The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, April 8, 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. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on March 25, 2003 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Virginia Killough, 1710 Harborview Drive, Marquette, addressed the Committee regarding the Pathways self-determination and fiscal intermediary. She first came to the County Board on January 6, 2003 and this has been an ongoing issue. The Michigan Department of Community Health sent a representative to Marquette for several meetings during the past few months. The State has provided a 35 page summary of the questions that Pathways and the citizens asked. The summary does not clear up all issues, however it is supportive of consumer's wishes. As a result, Ms. Killough thought there would be a move to restore a consumer's ability to act a fiscal intermediary.

Ms. Killough noted there is a possible $354,000 grant available to assist consumers in self-determination and just does not understand why Pathways is doing what it is doing. These funds will not be available if a policy of self-determination is not followed.

Janice Peterson, 1029 W. Baraga Avenue, Marquette, representing Superior Alliance for Independent Living expressed her concern about the loss of potential grant funds for people with developmental disabilities. She encouraged the Commission to do what they can to assist them. Superior Alliance for Independent Living is a nonprofit agency that promotes self-determination and is willing to act as fiscal intermediary.

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

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following additions: Item 9) Courthouse Annex Chiller Repair Agreement, and Item 10) Sales Agreement for Sawyer Building 817 with Governmental Agency.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period March 28, 2003 through April 3, 2003 in the amount of $255,815.19 and bi-weekly payroll for the period ending April 4, 2003 in the amount of $593,984.14 be approved.

The Committee considered a resolution which calls for immediate action on the part of elected officials at the State and Federal level to address the serious problem of rising health care costs. The problem should be addressed in a manner that would cut costs for health care and not just merely shift costs between employer and employee. Affordable, quality health care for all Americans should be a main focus and primary goal. The problem will not simply go away but must be addressed.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, noted Marquette County’s health care cost was approximately $2.7 million in 2002 and increased by $500,000 to $3.2 million for 2003. County health care costs have risen an average of 20% per year for the last five years.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend County Board adopt a resolution which calls for immediate action by our State and Federal Elected Officials to cut health care costs for everyone and provide affordable quality health care to the American public.

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The Committee considered a memo from Steve Powers, County Administrator, concerning recommendations for health insurance costs. Administrator Powers and John Greenberg met with approximately 30 retirees and received calls from an additional 30 retirees regarding proposed changes in County health coverage. The response was very favorable.

For pre-medicare retirees Staff is recommending the Community Blue 1, the plan for current employees to those who retired after July 1, 2002. It is broader in coverage and more competitively priced than the plan offered prior to July 2002. Community Blue 1 offers preventative services and elimination of deductibles and co-insurance for office visits, ambulance, and durable medical expenses. Community Blue 1 uses participating providers in a tiered (generic/name brand) drug benefit. If generic drugs are used the cost...
is $5 more per prescription whereas name brand drugs are $15 more per prescription than the current plan. Mail order will be available and continues to offer the best price for long-term and maintenance drugs. The estimated savings for 2003 if implemented by May 6th will be $41,000.

For retirees on Medicare, Staff recommends a switch from the $5 copay per prescription to a $10 copay per prescription for generic and $20 for name brand drugs. A mail order drug benefit will be added. The estimated 2003 savings from increasing the drug copay and adding mail order beginning June 6th will be $56,000.

To further lower 2003 health costs Staff recommends the County offer to eligible Courthouse represented employees the option of accepting $2,000 for opting out of insurance coverage. The $2,000 will be prorated bi-weekly and would end if the employee opted back into the health insurance system. The potential 2003 savings could be as much as $80,000.

It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the switch in health insurance plans for the under 65, pre-July 2002 retirees to the Community Blue 1 Plan; and for retirees on Medicare a switch from the $5 copay per prescription to a $10 copay per prescription for generic and $20 for name brand drugs, and add a mail order benefit; and allow Courthouse represented employees the option of accepting $2,000 for dropping their insurance coverage paid on a prorated bi-weekly basis and end if the employee opted back into health coverage.

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The Committee considered a Coastal Management Grant Application for Sugarloaf Mountain and the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge. Dotty Lewis, Staff Planner, was present to discuss the grant application and answer questions.

At the April 2, 2003 County Planning Commission meeting a Coastal Management Grant Application for improvements to the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge and Sugarloaf Mountain were reviewed. The projects are specifically identified for completions in the County’s Master Recreation Plan Capital Improvement Schedule adopted by the County Board on February 6, 2002.

The Coastal Management Grant would pay up to 50% of County facility improvements if selected. Recreation surveys ranks Sugarloaf as one of the top facilities in Marquette County, however continued use of the facility requires the County to include regular maintenance and improvements. As part of the Capital Improvement Schedule in the Recreation Plan, Sugarloaf Mountain is scheduled to receive railing enhancements that will provide better gripping surface for hikers and prevent children from going off the structure.

Strategies for improvements to the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge were also derived from the Recreation Survey responses and accordingly the Plan states Staff will work with State agencies to secure funding for the maintenance of the sea wall, sidewalk, and landing. Also identified is the need for more docking facilities and kayak accommodations.

The amount of grant funding being applied for is $54,000 from Coastal Management with a local match of $54,000 for a total project cost of $108,000, however funds should not be taken from the Forest and Recreation Fund.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Cihak, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board take the following action:

- Adopt a resolution approving submission of a Coastal Management Grant Application for Sugarloaf Mountain and the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge and commit Marquette County’s matching funds.
- Designate County funds for the County’s match money.
- Designate Administrator Steve Powers as the County’s representative authorized to sign the Grant Application.
- Authorize the Board Chairperson to sign documents related to the project if Marquette County is awarded the Recreation Grant.

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The Committee considered a Change Order for $7,990 with Johnson Controls to fix the Annex chiller. Funds are budgeted in the 2003 Public Improvement Fund for the facility project. Without the repair project the probability of replacing the compressor increases and also the repair project will reduce electricity costs.
Larry Gould, Facility Manager, was present and noted quotations were requested from Johnson Controls, Duquaine, and Dresseler to repair the Courthouse Annex HVAC system. The Annex cooling system has had ongoing problems and last summer it failed several times. The existing suction line is too large and the project will replace the air conditioning piping from the compressor to the chiller. Johnson Controls had the highest priced bid, however they are guaranteeing their work for one year whereas the other responders will not guarantee the system will function properly. Johnson Controls is under a regular contract to maintain the Courthouse Complex HVAC systems and has spent considerable time inspecting the diagnosing the deficiencies and verifying the solution. This repair work is out of the scope of their regular agreement so proposals from qualified contractors were requested.

Several Commissioners questions if the $1,600 difference from the high to the low bidder was worth a one-year guarantee, however Facilities Manager Gould assured Commissioners he thought the guarantee to be well worth it.

It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Cihak, and carried by voice vote 5 Ayes (Comm. Girard, Arsenault, Cihak, Tuominen and Corkin) to 3 Nays (Comm. Joseph, Nordeen and Wallace) that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Change Order for $7,990 with Johnson Controls to repair the Annex Chiller.

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The Committee considered selling Sawyer Building 817 to Prospect U (a governmental agency).

Building 817 is owned by Marquette County and is 6,090 sq. ft. The Building has an assessed value of $71,050. Tri-media Consultants estimated mold remediation cost to be $31,400. The facility is not handicapped accessible and has been vacant since closed and there are no other prospects at this time.

Staff has negotiated a sale price of $60,000 based upon the following assumptions:

1) Prospect U will remediate mold at its own expense
2) Prospect U takes the facility as-is, where-is, with the exception of the roof drain repair and unpicking. A portion of the unpicking costs will be paid by Caretaker. Staff estimates the total cost of these repairs to be between $5,000 and $10,000.

Prospect U has asked for Committee approval so the Board can make a decision to proceed next Tuesday. At that time the identity of the purchaser will be made known with closing to occur within 60 days. An earnest money deposit was received in the amount of $1,000.

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 of Staff entering into a Sales Agreement with Prospect U (a governmental agency) for the purchase of Sawyer Building 817 and further if the costs of the roof drain repair and unpicking exceed $10,000 the matter must come back to the County Board for review.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Tuominen congratulated the Marquette County Road Commission for the excellent job on winter maintenance with a very tight budget.

County Clerk Roberts noted he came back last evening from a vacation in Florida and flew Midwest Express into Milwaukee. When boarding the Skyways plane in Milwaukee passengers had to walk approximately 50 feet on glaze ice. When Skyways landed at Sawyer about midnight Monday night the plane parked about 50 feet from the terminal, however the pavement at Sawyer was bare, dry and free of all ice.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, April 8, 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.
7. Communication regarding Health Insurance.
8. DNR Coastal Zone Grant Application.
9. Annex Chiller Replacement
10. Sale of Lake Superior Fish with agency

11.
12.
13. PUBLIC COMMENT.
14. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
15. ADJOURNMENT.