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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ASSESS FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY OF COLLABORATIVE SEWER PROJECT**

**MANISTEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN** -- The governing bodies of five local units of government in Manistee County have each passed resolutions to determine the financial feasibility of working together with the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians to establish municipal sewer capacity. Participating local governments including Onekama Township, Pleasanton Township, Arcadia Township, Village of Bear Lake and Bear Lake Township

Next steps involve forming a sewer authority and submitting an application to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Rural Development to determine the level of grant and loan funds available for the project. A grant application will be submitted soon to USDA to cover the majority of the costs associated with the preparation of the financing application by the firm Wade Trim on behalf of the Authority.

On March 17 and 18, three public meetings will be held to discuss the project. On March 17, public meetings will be held at the Bear Lake School Library at 10 a.m. and again at 7 p.m., located at 7748 Cody Street, Bear Lake, Michigan. On March 18, a public meeting will be held in the gymnasium at the Pleasant Valley Community Center at 10 a.m., located at 3586 Glovers Lake Road, Arcadia, Michigan.

Anyone interested may attend any and all community meetings. The meetings will include participation by the participating local governments and the firm Wade Trim. The local governments have invited questions about the project and responses to those questions will be provided as part of the meeting. A purpose of the meetings is to identify additional questions that individuals or other entities may have so that answers can be provided either during the meeting or in follow up to the meeting.

Another set of public meetings will be held later this year to provide an update about the status of the project. The response from USDA on the availability of grant and loan funds for the project is estimated to be available late in 2017.

The local units are developing the funding application to USDA to determine the financial feasibility of developing a sewer pipeline system that would connect with the wastewater treatment plant in Manistee Township that is owned and operated by the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. The local governments are collaborating because of their shared interest in protecting water quality in three high quality watersheds, enabling planned development that needs sewer infrastructure and taking advantage of the economic benefits of collaboration in the project.

Questions about the project may also be submitted by:

- Emailing them to the Alliance for Economic Success at: [susan@allianceforeconomicsuccess.com](mailto:susan@allianceforeconomicsuccess.com)
- Phoning them to the Alliance for Economic Success at 231-723-4325
- Sending them to the Alliance for Economic Success by telefax to fax no. 231-723-3717