The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 25, 2003, 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, 234 W. Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on February 12, 2003 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Dave Lemire, Jail Administrator, was present and reported the Sheriff’s Department Deputies were outstanding in response to the double homicide that occurred in Skandia Township. The Sheriff’s Department was the only law enforcement agency on duty at the time. Sheriff Lovelace wanted Mr. Lemire to relay to the Board his appreciation for the Deputies’ excellent job.

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

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved as presented.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period February 14, 2003 through February 20, 2003 in the amount of $500,669.07 and payroll for the period ending February 14, 2003 in the amount of $605,594.15 be approved.

The Committee considered a resolution drafted by Comm. Nordeen regarding the Michigan DNR plans to consolidate several of its Field Offices in Marquette County into a single office near the City of Marquette.

Comm. Nordeen’s resolution notes that these DNR Field Offices provide essential forest fire fighting services for the large amount of State forestland located in Marquette County. By closing these Field Offices an increase in liability and responsibility will be placed upon township volunteer fire departments for fighting forest fires affecting the safety and welfare of our citizens. He urged the County Board of Commissioner express its concern regarding the closure of these Field Offices and if it is necessary they be closed that the DNR firefighting equipment be left at local township fire facilities near the areas where the Field Offices will be closed so that the township fire departments will have the equipment and resources to battle forest fires.

Comm. Wallace suggested an additional sentence be added to the resolution requesting the DNR also provide training for fighting wildfires and forest fires to members of the township fire departments.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole Recommend the County Board adopt the Resolution with the amendment.

* * * * * *

The Committee considered membership in the Northern Michigan Law Enforcement Training Group, Inc.

David Lemire, Jail Administrator, was present and noted participation in the training group makes available facilities and property at Camp Grayling for law enforcement training. The facilities include a jail and lockup, driving simulator and track, small arms range, building search, technical training, canine training, and marine training. This training center is available to any local government involved in law enforcement or corrections that pays the membership fee. The Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority, law enforcement agencies, and the Michigan State Police provide the training. The founding members are Grand Traverse County, Kalkaska County, and the City of Traverse City. Currently there are 41 affiliate agencies. The entity was established under the Urban Cooperation Act and a Board of Directors governs the agency.

Mr. Lemire further noted the Sheriff’s Department has been participating for the past year on a trial basis and six employees attended a three-day course. By being a member of the Training Group participation costs $50 per day for full room and board instead of $85 per night at a local hotel. The annual membership fee is $200 with MMRMA paying the initial first year memberships.
It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Cihak, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole Recommend the County Board approve of the Resolution authorizing membership in the Northern Michigan Law Enforcement Training Group, Inc.

The Committee considered modification to an Agreement with Great Lakes Recovery Centers for Community Corrections Services.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained the State of Michigan has reduced funding for Community Correction Programs, including probation residential services. This requires modification of the Agreement between Marquette County and Great Lakes Recovery Centers to include the reduced amount of State funding. The Board of Commissioners has already approved the amendment to the State Agreement.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole Recommend the County Board approve the modification to the Agreement with Great Lakes Recovery Centers for Community Correction Services.

The Committee considered a Special Election Scheduling Committee vacancy.

The County Special Elections Scheduling Committee is comprised of a County Clerk, City Clerk, Township Clerk, and a School Board Member. This Committee meets when necessary to review and approve application from local units of government for special elections.

Rev. George Kaiser from Palmer retired and moved away. He was a Negaune School Board Member and served on the County’s Special Election Committee. County Clerk Roberts is recommending the appointment of Fae Collins, Negaune School Board Member, to fill the remainder of Rev. Kaiser’s term. Ms. Collins will do an excellent job and will be available upon short notice.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole Recommend the County Board waive the regular appointment procedures and appoint Fae Collins, Negaune School Board Member, to fill a vacancy on the Marquette County Special Elections Scheduling Committee.

The Committee considered an Amendment to the Aeronautics Agreement.

Hal Pawley, SIABC Director, was present and explained that in July 2002 Marquette County received a grant of AIP entitlement funds for three airfield projects, relocation of the airport beacon, and purchase of snow removal equipment. The grant is for a combination of FY 2002 and 2003 entitlement funding. Also approved was an agreement with the Michigan Bureau of Aeronautics in July 2002 for FY 2002 AIP Entitlement Grant Funding. It did not include FY 2003 AIP entitlements because there was not yet a Federal Approved Appropriations Bill for Airport Funding.

Congress has now approved the FY 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and it went to the President for signature. This legislation includes AIP funding for airports. Mr. Pawley noted the amendment authorizes increasing expenditures by $718,500 for FY 2003 funding for purchase of snow removal equipment. Approving the amendment will allow SIA to issue the bid package for purchase of the snow removal equipment. The local share for the agreement was previously committed to and will come from Passenger Facility Charges.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole Recommend the County Board approve of the Amendment to the Aeronautics Agreement authorizing increased expenditures by $718,500 of FY 2003 funding for the purchase of snow removal equipment.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, to accept and place on file the SIABC Financial and Passenger Reports for 2002.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, distributed a list of 2002 Accomplishments and a Strategic Plan Status Report.

Chairperson Corkin read the highlights of the 2002 accomplishments and commended the County Board on setting policy and County Staff and Employees for getting the accomplishments done.
It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole accept for file and distribution the 2002 Accomplishments and Strategic Plan Status Report.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Corkin along with Commissioners Tuominen and Joseph attended a presentation by John Brinzo, Cleveland-Cliffs’ CEO. Mr. Brinzo presented a brighter picture for Cliff’s future. Cliffs is under contract for 20 million tons of pellets compared to 8 million tons two years ago and 14 million tons last year. Cleveland-Cliffs also owns a majority of both the Empire and Tilden Mines which provides them with more control but also more risk. Cliffs is still looking at a joint Tilden/Empire Project (TEC).

Chairperson Corkin also noted the tax relief legislation of $1 per ton to Rouge Steel has resulted in them purchasing 3 million tons of pellets from Cliffs. He commended Rep. Adamini and former State Senator Koivisto for their work on the legislation.

Cleveland-Cliffs’ major challenge for the future, like all industries and units of government, is health care and legacy costs. Chairperson Corkin commended John Brinzo for his good management of Cleveland-Cliffs which not only benefits it employees but all of Marquette County.

Comm. Girard attended the MDOT meeting at Wawonowin Country Club along with Commissioner Tuominen. Comm. Girard noted the new State of Michigan road map indicates that KI Sawyer has only a 3,000 foot runway and non-commercial air traffic. OOPS!

Comm. Joseph reminded Marquette County Citizens of the ski jumping tournament to be held at Suicide Hill this coming weekend, March 1st and 2nd. He hoped the public would show strong support for continued ski jumping at Suicide Hill.

Chairperson Corkin reported that he and Administrator Powers will be attending the Governor’s Budget Presentation at Northern Michigan University Wednesday morning. They prepared a list of suggestions for the Governor to help relieve Michigan’s budget crisis. Should any Commissioner have additional suggestions please let them know.

Next Week’s County Board meeting is to be held Wednesday, March 5, 2003 at 7:00 P.M.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, February 25, 2003, 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.
6. Resolution regarding DNR Plan to Consolidate/Close Field Offices in Marquette County.
8. Modification of Agreement for Purchase of Community Corrections Services with Great Lakes Recovery Centers.
9. Special Election Scheduling Committee Vacancy.
10. Amendment to Aeronautics Agreement Authorizing Funding for the Purchase of Snow Removal Equipment.
13.
14.
15.
16. PUBLIC COMMENT.
17. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
18. ADJOURNMENT.

Wed March 5th, 2003