Courthouse and County Services Building Renovation (Last Updated on 10/26/23) – A request for proposal (RFP) was reissued on October 26, 2023, with a bid due date of December 1, 2023. The RFP was altered to allow bidders to submit a proposal for 1) the Courthouse Addition (Phase I - southeast build-out), 2) the County Services Building Renovation (Phase II) and Courthouse Renovation (Phase III), or 3) all three phases. An optional pre-bid meeting was held on November 2. For more information, please contact Steve Sedore, Executive Director of Operations, at ssedore@allegancounty.org or (269) 673-0373.

Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion Project (Last Updated on 10/26/23) – On October 26, 2023, Governor Whitmer’s office announced the ROBIN (Realizing Opportunities with Broadband Infrastructure Networks) Batch 1 grant award winners (<https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/news/press-releases/2023/10/26/whitmer-announces-over-70000-unserved-michigan-homes-businesses-to-connect-to-high-speed-internet>). Allegan County’s project with 123Net received \$28,458,824 in funding for the 11,024 locations identified across the county. 123Net will begin construction for the first customer on 12th Street in November. An interactive map was developed by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to show all locations across the State served by this grant (<https://robin.sanborn.com/maps>).

On Monday, November 13, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., 123Net and Allegan County plan a joint press conference and community open house at Hopkins Middle School cafeteria.

The ROBIN funds are just one of the many funding sources for the county-wide broadband improvement project. There are several Internet service provider expansion projects currently underway across the County. Allegan County residents can find their address on the custom look-up map on the County’s website (www.allegancounty.org/broadband). By typing in their address, you can find out what company will build fiber to their home. For more information, please contact Jill Dunham, Project Manager, at (269) 673-0588.



Operations

Outdoor Warning System VHF Radio Repairs – Upon review of the County’s VHF radio-based multi-hazard outdoor warning system this past October, it was discovered that one of the GPS units had a faulty power supply which began causing timing synchronization issues. Though this could adversely impact the system’s effectiveness, no failures or issues were reported from the recent October siren test. The existing VHF system was installed in 2006, and the components reached their end-of-life support in 2017. In 2018, the County established a maintenance agreement with a contractor to continue to support the system on a time and material basis. However, due to the system’s age, finding suitable replacement parts is an increasing challenge. To address this current GPS issue, the County contacted various partner agencies, including the Michigan Communication Directors Association and Ottawa County Central Dispatch Authority (OCCDA). OCCDA happened to have the parts needed and donated their old spare inventory to Allegan County. Those replacement parts are being installed by the contractor. For additional information, contact Jeremy Ludwig, Director of Central Dispatch, at jludwig@allegancounty.org or (269) 686-5211.

Clean and Overhaul Well #3 – A request for proposal (RFP) was released soliciting bids from contractors to clean well #3 at the County Services Complex and overhaul its pump. This was an approved capital project for 2023 requested based on research indicating that wells should be cleaned every 5-7 years as a best practice and a recent inspection note that the well showed slightly decreased productivity. Although numerous contractors were invited to bid, only one bid was received, and the proposed cost to clean the well was unexpectedly high and well over the funds budgeted. Through the RFP process, one contractor expressed surprise that the well-needed cleaning was already done, given that it was only installed in 2015. Unfortunately, the County is still waiting for Wightman to deliver its Water Asset Management Plan, which would indicate whether the County’s understanding of best practices is correct or perhaps was for a different type of well system. Since no other bids were received to validate costs and the well is still performing satisfactorily, Facilities recommends that a bid not be awarded and appropriated funds be carried over into 2024 while additional research is conducted. If Wightman’s Water Asset Management Plan, once delivered, supports the need to clean and overhaul this well in the near future, then a new RFP will be released in 2024. For more information, please contact Carl Chapman, Facilities Management Director, at cchapman@allegancounty.org or (269) 673-0207.





Feedback is important to us.
Please take the time to fill out a
survey on any county service
you may have received.
[Click here to tell us how we are doing.](#)

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