The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole to do a budget review on September 23, 1985 in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.

Roll call was held and the following roll recorded:
Absent: None.

Chairperson Lowe opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming and the public comment section was closed.

The County Board took under consideration the proposed 1986 budget for the County of Marquette.

Several of the Commissioners had comments to make which included a suggestion by Frank Valente, that all demands for the budget be approved and that the money be taken from the bottom end of the Capital Improvement fund. It was suggested by Comm. DeFant that the County Board settle a short term budget for 1986 and also take into consideration long term plans for the future, when we will loose Revenue Sharing. It was stated by Comm. Lowe that we are finding ourselves in our third year of using the Federal Revenue funds. The County Board has stayed away from this for a very long time, compared to other units of government who have spent theirs for operational purposes at the very start. A discussion was then held on the possible loss of Federal Revenue Sharing.

It was pointed out that the Griffith Study had brought some indication of extra revenue and the staff has watched the costs and looked at some user fees, and these things will be very important in the 1987 budget session. The Commissioners felt at this time that there was very little fat in the proposed 1986 budget, with the exception of Comm. Berglund, who stated that there is probably fat in every budget and probably General Motors, Ford and C.C.I., at one time felt that there was no fat in their budget at all until they came in contact with foreign competition. Comm. Berglund stated that the County does have a problem that is a problem for all the County people. It is difficult to make a plan for another board, as they may not do what the present board would request them to do, and therefore certain cuts and changes are necessary to be made at this particular time.

It was the general feeling of Commissioner DeFant and other Commissioners that the County should wean themselves from the use of Federal Revenue Sharing even if it meant to go back to the taxpayer asking for millage. If the County is unable to raise income, then they would have to go back to the property owner and ask, do you want programs such as Commission on Aging, Netcom, AMCAB, Humane Society, Central Dispatch, and so on, and if so, then the County would need extra millage to provide these programs in future years. There was also a possible suggestion of putting some of this information on the 1986 ballot.

It was established through questioning by Comm. Valente that the need to balance the budget at this particular time was $15,000.00 for the Senior Meals Program, approximately $45,000.00 for Netcom Drug Program, and $17,000.00 for Special Appropriations.

MarqTran had made a pitch for an additional $54,000.00 for Specific Ore Tax that they felt should be included in their budget.

It was noted that in the past, Revenue Sharing had only been earmarked for special programs that were non-mandated so that in the event that the Federal Revenue Sharing stopped, the programs affected would be the non-mandated programs.

It was noted by Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, that if the County was to take $75,000.00 from the Capital Budget, it may not seem to hurt at the present time, but at some time key programs may suffer.
Comm. DeFant gave an overview on the County's action in regard to looking at user fees to support some of the costs in the budget. It was suggested that there was a need for media support to notify the people as to the reason for the charging of user fees. Comm. Valente expressed some disturbance at the amount of money that the Judges were paying out for attorney fees for the indigents.

Bob Niemi, Director of MarqTran, was present and advised the Board that certain members of the Marquette County Transportation Advisory Board would like to meet with the Board to discuss the possibility to obtain the $54,000.00 Specific Ore Tax Money that they feel belonged to the Transit Authority.

The issues to be resolved at this meeting were: 1) Special Appropriations; 2) the need for additional persons in the Friend of the Court operation; 3) $15,000.00 for the Senior Meals Program in the Commission on Aging budget; 4) the need for Netcom Drug Enforcement; 5) discussion of Specific Ore Tax; and 6) how to fund these programs and still balance the budget.

An overview of the Specific Tax Revenues were given by Bruce Rukkila, Finance Officer, and Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, along with the help of some of the Board of Commissioners. It was Comm. Berglund's thought in regard to the Specific Tax generated by the MarqTran millage, that the people who voted for the transportation three mill levy, were well aware that it would receive some specific tax money. It was the belief of Comm. Lowe that these things were not considered at the time of the proposal being placed on the ballot, nor at the time the budget was submitted for 1985. Comm. DeFant called the Board's attention to Chief Civil Counsel, Patricia L. Micklow's opinion, in regard to the Specific Tax dollars, stating that they can be used in any way the County wants them to be used.

It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Valente, that the Specific Iron Ore Tax be distributed to County as the statute applies, and as the opinion of Chief Civil Counsel, Patricia L. Micklow, states. The motion was later withdrawn.

Some of the recommendations of Comm. Berglund was that the Specific Tax money did belong to MarqTran, and should be supplied to them. He felt that in not doing that we are leaving the County Board open for a challenge as to the proper action. Comm. Berglund felt that all departments could live with the level of last years budget and that next year they may be required to live with even less. He suggested that every department be decreased by one-half percent of their budget approved for 1985. It was stated by Comm. DeFant that our Capital plan is in good condition and the County Buildings are in very good fiscal shape. In questioning Mr. Niemi as to whether the $54,000.00 Specific Ore Tax money was actually necessary for their operation, Mr. Niemi advised the County Board that they have adopted a budget for 1981 and that budget holds at salary increases of 90% as recommended.

It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Valente and carried on a roll call vote, with Comm. Berglund voting nay, that the County Board proceed with the 1986 budget in balance, based on items identified as revenues such as Revenue Sharing, one-third of the Budget Stabilization, and other funds identified as revenue sources in the proposed budget.

It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Lowe and carried, with Comm. Berglund voting nay, that in regard to the Specific Ore Tax distribution, that it remain unchanged, however, MarqTran may come to the County in 1986 or at any time in the future, and raise a budget request at budget time.

It was suggested that prior to the 1987 budget time, the County support a plan in which they would not use Revenue Sharing and that in 1988 the staff be asked to find ways of gaining revenue, cutting...
expenditures, and other means, so as to not cut the level of service and still carry on policies that are mandated. And that this be reconsidered in the spring when figures are available, for possibility of placing a millage request on the 1986 ballot. Comm. Berglund stated that in the past two years, the problem of cutting budgets has been ignored, and that sooner or later, some drastic cuts are going to have to be made in the budgets. He felt that there must be some reasonable cut that any department head could live with at this particular time. It was suggested by Comm. Valente that if a three percent budget cut was requested, then the department heads be allowed to cut the three percent at any place they want in their line item budgets. It was noted that the Friend of the Court had requested a position as a deputy Friend of the Court and revenues would be generated in their budget this year to cover the cost of that person. It was moved by Comm. Berglund, supported by Comm. DeFaint and unanimously carried that the County Board approve the position of Assistant Friend of the Court in the 1986 budget, based on the Friend of the Court obtaining the revenue to cover the position.

It was moved by Comm. DeFaint, supported by Comm. Valente and unanimously carried on a roll call vote that the Commission on Aging budget be funded the additional $15,000.00, and that this be taken out of the Capital Improvement budget from the bottom of the list in their rank and order, bringing the approved Commission on Aging budget to $18,999.00.

It was moved by Comm. Berglund, supported by Comm. Valente and unanimously carried that the County Board restore the Netcom Detective Division in the Sheriff’s budget, in the amount of $45,303.00, to be taken from the Capital Appropriations, from the bottom of the list as they are ranked. It was stated by Comm. Lowe that he felt the Netcom Program was very ineffective in the sense that it was operated by one person and was limited as to what that person can do. He felt that the Sheriff could possibly look into other ways to garnish support from other agencies as far as manpower. He felt that providing $45,303.00 for this type of program at this time, was not adequate and the money is possibly ill spent. He stated that when Netcom came into being at first, everyone was in favor of the program and the County received quite a bit of help, where now they are receiving no help from any of the other organizations. It was noted that Sheriff, Joseph Maino, will put on notice that he has to make the program grow by the providing of outside manpower or by funding from some other sources, or that in 1987 there is a possible chance that this program will be deleted.

The County Board took under consideration the Special Appropriations. The $10,000.00 request for the U.P. Substance Abuse operation is included in the Health Dept. budget.

Soil Conservation requests for $13,000.00 was taken under consideration. It was moved by Comm. DeFaint, supported by Comm. Valente and unanimously carried on a roll call vote that the request for the $13,000.00 be referred to the Resource Development Commission, with a suggestion that they finance this through their forestry fund now and in the future.

The appropriation for Alger-Marquette Community Action Board was taken under consideration. It was moved by Comm. DeFaint, supported by Comm. Valente that they be given an appropriation of $1,000.00, the same as last year, and this be taken from the Capital budget from the bottom of the list as ranked.

A discussion was held in regard to a request for the Harvest Festival. It was pointed out that the Harvest Festival in the last week, had experienced 16,000 people attending their Harvest Festival and that if each person was charged twenty-five cents to enter the Harvest Festival, they could have picked up an amount of $4,000.00 for their program. It was moved by Comm. Berglund, supported by Comm. Valente and carried on a roll call vote, with Comm. DeFaint voting nay,
that the Harvest Festival be given an appropriation of $1,000.00, to be taken from the Capital budget from the bottom of the list as ranked.

A request for appropriation from the U.P. Travel and Recreation Assoc., was taken into consideration. It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Valente and unanimously carried on a roll call vote that the appropriation be $500.00 and that it be taken from the Economic Development Fund Program and added as a line item for UPTHA Appropriation.

The County Board took under consideration the request for boarding fees from the Marquette County Humane Society. Requested was $7,500.00, the recommendation by the County Administrator was for $5,000.00. The recommendation of the County Administrator will be accepted and the boarding fees set at $5,000.00. The direct appropriation to the Marquette County Humane Society in the amount of $10,000.00, was then taken under consideration. It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Berglund and unanimously carried on a roll call vote that the appropriation of $10,000.00 be granted and that it be taken from the Capital budget from the bottom of the list as ranked.

The County Board took under consideration, a request from the Upper Peninsula Health System Agency, for a request in the amount of four cents per capita. No appropriation was made.

The County Board took under consideration a request from the U.P. Emergency Medical Services for the amount of $11,000.00. The understanding of the County Board when this initial amount was requested earlier in the year, the U.P. EMS Council was going to work out some sort of an agreement where the money, if appropriated, would be used entirely for Marquette County. The director of the U.P. EMS Council will be asked to meet with the County Board on Tuesday, October 1, 1985.

The County Board took under consideration a request from the Negauene Historical Society for an appropriation. No appropriation was provided.

The County Board took under consideration a request for an appropriation for Bay Cliff Health Camp, in the amount in $1,500.00. In the past several years, the County has appropriated $1,500.00 to the Bay Cliff Health Camp. It was moved by Comm. Berglund, supported by Comm. DeFant and unanimously carried that the $1,500.00 appropriation be granted and it be taken from the bottom of the Capital budget as ranked.

The County Board took under consideration a request from Ishpeming Township for $4,738.00 necessary to improve their Dog Pound. It was moved by Comm. DeFant, supported by Comm. Lowe that the request be denied. It was called to the Board's attention that if the request was denied then no action need be taken by the Board and the motion was then withdrawn with no action taken.

The end result of the action by the Committee of the Whole at this meeting, was that the $15,000.00 appropriated for the Commission on Aging, the $45,303.00 appropriated for the Netcom, the $1,000.00 appropriation for AMCAB, the $1,000.00 appropriation for Harvest Festival, the $10,000.00 for the Humane Society, and the $1,500.00 for Bay Cliff Health Camp, were taken from the bottom of the 1986 Public Improvement Fund recommended Capital budget, thereby eliminating the following programs; terminal overhead doors at the Airport, $6,964.00; the Resource Management vehicle, $7,300.00; Airport snow removal doors, $8,793.00; garage doors/Jail building, $8,300.00; fire protective clothing for the Airport, $5,961.00; Perkins Park Shoreline Erosion, $12,000.00; Airport automatic doors, $15,050.00; and the bulk of Jail yard security is reduced to $8,223.00. Total amount needed to balance the budget taken from all sources is $66,145.00.

Chairperson Lowe opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming and the public comment section was closed.
There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry A. Skewis
Marquette County Clerk