The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, January 10, 1995 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on December 13, 1994 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. None was forthcoming.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period December 9, 1994, through January 6, 1995 in the amount of $1,718,207.81 be approved.

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The Committee considered the bids for a Sheriff’s Department vehicle. Undersheriff Michael Quayle was present. Four bids were received and all the vendors met or exceeded the County’s bid specifications. They are recommending accepting the low bid from Public Service Garage for a 1994 Oldsmobile Sierra four door sedan, at a price of $13,696.75. Undersheriff Quayle further explained that the year of the vehicle is not critical because when the Sheriff’s Department trades or sells these vehicles, the high mileage becomes the issue. The County will save $800 to $900 by purchasing a 1994 rather than a 1995 vehicle.

There will be some changeover costs. The Sheriff’s Department will utilize $11,500 obtained from insurance of the wrecked patrol vehicle, leaving approximately $1,700 in the 1995 capital budget for Sheriff Patrol Vehicles.

Under Sheriff Quayle further explained that the DARE Officer will use the new vehicle. It will also be utilized for necessary trips. The new warrant officer will use a marked Sheriff Patrol Vehicle.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the low bid from Public Service Garage of $13,696.75 for the 1994 Oldsmobile Sierra, Four Door Sedan, for the Sheriff’s Department vehicle.

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The Committee considered a grant offer from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of $125,000 (no local match required) to undertake planning and related activities in reaction to the closure of K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base. Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, was present and explained that the activities to be performed involve the update of portions of the County Comprehensive Plan, the update of the Township and City plans, and providing business counseling services. All study activities taking place now are focused on the Base itself and its reuse. This study will target the off Base impact on roads, housing, public services, transportation, etc. The County Board approved the application several months ago and now the funds are being offered to us by HUD. Mr. Koshorek recommended that the County Board accept the grant and authorize the Chair to sign the agreements.
County Administrator, Dennis Aloia, also pointed out that the County Comprehensive Plan is fifteen years old. Over the years parts have been updated but the plan written at the time reflects the impact that K.I. Sawyer has on the County. A new plan is now necessary because the closure of K.I. Sawyer changes the impact the County and local units of governments drastically. A side benefit is that some of the issues staff will be working on are related to the closure of K.I. Sawyer. We must have an updated Comprehensive Plan in place in order to qualify for further grant funds in the future.

Jim Kippola, Senior Planner, further explained that the 18 month time frame for the project was developed by him, however, several items within the plan will be prioritized. For example, the transportation issue should have top priority. Another issue of top priority, many interlocal agreements were developed in the early 80’s for cooperation between the Base and local governments for fire and police protection. These must be reconsidered. Also, solid waste issues must be reevaluated. The waste stream at the County Landfill is already down 10%.

Commissioners engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the Community Development Planning Grant and asked staff many questions. Chairperson Corkin summarized: In the long run we will have to spend money to update the Comprehensive Plan anyway. We don’t always understand the planning process but planning requires dollars and it must be done.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board accept the grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for community development planning in the amount of $125,000 and authorize the Chairperson to sign the agreements.

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The Committee considered a memo from Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, outlining a scope of work which must be followed in determining the closure costs and reuse opportunities associated with vacating the Marquette County Airport. Ron Koshorek was present and explained that the Conversion Authority hired Greiner Consultants to study the reuse of K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base. Part of that study recommends that it is feasible to move the County Airport to K.I. Sawyer, however, the reuse study did not analyze the closure and relocation of the County Airport. An analysis must be made to determine the closure costs of the County Airport and its potential reuse.

The recommended scope of work was developed in consultation with the Base Conversion Authority Staff, the Airport Manager, and County Planning Staff. The scope of work covers the issues that are important to any decision for relocation of the County Airport. Mr. Koshorek believes that the study should be offered to Greiner Consultants because they are already familiar with the County Airport facility and are currently under contract with the Conversion Authority. The Conversion Authority will be asked to fund this study and the County Board wants these issues analyzed and discussed before it makes any decision to relocate. Consultants are expected to involve area organizations, in particular, Marquette County and Negawee Township officials, and utilize existing data surveys and resources to every extent possible.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the scope of work for the reuse study for the Marquette County Airport and forward it to the Base Conversion Authority with a recommendation to proceed.

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The Committee of the Whole considered a letter from Joseph P. O’Leary, Tribal Attorney for the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, in response to questions from the Marquette County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will be meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, January 13th, to review Mr. O’Leary’s responses on behalf of the Indian Community.
Comm. Seppanen pointed out two things: First, Chocolay Township will not make comment on the Keweenaw Bay Indian Casino operation because they believe it to be an illegal operation. Second, on Page 2, Paragraph 2 of Mr. O’Leary’s responses it says “Thus, the Community still agrees with the County Commissioners that the Casino will not significantly impact the local bingo operations”. The County Board has never taken an official position regarding the casino gambling impact on local bingo operations. One Commissioner made such a comment, but this should not in any way be construed as any official County Board position. It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the communication on file.

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The Committee of the Whole considered a memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding the reorganization of the County Board committee system.

Comm. Seppanen thought that because we now have ten County Commissioners, a system with a number of smaller committees should work well. Each committee would have a certain area of responsibility and if Commissioners traded off committees year after year, then Commissioners will begin to learn and understand County government better. This could eventually eliminate the need for Board Liaisons.

Comm. Bergdahl believed committees to be alright if the system works well, but what if a committee works on a project for several weeks and recommends action to the County Board only to be voted down? Why spend the time in the first place? Comm. Bergdahl thought an ad hoc committee should be formed to meet with the Administrator and Department Heads to determine what kind of committee system could work. He would also like to see an ad hoc committee made up of three Commissioners to work on the K.I. Sawyer Conversion issue to keep the County Board more informed of what is taking place.

Comm. Trudell hoped that whatever committee system we decide upon, that it does not become political.

Comm. Braamse would like to have the results of the Strategic Planning Session before settling on a committee system. She also concurred with the Administrator’s remarks about the Board getting things without the proper review and recommendation by Staff.

Comm. Rapport thought it was good to form ideas through a committee process, and to thoroughly review issues for presentation before the County Board. Then the County Board can add ideas as it sees fit.

Comm. Minelli would like to try several smaller committees for a trial period of six months to a year just to see how they work. He suggested the Board follow a schedule that on the first week the County Board meets, the second week the standing committees meet, the third week the County Board meets, and then the fourth week the Committee of the Whole would meet, thereby eliminating one Committee of the Whole meeting replacing it with the standing committees.

Comm. Angeli contended that a number of small committees sounds like more work for staff.

Administrator Aloia concurred that reorganization of the Committee system would be more work for Administrative staff and the County Clerk’s office. He pointed out that no matter what committee system the County Board finally agrees upon, he would like to emphasize that matters coming to the Board, especially those with a financial impact on County operations, should be first reviewed by him for a recommendation. As the Administrator that is what the County Board has hired him to do. If a different committee system helps Commissioners become more involved and more informed then we are willing to do the extra work to help.
Comm. Joseph pronounced this to be a very good discussion. These are the type of sessions that we need, where everyone participates.

Chairperson Corkin contended that any committee system will work if the County Board accepts their work. We have good people, so no matter how it is set up, the system should work.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Rapport and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Chairperson appoint four Commissioners, along with the County Administrator, and whoever Administrator Aloia believes would be necessary, to study the possible reorganization of the County Board committee system and make a recommendation to the County Board.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Angeli and unanimously carried by voice vote that the three Commissioners representing the districts on which K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base is located (Comm. Bergdahl, Comm. Minelli and Comm. Seppanen) be appointed to form an Ad Hoc Committee to work with the Base Conversion Authority, the Aviation Committee, the Airport Board and the County Board to keep the County Board informed on issues concerning the reuse of K.I. Sawyer, and the Marquette County Airport.

Comm. Joseph requested a calendar of deadlines for County Board decision making regarding the reuse of K.I. Sawyer and a list of the County Board's responsibilities in the decision making process.

Chairperson Corkin introduced Ed Bailey, Acting Executive Director, Base Conversion Authority. Mr. Bailey explained that the EDA is the largest source of grant funds for conversion projects. The County must be the applicant for these grants. Mr. Bailey further explained that no specific time tables can be given, however, the County Board must approve the Governance Plan, whatever that may be, and the County Board must approve the Reuse Plan. Time lines that have been set by the Conversion Authority are basically arbitrary. If they are not met the sun will still come up the next day, however, it would be best for all concerned that these decisions be made as possible.

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The Committee considered a letter from U.S. Senator Carl Levin regarding long term health care. Comm. Rapport requested that a letter be sent to newly elected U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham requesting his position on long term health care.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the communication on file.

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The Committee considered a memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding the Strategic Planning Session with Mr. Ken VerBurg. He will be in Marquette on Thursday, January 19, 1995 and all that remains would be to establish a time. Comm. consensus was to begin the meeting at 3:00 P.M. in Commission Chambers.

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The Committee considered a memo from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, regarding a meeting between the Airport Board and the County Board. The Airport Board offers to meet with the County Board of Commissioners to provide information and discuss any areas or concerns that the Commissioners may have whenever the County Board wants to do so.
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It was moved by Comm. Angeli, seconded by Comm. Arsenault and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board agree to meet with the Airport Board to discuss areas of concern, details of the meeting to be worked out between the County Administrator and the Airport Manager.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. None was forthcoming.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, announced that the Aviation Committee will meet tomorrow, Wednesday, January 11, 1995 at 10:00 A.M. in the Geraldine DeFaut Building in Room 2748, however, the location of the FAA meeting for 1:30 P.M. on Wednesday, January 11, 1995 has been changed to the Holiday Inn Lake Room, U.S. 41 West, Marquette.

Comm. Angeli had requested and received some information from County Treasurer James Sodergren which he would like to pass along. Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) has been increased from 75 cents/acre to 93 cents/acre. PILT payments are scheduled to be increased to double over a five year period to approximately $1.50 per acre, however, these are still behind what the State of Michigan pays, $2.55 per acre.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]
David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, January 10, 1994, 4:30 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
7. Memo from Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, regarding Grant Award - Community Development Planning.
8. Memo from Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, regarding Closure/Reuse of Marquette County Airport.
9. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Application for a Marquette County Casino.
10. Memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding Reorganization of the Committee System.
12. Memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding Strategic Planning Meeting.
13. Public Comment.
14. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
15. ADJOURNMENT.