The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, October 8, 2002, 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skevis Annex, 234 W. Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on September 24, 2002 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Lou Lampi, Rt. 1, Box 29, Republic, Michigan explained he was divorced seven years ago. He received a letter from Attorney John Burcham noting his divorce case has been reopened. In the letter he explained to Mr. Lampi the reason for the reopening was the Judgment of Divorce required the property be surveyed. It was never surveyed until recently. Mr. Lampi contended someone is using the Courthouse for frivolous reasons and attempting to subdivide this 90 acres.

Mr. Lampi also noted he has provided Sand to the west end for the Marquette County Road Commission for 20 years. The Road Commission uses the sand and in return his property is improved. Last year the DEQ sent him notice he was not in compliance for providing sand. He has no idea who to talk to or how to meet compliance. He would like to meet with Gary Walker regarding these matters. He provided a copy of the letter from Attorney Burcham to the County Clerk.

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

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following additions: Item 12) Lease Agreement with Magdeleno Custom Flooring for Sawyer Building 607.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period September 27, 2002 through October 3, 2002 in the amount of $412,273.80 and Payroll Ending September 28, 2002 in the amount of $572,858.54 be approved.

*****

The Committee considered the Kamehameha School land sale. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained the Kamehameha Schools has decided to sell 390,000 acres in the Upper Peninsula. Approximately 40,000 of these acres are in Marquette County. This sale could have extensive impact on U.P. Communities. Most of the land is forested and currently timbered using sustainable forest practices. Within the land there are over 160 undeveloped inland lakes, 20 miles of major rivers, 250 miles of secondary rivers, significant Lake Superior shoreline and key buffers along the Porcupine Mountain Wilderness State Park, the Pictured Rocks natural lakeshore, and land along the Michigan natural and scenic rivers.

To further inform the local units about the land, the upcoming sale, and possible purchase plans, Jim Ekdahl, Department of Natural Resources, and Tina Hall from the Nature Conservancy will meet with City, Township, and County Officials on October 16, 2002 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. at the Ishpeming Senior Center (Note: This is a change from the Wawanowin Country Club).

A draft resolution will be considered in support of a private/public venture to acquire the land involving the State of Michigan and the Nature Conservancy along with a third party. The partnership model of mixing public and private funds to purchase a working forest easement will support these key aims:

- Keeping land in private ownership and paying local property taxes.
- Insuring permanent public access through nearly all the lands through a working forest easement.
- Providing permanent protection for the working forest lands.
- Supporting critical protective cores around the natural areas most important to conservation and recreation such as river corridors and headwaters.
- Having a timber investor to acquire the working forest and manage the land for economic value and sustainable timber flow.
Bill Rowe, Staff Planner, was present and noted the effort of a public/private venture to acquire the land is consistent with the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.

Comm. Wallace and Comm. Girard attended a meeting with State Senator John Cherry, Democratic Candidate for Lt. Governor, who indicated his support for the public/private venture to purchase the land and will try to help in these matters.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt the Keweenaw School Land Resolution and urge other Upper Peninsula Counties, Cities, and Townships to do likewise.

The Committee considered a Michigan DEQ Public Notice and request for comment on a permit application by the City of Ishpeming to work in or over inland waters. According to the Ishpeming City Manager the Washington Street Project will improve existing crossings and structures. The County Planning Staff has reviewed the information provided by the Michigan DEQ and believed the projects will not have any adverse environmental effect.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a letter of support to the City of Ishpeming for its Application to the Michigan DEQ under the Underland Lakes and Streams Act (PA 451 of 1994 as amended) to improve 1.6 miles of Washington Street crossing Carp Creek, Ely Creek, and several wetlands.

The Committee considered a memo from the Marquette County Planning Commission regarding a 2003-2004 Housing Resource Fund Allocation from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. Dotty Lewis, Staff Planner, was present to discuss the Housing Resource Fund Allocation and answer questions.

On October 2, 2002 the Marquette County Planning Commission conducted a Public Hearing. The County's previous success in implementing the 2001-2002 County allocation entitles Marquette County to receive 150% of the population based allocation amount. As a result, Marquette County will receive $412,250 to improve the housing stock in Marquette County over the next two years.

The Marquette County Planning Commission found the housing strategies developed for the 2003-2004 application are consistent with the needs and opportunities established in the Marquette County Housing Plan adopted in 1996. Many of the problems identified for first time homeowners such as the growing affordability gap between income and housing continues to widen. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics the cost of housing has increased by 26% in Marquette County from 1990 to 2000 where income has increased only 5%. As a result, many first time homebuyers must compromise the condition of the home for the sake of affordability.

The 2003-2004 Housing Resource Fund Application would assist existing and future income qualified homeowners with the following programs:

- $157,093 for homeowners rehabilitation
- $28,200 for emergency repairs
- $150,957 for home purchase/rehabilitation
- $74,000 for grant administration

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the County Board, commended the Marquette County Planning Commission and Staff for their past good work which has resulted in continued allocations to Marquette County to improve housing.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Marquette County Planning Commission 2003-2004 Housing Resource Fund Allocation Application to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in the amount of $412,250.

The Committee considered a proposal from Paul Arsenault, Manager, Pioneer Square LC, for a 5-year extension of the current lease for Ishpeming District Court.

Chairperson Corkin outlined the proposal which noted the Lease between Pioneer Square and the 96th District Court dated December 1988 will expire December 31, 2003. Paul Arsenault offers Marquette County a twofold incentive to renew the lease for an additional five years which includes:
Lowering the 2003 rental rate from $51,478 to $45,000 (a 13% reduction) and in addition, he will lock in the lease rate from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2008 at $45,000 per year.

This proposal will provide the same level of services to the western end of Marquette County that is provided on the eastern end by the 96th District Court. The Courthouse in Ishpeming provides an anchor that helps stabilize its downtown area. The original design of the Ishpeming Courthouse was developed according to the space needs as defined by the District Judges in 1988. The needs of the west-end population have not changed and all people in Marquette County deserve equal access to a Court system.

Larry Gould, Facilities Manager, was present and outlined some basic recommendations that were made by the recently completed Space Study. The recommendations include downsizing the Ishpeming District Court office and moving to the U.S. 41 corridor. This facility would no longer conduct jury trials but would provide other normal Magistrate and Court services and better parking.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion regarding the Lease Proposal. Commissioners directed Civil Counsel to review the lease and also requested staff to provide a cost comparison between the proposal from Paul Arsenault and the Space Study recommendation. Commissioners also expressed concern about "locking in" for five years and thought the Lease Agreement should provide an annual option to opt out.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and carried by voice vote 7 Ayes, 1 Nay (Comm. Seppanen) 1 Abstain (Comm. Arsenault), that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the 5-year Lease Extension between the 96th District Court and Pioneer Square LC in concept contingent upon review by Civil Counsel, a financial comparison with the Space Study Recommendations, and 1-year opt out/renewal provision.

The Committee considered the 2003 Access and Visitation Contract between the Marquette County Friend of the Court and the State Court Administrative Office. The 2003 Access and Visitation Grant totals $27,916 which would provide programs to support and facilitate parenting time by non-custodial parents. Activities include mediation, counseling, and development of parenting plans, parenting time enforcement (including monitoring, supervision, and neutral drop-off and pickup) and the development of guidelines for parenting time and alternative custody arrangements.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Friend of the Court FY 2003 Access and Visitation Contract with the State Court Administrative Office in the amount of $27,916.

The Committee considered Anderson Tackman & Company Auditor's Management Letter - Corrective Action Plan. Sue Vercoe, Finance Manager, noted during the presentation of the 2001 Audit Report the auditors provided comments and findings to be included in the Single Audit Report. A copy of the Auditor's Management Letter along with the Corrective Action Plan was included in the Single Audit Report was presented for Commissioners' review.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Girard, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Corrective Action Plan as a result of the Auditor’s Management Letter for the year ending December 31, 2001.

The Committee considered a Lease with Magdeleno Custom Floors for Sawyer Building 407.

Hal Pawley, SIABC Director, was present and noted Magdeleno Custom Floors, Inc. has purchased a facility at Sawyer. They also desire to lease Sawyer Building 407 for cold storage. The building does not have utilities or a restroom but is basically a shell of 2,760 sq. ft. with a cement floor and lighting.

The lease terms would be a rate of $1 per sq. ft. per annum with a security deposit of $500. Tenant has the option to renew the lease for two additional years at the same terms and conditions.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Girard, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the 3-year lease with Magdeleno Custom Floors, Inc. for Sawyer Building 407.
Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Corkin noted the U.P. County Commissioners’ meeting will be held in Munising this weekend and the Kamehameha School Resolution will be considered.

Comm. Tuominen noted the Road Commission has reassessed and reorganized its operations. They will provide good snow removal just like last year.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, October 8, 2002, 6:00 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. Michigan DEQ Notice of Application for Various Inland Water Projects Within the City of Ishpeming.
9. Lease Between Pioneer Square and the 96th District Court.
10. Friend of the Court Access and Visitation Contract with the State Court Administrative Office.
12. Lease Agreement with Magelan Custom Floors.
13.
14.
15.
16. PUBLIC COMMENT.
17. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
18. ADJOURNMENT.