The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met in budget hearing session on September 13, 1985 at 5:00 P.M. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex.

Roll was called and the following roll recorded:
Absent: None.

Chairperson Lowe advised the department heads of the ground rules set up for budget hearings which basically are that the department heads well speak in support of their proposed budgets, after which the Board of Commissioners would ask questions concerning details of the budget. Finally the department heads would have the opportunity to address the budget issues in a rebuttal. No decisions will be made at this time, all decisions on the budget will be made during study sessions later in the month.

David Berns, Director of the Dept. of Social Services, was present to speak on the two budgets involving appropriations to the Social Services Dept. One is the Child Care Fund, which is a joint budget shared with the Probate Court. Mr. Berns stressed the need for the appropriation stating that children were better off in foster homes than under institutional care and it was far cheaper. In some cases payments are reimbursed at 50% from State funds in these cases. The benefit of the in-home care with foster parents has been demonstrated over the past years as being the best way to handle the situation. When asked if this was an identical program to Child Care/Probate Court, Mr. Berns answered no, that they deal mostly with the abused child. The Judge deals with the delinquents. The State has a contract with the Dept. of Social Services and the money is divided between the Probate Court and the Dept. of Social Services. The requested appropriation was $45,000.00. Costs in the Child Care Program of the Dept. of Social Services are paid half by the County and half by the State.

Mr. Berns also spoke in regard to the appropriation for the Social Services Fund which covers the County Hospitalization and the Employment and Training. The County must fund a reasonable amount for hospitalization. One county employee administers and monitors the county hospitalization program which has improved over the past years. This persons actions in this particular area provides an easy way for the Dept. of Social Services to get the reimbursements from the State. She also collects third party providers for reimbursements. Under the Employment and Training Program for welfare recipients, it was noted that the State does not provide enough funds to administer the program. This program is monitored on work site and employment records of each of those persons working who are receiving ADC are also monitored. This work training program is available to all persons who are on ADC or General Assistance and who are able to work. Those who are disabled or of old age are not always required to work. Mr. Berns then left the meeting.

Sheriff, Joseph Maino, was present to speak in regard to the Sheriff's Dept. many budgets. Sheriff Maino noted that the Narcotics Endorsement
budget had been deleted from the 1986 proposed budget for the Sheriff’s Dept. Sheriff Maino felt that this was a very valuable program as it deals with the importing and the selling of drugs within the County. He stated that in the period between October 1984 and May 1985, 260 complaints had been received. Fifty five arrests of a felony nature were made, mostly these were narcotic repeats. Sheriff Maino has approached the City of Ishpeming and Negaunee to help out in the enforcement of this program by providing some staffing. Marquette City, this year, has refused to participate in the program as they have in past years in providing manpower. It was noted by Sheriff Maino that they arrest the large dealers through their snitches and work up the ladder to try to get to the top dealer. When asked by the Commissioners if other units of government were helping out in any way on the drug enforcement, Sheriff Maino replied that they are helping out by furnishing the Sheriff’s Dept. with information, but they are not participating in the full time operation. This program has been looked at in the last three years as a non-mandated program, but in the opinion of Sheriff Maino, it was one of the most mandated programs by the people within the whole County. A great deal of the cost of last years expense for drug enforcement was for officers fringe benefits. This was due to one officer off on sick leave and the transfer of dollars because additional help was needed. Sheriff Maino noted that drug enforcement was reduced over $22,000.00 over the last year figure due to fewer man hours put in. The amount requested was $44,303.00. It was noted by Sheriff Maino that if a person becomes disabled by drugs he may become a greater burden on the County through participation in welfare programs for a lifetime. It was noted by Commissioners that there is only so much money to go around and they have to eliminate most of the non-mandated programs. It also was of some concern to the County Board that the County is carrying the full load rather than the various units of government carrying their fair share. Sheriff Maino predicted with the elimination of the Drug Enforcement Program, Marquette County could become as bad as Detroit or any other large city in regard to the drug traffic. He felt that the dealers were waiting to see what would happen this year with the budget. The State Police Dept. does have a drug enforcement team that covers the area from Grand Rapids north and the U.P. It was almost impossible to eliminate drug sales in the U.P. when the State Police Law Enforcement Team only gets into the area two or three times a year. Sheriff Maino felt that the budget for the Sheriff Dept. had been cut to the bone and there was no way to go from here. Sheriff Maino then left the meeting.

Phil Seitz, Director of the Cooperative Extension Program, was present to speak in regard to the appropriation for Cooperative Extension. The request was for $75,083.00, recommendation by the County Administrator was $66,342.00. Mr. Seitz went over last years doings for the fiscal year September 1st through August 31st. He said the 4-H Club had turned a corner and there was an increase in 21% involvement with 4-H youth. He said this requires an increase in the leader volunteer recruitment to provide 4-H programs. Mr. Seitz outlined the projects of the Cooperative Extension, some of which were, Substance Abuse Prevention, Home Economics Dept., Money Management Program, which they were training volunteers to teach, Natural Resources, Public Policy Program, Tourism and Tourism
Advisory Programs, Agriculture and Farming and the Farmers Market. These were some of the key objectives. They also were involved through the Solid Waste program to do some work on the new Clean Michigan Program. They are in the process of making a comprehensive tourist map, which is needed by both private and governmental units of government. He has requested a half time person to keep up with the requests. Mr. Seitz also felt that he could not live with the reduction in office supplies of $700.00. He noted that he considers the Cooperative Extension Dept. have the finest staff of people throughout the State. Michigan State University supports our County Cooperative Extension program in the amount of $229,000.00 a year.

John Beerling, Supt./Engr., and James Alderton, Chairman of the Road Commission, were present to discuss the appropriations of the County Road Commission. It was noted that the County Board had not proposed a appropriation for the Road Commission nor has it included Road Commission in it’s Capital Improvements Budget. The Road Commission therefore will have to rely on it’s State funding for this year. It was noted that in the past year the Road Commission had received an increase in funds from the State. It was explained by James Alderton, Chairperson, that this increase last year was due to a change in formula, whereby the County Road Commission reserved thirteen monthly payments in one year. The proposed Skandia garage was discussed. This garage building was not included in the appropriations and the capital improvement, although it was the number two priority of the County Road Commission. The need for this and their number one priority, the crushing plant, was demonstrated by John Beerling and James Alderton. This would provide better service to the people in the long run.

Charles Hohman, Jr., Manager of the County Airport, was present to discuss the Airport appropriation. Mr. Hohman stated that they could live with the $180,000.00 appropriated by the County, but asked that at next years budget time, inventory not be considered as part of the funding for the Airport and he explained that the 1986 Airport Improvement Project was not ready to go, but will probably be coming at a later date.

The Acock’s Medical Facility budget was taken under consideration. It was noted that there was no one here to speak for or against the budget, it is assumed that there are no objection.

Lynn Emerick, Director of the Commission on Aging, was present to discuss the Commission on Aging budget. The request was for $118,995.00, which included $15,000.00 for the meal program to be handed over to AMCAB. The recommendation from the County Administrator was for $103,995.00. Also present was Leonard Santti, Chairperson of the Commission on Aging, along with representatives of AMCAB and the senior meal program. Ms. Emerick stated that in the past the County had asked that the appropriation for the senior meals program be requested by the Commission on Aging when they make their budget request for the year. When this was done this year, it was added to the request and making the total request of $118,995.00. It seemed to her that the $15,000.00 was then deducted from this program, leaving a recommended budget for the Commission on Aging of $103,995.00.
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It was explained by Dennis Aloia, that the $15,000.00 was included but that the budget had been reduced by that like amount on his recommendation. Ms. Emerick stated that this put the Commission on Aging in a dilemma as they had reduced their budget to the bare bones and any further deduction of $15,000.00 would affect the doing away of a particular activity or parts of several activities. It was asked by the Commission whether the $15,000.00 would have a dire effect on the meals program. It was noted that there is a possibility that it would have a very great affect because the senior meals program could be one of the programs which is eliminated in part or in whole. It was stated that federal grants have not increased in the past eight years and that unless the Commission on Aging receives the full appropriation of $118,995.00 the various programs or parts of programs would have to be cut to that extent, thereby affecting the Commission on Aging program to it’s greatest extent.

Bruce Rukkila, Finance Officer, called the County Board’s attention to the notice of proposed redemption, hearing and location and consent to redemption in the case of Ronald D. McDaniel vs the County of Marquette. This case involves a injury to Mr. McDaniel while working for Marquette County. The Workmens Compensation insurance on this case is the Employers Insurance of Wausau. They have agreed to pay Mr. McDaniel a single payment of $13,500.00, in exchange for this payment, Mr. McDaniel surrenders all of his rights he has under Michigan’s Workmens Compensation Law, including weekly compensation, medical care and vocational rehabilitation. It is further agreed that Mr. McDaniel will hold harmless and indemnify the County of Marquette in the Employers Insurance of Wausau for any claim in the future for occupational disability, whether made by Mr. McDaniel, his heirs or his last employer. There will be a hearing in regard to this settlement at 9:30 on the 16th day of September, 1985 in the Bureau of Workmen’s Disability Compensation, State Office Bldg., Escanaba, Michigan. It was recommended by both Chief Civil Counsel and the Finance Officer that the County approve this settlement. The County tentatively approves the settlement and will place the item on the September 17, 1985 agenda for ratification and also to establish some procedure to be set forth to cover the signing of the documents in any future cases.

There being no further business to come before this budget hearings committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry A. Skewis  
Marquette County Clerk

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