The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, March 28, 1995 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on March 14, 1995 be approved with the following corrections: Page 2, Comm. Rapport is no longer Chairperson of the Board of Health, Harvey Wallace is; on Page 3, remove the word “unanimously” from the last paragraph where it was a six to four vote; and finally on Page 5 the motion in the middle of the page was to “file” rather than to “table” the letter from Comm. Braamse.

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

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late additions: Item 12) The Prevailing Wage Resolution, Item 13) Resolution honoring the Ishpeming Hematites Class C State Boys Basketball champions, Item 14) Proposals to purchase the old Acocks property and Item 15) A resolution honoring the Marquette High School Hockey Redmen Class A State Champions.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period March 11, 1995, through March 23, 1995 in the amount of $1,408,529.62 be approved.

The Committee considered drafting a letter of appreciation for Marvin R. Gibson for 45 years of service to the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Gibson is a Eagle Scout (1959), a Vigil Member "Order of the Arrow" and holds the Silver Beaver Award. He has been Scoutmaster for many years with Troop 305 and has held offices with the Pere-Marquette District and Council, and is presently Eagle Scout Chairperson for the Pere-Marquette District. He has also served on the Marquette County Library Board, Marquette County Transit Authority, and is presently on the City of Marquette Handicapped Citizens Advisory Board.

It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a letter of appreciation to Marvin R. Gibson for his 45 years of service with the Boy Scouts of America and the community.

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The Committee of the Whole met on Tuesday, March 28, 1995, they considered a memo from Randall E. Girard, Director of Human Resources, and Cynthia L. Beaudry, Risk Management Specialist, regarding the Over-All Insurance Program Analysis. Mr. Girard was present and explained that in the third quarter of 1994 the County Board supported a recommendation to begin an in-depth analysis of our insurance program. The analysis was conducted, and recommendations made by Advanced Risk Management Techniques, Inc. (ARM Tech), an external consulting firm in the insurance field. As a result of implementing the recommendations from ARM Tech a total of $198,345 in reduced insurance cost has been realized. The following specific cost reductions have been obtained to date:

- Property, Liability, and Auto - $ 48,948
- Term Life Insurance - $ 17,043
- Long Term Disability - $ 1,633
- Renewal proposal from our present health insurance in anticipation of ARM Tech recommendations - $130,721
The Board of Commissioners has acted to accept the renewal proposal, and defer health insurance bidding until January 1, 1996. For that bid process, it is now necessary to update the data contained in the RFP constructed by ARM Tech and reflect our 1994 health insurance experience. ARM Tech proposes to perform the work necessary for the update, cost not to exceed $4,000, funds to come from savings realized by cost reductions in overall insurance expenses.

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 approve an amendment in the current agreement between Marquette County and ARM Tech to include the additional work necessary to update the health insurance RFP for distribution in September, funds to come from reduced costs realized by the overall insurance program analysis.

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The County Board considered a letter from Michael J. Andergg, Probate Judge, to Jim Storey, Interim Director, K.I. Sawyer Conversion Authority, regarding the Down River Community Conference plans to locate a Youth Academy at K.I. Sawyer. Judge Andergg expressed some concerns and requested more information regarding possible negative impact on the local Court system, which is already operating at or near its capacity in dealing with at-risk youth.

County Administrator Dennis Aloia, further explained that Judge Andergg will continue to monitor and collect information regarding this potential project and pass along any information when available. Commissioners requested that if Jim Storey responds to Judge Andergg’s letter that a copy be sent to the County Board.

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

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The Committee considered a letter from Sue Girard-Jackson, Project Coordinator, Marquette County TEAM Voice explaining that as of September 30, 1995 they will have exhausted their three years of funding. Project MCTV was originally funded through the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning for a three-year, annually renewable period. Funding comes from the U.S. Department of Transportation, under Section 402, which prohibits funding of a traffic safety project such as this for a period longer than three years.

Ms. Girard-Jackson further explained that Project MCTV Staff will continue to investigate various other avenues of funding which they would have done even if the millage had passed, however, the probability of continuing this program as we know it today is very unlikely.

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

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The Committee considered a letter from County Treasurer, James Sodergren, to Mr. Peter Kakala, Resource Development Department, MSU, regarding a special report on non-renewable mineral resources. Mr. Sodergren’s letter agrees with the conclusions expressed in the report that Minnesota is 50 years ahead of Michigan in planning and development for depletion of their natural resources.

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

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The Committee considered a letter from County Treasurer, James F. Sodergren, to Dick McNally, Michigan Department of Treasury, regarding comments on the forms for distributing CFA monies. Mr. Sodergren pointed out that countless hours have been spent trying to interpret the specific tax legislation and the distribution of these monies. He is convinced that the legislators who voted in favor of HB 5680 did not read or understand the content of the Bill. It has become a fiasco for Township Treasurers to administer.

Mr. Sodergren further explained the six mills is levied under the State of Michigan Education Tax and is not a general property tax. It is levied on all property not exempt by law. The CFA lands are exempt by law and monies collected are to be distributed according to the general property tax laws. And finally, the State shall receive a portion based on the local school 1993 operated millage minus six mills which is over $.15 an acre and that portion under $.15 per acre shall go to the local schools and ISD accordingly.

Mr. Sodergren finished his letter by saying that the State form is not in accordance with applicable laws. The County has settled with most units and 1994 Specific Tax monies have been distributed accordingly and he would urge that all work to repeal PA 94 of 1925 and put commercial forest lands back on the Ad Valorem Tax Roll.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the communication be placed on file.

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The Committee considered a memo from Civil Counsel David Payant regarding Marquette County’s Prevailing Wage policy. The County adopted a resolution on February 15, 1989 whereby all contractors working for the County are required to pay prevailing union scale wages. The policy refers to the prevailing wages that are set by the Michigan Department of Labor. A recent lawsuit challenged the Michigan Department of Labor prevailing wage system and the Federal Court has declared that the Michigan Prevailing Wage is unenforceable because it conflicts with the Federal laws.

Comm. Seppanen made a motion that Marquette County amend its Prevailing Wage Resolution to comply with Federal law.

Ron Koshorek, Resource Management/Development Director, explained that Marquette County has used Federal regulations in the past when it has used federal monies for construction projects and provided several examples of the rates. However, it is very difficult to determine by using past figures of what the present rates are.

Commissioners generally thought before amending and passing a new Prevailing Wage Resolution they would like to know what the present Federal and State prevailing wage rates are. There being no urgent need to adopt this resolution immediately. Comm. Seppanen withdrew his motion.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to provide more information regarding the Federal prevailing wage requirements for consideration at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

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It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole direct that the County Board adopt a resolution honoring the Ishpeming High School Boys Basketball Team on winning the State Class C Championship.

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The Committee considered a request from County Administrator, Dennis Aloia, for direction on reviewing proposals to purchase the Old Acock's Property. Administrator Aloia explained that he currently has two proposals in hand, but expects by the end of the week to get a third. He is finding it difficult to evaluate these proposals without criteria to go by. There are several factors involved, such as proposed use of the property and business plans. All proposals so far are willing to accept the environmental liability on the items identified by the County. Administrator Aloia suggested that the County Board also ask for financial background information.

Civil Counsel, David Payant, explained that the County Board can contract away its responsibility for the environmental concerns, but the promise is only as good as the financial ability of the purchaser to pay. In other words, if an environmental contamination is uncovered that costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to clean up, and places the purchaser in bankruptcy, the responsibility for clean up would fall back on the County of Marquette.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board provide the following direction to Staff regarding reviewing proposals to purchase the Old Acock's Property:

+ That the purchaser be willing to accept environmental liability.
+ That the proposed use of the property is compatible with the zoning requirements of Negaunee Township (need documentation from Negaunee Township).
+ Purchase price.
+ Sealed proposals to be submitted in four weeks from a date specified by the Administrative Staff.

It was moved by Comm. Angeli, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt a resolution honoring the Marquette High School Redmen Hockey Team for winning the Class A State Championship.

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1995, 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. Overall Insurance Program Analysis.
8. Letter from Probate Judge Michael Anderegg to Jim Storey, Director, K.I. Sawyer Conversion Authority regarding Plans to Locate a Youth Academy at K.I. Sawyer.
9. Letter from Sue Girard-Jackson, Project Coordinator, Marquette County Team Voice, that as of September 30, 1995 they will have exhausted their Funding.
10. Letter from County Treasurer James Sodergren to Mr. Peter Kakala, Resource Development Department, MSU, regarding a Special Report on Nonrenewable Mineral Resources.
11. Letter from County Treasurer James Sodergren to Dick McNally, Michigan Department of Treasury, regarding Revised Forms for Distributing CFA Monies.
12. Prevailing wage
13. Resolution honoring 50th anniversary of hockey
14. PUBLIC COMMENT.
15. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
16. ADJOURNMENT.