

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

A Special Session of the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 9:45 a.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

***A live streaming of this meeting will be available for viewing via the following link –***  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNQTgIgcTedF2qB8floC1GQ?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNQTgIgcTedF2qB8floC1GQ?view_as=subscriber)

There are two ways to provide public comment during the meeting – you can attend in-person, or email your comments prior to the meeting to [clerk@leelanau.gov](mailto:clerk@leelanau.gov)

***(Please silence all electronic/cellular devices)***

*(Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded and are not the official record of the meeting, the formally approved/accepted written copy of the minutes will be the official record of the meeting.)*

## **AGENDA**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE/PRIVATE PRAYER**

**ROLL CALL**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** *(3 minutes Agenda Specific)*

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

### **Purpose of Meeting – Discussion/Potential Action:**

1. County Administrator Candidate Dialogue and Possible Selection of Candidate for Position of County Administrator
  - a. 10:00am – Mark Brown
  - b. 11:00am – James Dyer

**PUBLIC COMMENT** *(5 minutes)*

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

November 6, 2024

Mr. Chet Janik  
Consultant  
Michigan Leadership Institute

Dear Mr. Janik:

I am writing to apply for the position of Leelanau County Administrator. Based upon the duties and responsibilities listed in the job description, this position requires the skill sets that I have developed throughout my career.

As the top financial executive at my current and previous employers, I have worked alongside the President and been the primary business partner to those throughout the organization. I have extensive experience in providing financial, as well as strategic leadership to a large organization.

While this position does not require implementation of budget reductions such as those you see on my resume, the relevance to this position of what I accomplished in that regard is this: those expense reductions were the result of *hundreds* of hours of collaboration and consensus building among company leaders, and not top-down edicts. I would set the targets for the organization and then lead others to the desired result. To a large degree, my collaboration skills have been developed leading others under difficult circumstances brought on by the pressure of declining revenue.

Also of note, would be my ability to present and explain financial information to non-financial folks. Throughout my career I have presented financial information to others in the organization for whom finance was not their first language. I also have many years of experience in leading a diverse finance department and have well-honed interpersonal skills that promote team development and accountability. I also have experience evaluating union proposals and counter proposals.

Although I am local (having worked remotely in my present position the last two years), regardless of who the seven commissioners are after the election, I have no connection to any of them.

This is not a position I need, but rather one that I want. I would like to spend the final 4-5 years of my career serving in a more altruistic position that comes with public service. I love this community and am seeking the opportunity to serve it.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about how I would fit into this role.

Sincerely,  
Mark J. Brown

## **MARK J. BROWN, CPA**

313-969-4991 <> Mjbrown2468@comcast.net  
4739 E. Water View Drive, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653

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### **CORPORATE LEADERSHIP, FINANCIAL PLANNING & ACCOUNTING**

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Hands-on executive with broad competencies in administration, finance, planning, accounting and IT management. A history as a "go to" person within the organization. A team builder who bridges gaps between executive, finance, technical and operational staff to create consensus and move projects forward. Impeccable integrity. PC proficient with Microsoft Office and financial reporting software.

- Strategic, Operational and Capital Planning and Execution
- Operational Change Agent
- Financial Planning, Analysis and Reporting

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### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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#### **MediaNews Group**

##### **CFO – Michigan/Ohio Groups**

2017 to Present

Reporting to the Group President, provide financial and operational leadership for the \$75M organization.

- Plan and direct the annual operating budget process, ensuring it is accurate and consistent with the operating plan and company objectives. Present the annual operating plan to corporate leadership.
- Lead managers in keeping the company performance on plan.
- Coordinate special projects and operational reviews of various areas within the company in search of process improvements and operating efficiencies.
- Prepare ad hoc analyses for corporate management and Board of Directors to validate current practices or recommend corrective actions.

#### **Michigan.com / Detroit Media Partnership, LP**

*The umbrella entity for the Gannett Company's print and digital properties across Michigan (Detroit Free Press, The Detroit News, Lansing State Journal, and others); 2015 revenue of \$235M.*

The top financial executive from 2009 to 2015 (the number two financial executive from 2005 to 2009) played an integral role in the strategic transformation of the company's business model.

##### **VP/Finance**

2011 to 2015

Reporting to the President, provided financial leadership for the \$235M organization.

- Collaborated with fellow executives to develop and reach consensus on strategic and annual operating plans.
- Key member of the management team that reduced operating expenses by \$37 million and the workforce by 650 employees over this timeframe.
- YOY NIBT growth 2013, 2014 and 2015.
- Integrated the Lansing, Port Huron and Battle Creek properties under Detroit management.
- Performed outsourcing analysis.
- Developed multi-year financial forecasts for planning purposes.
- Between 2005 and 2015, reduced the finance staff by over 40 employees within Michigan.

<b>Controller</b>	2005 to 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led a division with a diverse staff that in 2005 consisted of 65 employees in Detroit; direct reports consisted of four managers.</li> <li>• Key member of the management team that reduced operating expenses by \$94 million and the workforce by 450 employees over this timeframe.</li> <li>• Responsible for the preparation of timely and accurate financial statements and monthly submission of financial package to Gannett corporate office.</li> <li>• Implemented and maintained financial controls to be in compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley.</li> <li>• Coordinated special projects and operational reviews of various areas within the company in search of process improvements and operating efficiencies.</li> <li>• Conducted training sessions for over 50 managers on complying with Sarbanes-Oxley requirements and bi-annually conducted a course on financial policies and procedures.</li> </ul>	
<b>Finance Director</b>	2002 to 2005
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued with Financial Reporting Manager Duties.</li> <li>• Assumed responsibility for leading the annual capital budget process, as well as reviewing and editing project requests before submission to corporate office.</li> <li>• In-depth involvement in labor negotiations by assessing current operations and recommending work rule changes; developed financial models to quantify impact of company proposals and union counterproposals.</li> </ul>	
<b>Financial Reporting Manager</b>	1998 to 2001
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the monthly financial close process and preparation of a financial reporting/analysis package, including adherence to proper accounting practices.</li> <li>• Responsible for coordination, preparation and review of information provided to external auditors and internal auditors from our parent company.</li> <li>• Supervised a staff of eight financial analysts and accountants.</li> </ul>	
<b>Project Manager—Strategic Planning</b>	1996 to 1998
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for evaluating proposed products and modifications to existing products in terms of financial potential and operational feasibility.</li> <li>• Wrote business plans for implementation of new products.</li> <li>• Facilitator of task force on quality improvement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Senior Financial Analyst</b>	1994 to 1996
<b>Financial Analyst</b>	1992 to 1994
<b><u>Vlasic Foods, Inc.</u></b>	
<b>Senior Accountant</b>	1988 to 1992
<b><u>Electronic Data Systems (EDS)</u></b>	
<b>Financial Analyst</b>	1986 to 1988
<b><u>Svagr, Malinowski and Thalacker, PC</u></b>	
<b>Staff Accountant</b>	1984 to 1985

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**EDUCATION**

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**Master of Business Administration** -- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - 1984  
**Bachelor of General Studies** -- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - 1982

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**PROFESSIONAL / COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

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- CPA – State of Michigan.
- Board of Directors – Crossroads of Michigan – 2015-2020.



**JAMES L. DYER**

1758 South Cherry Blossom Lane Sutttons Bay, MI 49682 |269 217-7364| james.dyer3@icloud.com

**November 4, 2024**

Administrator Search  
Leelanau County Human Resource Office  
Att. Chet Janik  
8527 E. Government Drive  
Sutttons Bay, MI 49682

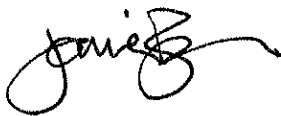
**Dear Mr. Janik**

I am writing to express my interest in the position of Leelanau County Administrator. With more than thirty years' experience as a practicing municipal lawyer, nearly eight years serving as the Calhoun County Corporation Counsel, my deep personal commitment to and extensive experience with community engagement as an appointed and elected official of the City of Marshall, and my more recent experience as Northport Village Manager, I believe that I bring a unique set of skills that will contribute meaningfully to Leelanau County government as County Administrator.

As detailed in my resume, throughout my career, I have consistently demonstrated a leadership style that manages change by actively involving those it impacts the most and recognizing that the everyone is an involuntary customer of the governments that serve them. In my role as County Corporation Counsel, I was often called on to mediate conflicts between commissioners, the administration, and elected officials and find creative ways to collaborate and achieve a common goal where there was disagreement about the methods to achieve that result. I was very good in that role. I believe these skills and past experiences make me very well suited to fill the role as County Administrator and excited about the possibility that I could have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the future of Leelanau County as its Administrator.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my background, skills and values align with the County's priorities. In closing, to the extent possible by Michigan law, I would like to maintain my application as confidential to minimize any impact that would have on my current position with the Village of Northport.

Sincerely,



James L. Dyer



# **JAMES L. DYER**

1758 South Cherry Blossom Lane  
Suttons Bay, MI 496823

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(269) 217-7364

[Linkedin.com/in/james-dyer-38bb635a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-dyer-38bb635a)

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## **SUMMARY**

Experienced municipal management professional and attorney with a demonstrated history of successfully managing, counseling, and assisting municipal entities to define and achieve their current objectives and plans for their future, while serving their citizens. Effective at communicating and implementing established objectives.

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## **REPRESENTATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

As Northport Village Manager I drafted and implemented an ordinance transferring administrative authority from the Village President to the Village Manager to fulfill the Council's desire to have full time professional management of the day to day operations of the Village; implemented a new budget preparation and review process; as Zoning Administrator assisted with reviewing a new Village Zoning Ordinance and prepared the final amendments necessary for its adoption; prepared and implemented a public hearing process to review and provide policy direction to resolve a longstanding dispute regarding the use of a Village owned parcel of land; proposed and in the process of implementing a joint Village/Township initiative to encourage and develop workforce housing; established effective working relationships and communication with local business, education, volunteer, citizens groups and individuals of Northport.

As Mayor of Marshall I proposed, planned and championed a process to restructure the City's economic development function, merged it with the local Chamber of Commerce and revised the method of staffing two City Tax-Increment finance Boards, creating a new vertically integrated, single source, entity.

Assisted the Village of Homer, MI with the expansion of its wastewater treatment facility through a US Department of Agriculture Rural Development Loan, while serving as Village Attorney by contract through Calhoun County.

As Marshall Planning Commission Member and Chairperson, I guided a complete revision of the City's Zoning and Sign Ordinances and worked through two revisions of the Master Plan for Land Use. I also planned, drafted and managed the adoption of the City's Hospital Zoning Overlay District Ordinance to control Hospital expansion into the City's Landmark Historic Residential District, while permitting the growth necessary to retain an essential local employer and a significant quality of life asset. During this multi-year process, I personally engaged numerous groups and individuals, those in favor and those opposed, to achieve a fair and effective compromise solution.

As a practicing attorney I was hired to represent a non-unionized government employer with a just cause employment policy, a progressive discipline policy, and a long history of employment litigation. Implemented a supervisor training regimen and enforced a policy of aggressive involvement of legal counsel in the disciplinary process. These changes resulted in no new employment lawsuits over a 25-year period.

Also experienced in the preparation, presentation, and documentation of municipal decision making through the drafting of rules of procedure, bylaws, contracts, ordinances, motion or resolutions, and the supporting materials necessary to comply with Michigan law and the rules of procedure established by the decision-making body.

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## **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

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■ October 1, 2023 – Present:

- Village of Northport, Village Manager – Chief Administrative Officer for a small Leelanau County Village. Reporting to a seven-person Village Council I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Village; supervision of the Village Clerk, Treasurer, Public Works Director, and Harbormaster; preparation of the monthly Village Council Agenda and Manager's Report; preparation, presentation and monitoring the Village Budget; preparation and enforcement of Village Policies; also acts as Village Purchasing Manager and Zoning Administrator.

- April 16, 2016 – September 30, 2023:
  - Calhoun County Corporation Counsel – Chief legal officer for mid-Michigan County government. Appointed by Board of Commissioners, reporting to County Administrator Controller. Sole legal counsel for municipal employer of 625+ workers in administrative, law enforcement, public health, and road construction environments. Acted as liaison to County Elected Officials. Member of the County Executive Team and the Internal Budget Team. Significant involvement in employment, union bargaining and grievance management, and non-union hiring and discipline. I began this role in April 2016, on a contract basis while still a partner with my law firm. I became a full time County employee on January 1, 2020.
- September 1, 2002 – December 31, 2019
  - Attorney and Shareholder – Rosati, Schultz, Joppich and Amstbuechler, PC. Partner in a municipal liability defense firm. First chair litigator with direct responsibility for client contact and retention. Represented multiple governments throughout Michigan in Civil Rights, Employment, Land Use, Police Liability, and General Negligence claims. Served several clients for more than 25 years through multiple firm affiliations.
- Advertising Agency General Counsel (3 years)
- Assistant Prosecutor Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office. (2 years)
- Licensed Michigan Attorney since 1981, (P32544). Admitted to practice in all Michigan Courts, both Federal District Courts of Michigan. And the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

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## **EDUCATION**

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Michigan State University, B.A, with honor. Political Science and Honors College.

Thomas M. Cooley Law School, JD, cum laude.

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## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

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City of Marshall – Planning Commission 1997-2007; City Council 2007-2010; Mayor 2011-2014.

Director, Community Action Agency of South-Central Michigan.

Director, Brass Band of Battle Creek.

Marshall Rotary Club, Past President 2019-2020, Treasurer 2022-2023.

Suttons Bay Leelanau County Rotary Club.

Board Member, Peninsula Housing.

Certified Soccer Referee 2000-Present and Referee Mentor 2023-Present.