The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, May 12, 1998, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on April 28, 1998 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. James Sodergren, Marquette County Treasurer, made a presentation regarding the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund. Mr. Sodergren noted that October 10, 1978 the County Board adopted a Resolution creating the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund. Once the fund was created the County Treasurer could serve as an agent for the County and had the authority to borrow money to pay all the local units those real property taxes that were not paid by March 1st. The County would then collect the delinquent taxes, fees, and penalties and pay off the loan.

The Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund has been good for schools, cities, townships, and the County. Shortly after the fund was created the Board decided it would be wise to hold part of the interest and fees generated to build up the fund so it would not be necessary to borrow every year. Mr. Sodergren reported that we have finally reached that goal. He will not be asking the County Board to adopt a borrowing resolution for 1999.

Since 1984 the County Board has transferred unallocated monies amounting to $8,099,684 from the Delinquent Fund to pay for a number of County projects. In addition to these transfers the fund now has equity and cash of $2,582,000 and uncollected taxes in the amount of $5,049,000 for a net gain of $15,730,684 as of March 31, 1998.

Mr. Sodergren noted that it has been exciting for him to work and watch this fund grow and finally achieve the goal set by the County Board back in 1978. He credited John Ax for his excellent legal counsel over the years and to his Staff for their expert service to Marquette County.

Chairperson Corkin commended the previous County Boards that have supported the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund over the last 20 years and also County Treasurer Jim Sodergren and his Staff for their fiscal responsibility. This once again demonstrates that Marquette County is not going bankrupt but rather is responsible regarding public finances.

There being no further public comment, Chairperson Corkin closed this portion of the meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: Item 14) Limited Services Agreement for a Fixed Based Operator at KI Sawyer, and Item 15) Sublease to Boreal Aviation for Building No. 418 at KI Sawyer.

It was moved by Comm. Roberts, seconded by Comm. Rapport and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period April 24, 1998 through May 7, m 1998 in the amount of $869,254.90 be approved.

The Committee considered a presentation by the Honorable Patricia L. Micklow, District Judge, on behalf of the Marquette County Judicial Council. Judge Micklow thanked the County Board for the opportunity to engage in preliminary discussions concerning this important issue. The Judicial Council has made number one priority to 1999. She noted that the Honorable Michael Ander, Probate Judge, and the Honorable John R. Weber, Circuit Court Judge, were present along with the Bailiff Len Anthos, Cindi Beaudry, Risk Manager, and Undersheriff Jim Bjorne. They are all members of the Security Advisory Committee.
Judge Micklow briefly reviewed the progress made so far on security and provided a future "heads up" as a result of the security study of Marquette County Trial Court Facilities prepared by the State Court Administrative Office. Four major areas are being addressed: First, Undersheriff Jim Bjorne has provided information regarding the use of COPPS Grant Officers in providing courtroom security. Second, the Capital Improvement Budget Process contains requests submitted by the three courts addressing security issues. Third, a two-way closed circuit video camera between the Court and the Jail is being funded by an MMRMA Pilot Project. This will provide for video arraignments for six months starting in June. Fourth, the establishment of security and emergency policies, which involves consideration and approval of the Administrator’s recommendation this evening to establish a County Risk Control Committee.

Commissioners engaged in discussion and asked questions of members of the Judicial Council. It was noted that a reduction in the number of Court buildings has not been considered regarding security issues. Judge Micklow indicated there is no room anyway at the Marquette District Court for those personnel at the Ishpeming District Court. Also, Judge Micklow could not say which Court needs security issues addressed first. All courtrooms deal with angry people and require a responsible level of security, taking into account the types of threats and the cost of implementing security issues. Judge Micklow noted that the Warrant Officers have generated approximately $300,000 in revenue and those dollars may assist with security issues.

Chairperson Corkin noted that the County Board will take the security issue very seriously in its deliberations during the budget process.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Cihak, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the recommendation from Administrator Steve Powers and the Judicial Council to establish a County Risk Control Committee which will develop a building wide security plan, County-wide emergency policies and procedures, and county-wide policies and procedures for records storage and maintenance. The first priority of the Risk Control Committee will be to review options available to provide building-wide security which measure the County’s security needs against the budgetary implications, availability of funds, and existing resources and services.

And further, continue to implement policies and procedure changes, building and facility modifications (within budget) and personnel training designed to reduce safety and security risks. The County Risk Control Committee will complete their evaluation and present the County Board its recommendation regarding its findings by August 1, 1998. (Also, some security issues should be addressed by department heads within the upcoming budget process.)

The Committee considered a recommendation from the Marquette County Board of Health to award the bid, in response to Requests for Proposals from qualified health care organizations, to purchase the Marquette County Home Health Program and assume responsibility for continuing to provide care to its present home health patients.

Comm. Seppanen, County Commissioner Member of the Board of Health, noted that only one bid was received in response to the Request for Proposals, from Marquette General Hospital. A concern of the Health Board has been to be sure that clients are cared for and Marquette General will make every effort to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Dr. Randall M. Johnson, Health Department Director, was present and explained that in August of 1997 the Federal Balanced Budget Act was passed which changed the way Medicare Funding is implemented: 1) There was a reduction in the per visit reimbursement ratios for all home health care agencies by 20%, 2) Established brand new aggregate cost limits, 3) Eliminated the drawing of blood as a reimbursable cost (Marquette County had 15 such clients) and 4) Hospitals now get reimbursed for use of "swing beds" which allows for an additional three weeks of stepdown care for patients which results in fewer referrals to home health.

As a result of all this, the Marquette County Home Health Program has seen a 50% reduction in its patient clientele and visits have reduced by one-third, however, many fixed costs remain whether 100 or 5 clients are served. From January 1 to March 31, 1998 the Marquette County Home Health Department has loses of $68,000 whereas last year home health made $75,000 and actually provided a subsidy for other Health Department services. The future continues to look bleak so the Board of Health has decided to cut its losses and advertise the RFP process for which only Marquette General Home Health bid.
Comm. Rapport noted that Marquette County has offered outstanding home health services since 1967. This is sad news, however, Marquette General Hospital is committed to continue to provide care to indigents and she would like to publicly thank all County home health care workers for their excellent services. Comm. Seppanen also commended Dr. Randall Johnson and all the good people that made home health care work in the past. It is unfortunate that some of these employees may lose their jobs however he is hoping that Marquette General Hospital will hire most of them. Comm. Corkin commended Dr. Johnson’s efforts to deal with this difficulty swiftly before it provided a greater damage to the Health Department’s finances.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the purchase of the Marquette County Health Department’s Home Health Program and surplus physical assets by Marquette General Hospital and further, allow dollars recaptured by the sale to offset Health Department costs for the last six months.

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The Committee considered proposed ballot language for the renewal of MarqTran’s millage from Robert Niemi, Executive Director of the Marquette County Transit Authority. The current five-year authorization for millage will expire in December of 1998. In 1994 the voters approved the renewal of .2867 mills for MarqTran plus an additional .2 mills for MarqTran. The ballot proposal will simply ask the voters to renew these levies at .4857 mills.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of a County-wide proposition for the renewal of millage for the continuation of the Marquette County Transit Authority to be placed on the August 4, 1998 Primary Election, ballot language to be reviewed by Staff and Civil Counsel.

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The Committee considered a request from Bay de Noc Community College for Marquette County Board support for a Technical Training Center to be located at Bay de Noc College. Chairperson Corkin noted that the demand for skilled workers is expected to increase significantly over the next few years and to address this need $30 million is being provided to establish at least five new Technical Training Centers in various sites throughout Michigan. The eligible institutions are Michigans’ Community Colleges and one of these sites ought to be located in the Upper Peninsula.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Bay de Noc Community College has demonstrated its ability to provide flexible training opportunities in a credit or noncredit format and is willing to examine various options in restructuring technical programs to provide for specific employer needs, and

WHEREAS, the Bay de Noc Community College is geographically located in the heart of the Upper Peninsula with sites established for delivery of regular academic programs and from this central location, training can be delivered throughout the Upper Peninsula in traditional formats or using a variety of technologies,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners supports Bay de Noc Community College in its efforts to bring a state-of-the-art technical training center to meet the demand of businesses for skilled workers which is expected to increase significantly over the next few years in the Upper Peninsula.

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The Committee considered new operating hours for the Building Code Department and Clerical Support Staff for the Summer of 1998.
Gordon Uren, Building Official, and Cathy Smith, Administrative Aide, are proposing expanding hours in the summer beginning May 18, 1998. As of that date the Building Codes Department Office proposes to be open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 5:00 P.M. In order to accomplish this part of the Staff which includes one secretary, one electrical inspector, one plumbing/mechanical inspector, and one building inspector will report to work at 7:00 A.M. The rest of the Staff will report to work at 8:00 A.M. The people who start at 7:00 A.M. will finish at 4:00 P.M. This should allow the ability for inspectors to do some earlier inspections if needed and also allow for contractors to do business in the Building Code Office before getting to their job site at 8:00 A.M.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, noted that the new hours will be done on an experimental basis with the purpose of becoming more customer friendly and will not compromise the level of inspections.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the new operating hours for the Building Code Department and Clerical Staff beginning May 18, 1998.

The Committee considered a memo from Lyn Nelson, Community Corrections Coordinator regarding the annual grant application to the Michigan Department of Corrections, Office of Community Corrections, for continuation of the Community Corrections Program in Marquette County. The grant requires no local match.

The Marquette County Community Corrections Advisory Board approved the document at its May 5, 1998 meeting. The grant application will be reviewed and approved by the State and the Contract will be returned. Once received, the contract with the entire grant application will be forwarded to the County Board for the approval process.

It was moved by Comm. Seppenen, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Marquette County Community Corrections Grant Application.

Comm. Rapport, Chairperson of the County Sesquicentennial Committee, provided an update. The Sesquicentennial Committee has been working on several activities as follows: Each Department Head will be asked to submit a one minute script for a Sesquicentennial Minute which Bresnan Communications has offered to cover the cost of filming, editing, and broadcasting these television spots. Also, Joe Blake, has a series of historical radio tapes that run approximately 15 minutes each.

The Committee is working on a Labor Day celebration which includes a parade starting from Ishpeming, through Negaunee, and ending in Marquette commemorating Marquette County’s labor history. The Committee would also like to honor those people who have worked for Marquette County over the years.

There will be a Courthouse celebration in the late summer, early fall, which will include courthouse tours and art show, especially displaying those artists who have sketched or painted pictures of the Courthouse and grounds. Judge Edward Quinnell will review the famous Teddy Roosevelt vs. Newitt lawsuit which took place in 1913 in the Marquette County Courthouse. The Committee hopes to have a budget presented to the County Board for these activities in the every near future.

The Committee considered the Board of Commissioners FY 1998 Budget Calendar as follows:

Friday, 5/17/98, Budget materials and call for 1999 Operating Budget requests distributed to departments.
Friday, 6/26/98 Department submit final Operating Budget requests to County Administrator.
8/3/98 to 8/7/98 Administrator conducts budget conferences with departments.
Friday 8/14/98  County Administrator recommends 1999 balanced Operating and Capital Budget to Committee of the Whole.
8/24/98 to 8/26/98  Committee of the Whole conducts departmental budget hearings.
8/31/98 to 9/11/98  Committee of the Whole working session:
   1. Review information presented
   2. Set tentative appropriations
Tuesday, 9/22/98  Committee of the Whole budget recommendation.
Friday, 9/24/98  Notice of Board Budget Hearing (Annual Meeting).
Tuesday, 10/13/98  Truth in Taxation hearing, budget hearing, annual meeting, adopt budget.
Thursday, 10/15/98  Publish notice of Budget Summary available
Friday, 10/23/98  County departments receiving General Fund appropriations submit, if necessary, adjusted 1999 Operating Budgets to the Administrator’s Office for preparation of the 1999 Budget Document.
Wednesday, 12/30/98  Distribution of the 1999 Budget Document to all users.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt the FY 1999 Budget Calendar as presented.

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It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Roberts, that at the May 26, 1998 Committee of the Whole Meeting the County Board dedicate a portion of that meeting for an update and public hearing on the Strategic Plan with Rita Hodgins participating as coordinator. The hearing should be publicized so that people can provide input.


It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Cihak, that the Department Heads be given a directive to update the County Board on their implementation of the Strategic Plan during budget work sessions.

Motion failed 4 Ayes (Comm. Seppanen, Rapport, Roberts, Corkin) to 4 Nays (Comm. Angeli, Bergdahl, Cihak, and Joseph).

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The Committee considered an Agreement between the Marquette County Board of Commissioners (the Airport Sponsor) and Boreal, Inc. (the Fixed Based Operator), for the purpose of providing aircraft fueling and line services at Sawyer Airport.

Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, was present and noted that the Boreal Aviation was the only respondent to Request for Proposals. Boreal Aviation is currently providing fixed based operator services at KI Sawyer as per an Agreement with the State of Michigan.

Mr. Pawley explained that the initial agreement is for a period of 5 years beginning May 1, 1998, however, the Agreement may be extended for additional terms of not more than 5 years each, upon such terms and conditions as the parties agree to in writing. This gives the County a chance to change the terms and review the agreement. Mr. Pawley also noted that Boreal Aviation meets the requirements of the various airlines to supply fuel.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, also pointed out that in Section VI there are provided termination clauses for the agreement. The agreement is being reviewed by Civil Counsel and the Risk Manager. Administrator Powers also noted that the County Board cannot limit the number of fixed based operators to be located at KI Sawyer but as a practical matter only one will be able to provide such services. Boreal Aviation already has a substantial investment in equipment at KI Sawyer and this agreement will require additional investment.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Fixed Based Operator Limited Services Agreement between Marquette County and Boreal Aviation for aircraft fueling and line services at Sawyer Airport.

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The Committee considered a proposed Sublease for Building 418 at KI Sawyer by Boreal Aviation, Inc. The Building is 3,300 sq/ft. It is an unheated garage. Commissioners questioned the annual rental rate which is only $1,200 per year with $100 per year escalator cost. This seemed far short of JBF’s recommendation to lease buildings at a minimum of $2 per square foot.

Steve Powers pointed out that the JBF recommendation was for priority buildings. This building is considered an undesirable building because of its location, its small size, and it is not heated. In time this building could become a liability to the County rather than an asset. It presently has a fair market value of $0 according to the CUPPAD Study.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and carried by voice vote 7 Ayes to 1 Nay (Comm. Cihak), that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the proposed Sublease for Building 418 with Boreal Aviation, Inc. for an annual rental rate of $1,200 per year, $100 per year escalator for years 2 through 4 with a purchase price to be negotiated in the future if the County is interested in the sale of the Building.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, reported on a fire at KI Sawyer in Sands Township. The fire occurred on the north end of the base near the old Marplex Building. Wind spread the fire rapidly, however, a quick response from the Base Fire Department, the Sawyer Development Department (with dozers and a loader), the DNR, Forsyth and Sands Township Fire Departments, the fire was confined to approximately 50 acres. Only grass, brush and some trees were burned. No buildings were destroyed or injuries reported. The DNR Tanker Plane made five water drops during the fire fight.

Hal Pawley also reported that the first 6,000 feet of the Sawyer runway is temporarily closed because the light project is underway. They are removing the beam lighting for the new lighting and the ILS installation is in its final stages. The FAA will flight check the ILS on Friday which hopefully will be commissioned soon. The security fencing project is progressing well and the access road project is now underway.

Chairperson Corkin noted that he will represent the County Board at a Health Conference to be held at Northern Michigan University on Thursday. He will report on Marquette County’s dental services for indigent youth and now indigent adults.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, May 12, 1998, 6:00 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
   MEETING HELD ON APRIL 28, 1998.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
7. Home Health Program Disposition.
8. MarqTran Millage Renewal Language.
9. Request for County Board Support for a Technical Training Center at Bay de Noc
   College.
10. Announcement of Expanded Summer Operating Hours for the Building Codes
    Department.
11. Community Corrections Application for Funding.
12. Marquette County Sesquicentennial Committee Update (No Packet Materials).
13. Budget Calendar.
14. FBO limit on same agent (2)
15. R15. FBO limit on same agent (2)
16. PUBLIC COMMENT.
17. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
18. ADJOURNMENT.