The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met in special session as a Committee of the Whole with the Department of Social Services Board on Tuesday, May 23, 1989 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.

Vice Chairperson Seppanen called the meeting to order and noted that Chairperson Corkin will be a few minutes late. Roll call was taken and the following roll recorded: Present: Comm. Arsenault, Comm. DeFanti, and Comm. Seppanen. Absent and Excused: Comm. Bays. Also Present: DSS Board Members, Ron Heighs, Chairperson, Tuulikki Sayting, and John Ashby. Staff Members present, David Berns, Director DSS, Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, Randall Girard, Human Resources Director, Gary Yoder, Finance Manager, and David Payant, Civil Counsel.

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

The Committee of the Whole, the DSS Board, and Staff Members present discussed the following items in detail: a) Patient Care; b) Replacement of the Administrator; c) Maintenance of Effort; d) Budget; e) Replacement Fund Usage; f) Insurance; g) Policies; and h) Wage Administration.

The major points resulting from the discussion are as follows:

a) A larger staff is necessary with better pay and benefits in order to keep the Valente Medical Care Facility staff at a stable and professional level.

b) The Valente Medical Care Facility should continue the policy of taking a home patient and a hospital patient in a ratio of one in one. While other facilities will take medicare patients first, or patients who have adequate financial resources, the Valente Medical Care Facility should continue admitting patients who need care but have no financial resources.

c) Should a wage compensation and classification study done on the Valente Medical Care Facility, it should include all employees, not just the administrative personnel.

d) In the long run, a replacement fund for maintenance should be established.

e) The County Board suggests the DSS Board review all their policies such as personnel, patient care, admitting, etc. Administrator Aloia will request personnel manuals from other similar facilities around the State.

f) An interim administrator must be hired, not to make any major changes, but to keep the Valente Medical Care Facility running smoothly, and to complete the budget documents. In the meantime the administrator’s position will be advertised following County hiring procedures with the help of Randall Girard, Human Resources Director, and County Administrator Aloia.

DSS Director, David Berns, suggested when the Valente Medical Care Facility audit has been completed by Anderson, Tackman & Co., that the Committee of the Whole again meet with the DSS Board for the audit presentation.

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the County Board, complimented the Department of Social Services Board for their efforts especially in a difficult situation, and wished them the best in the future.

DSS Chairperson, Ron Heighs, thanked the County Board for their support and for the help provided by Civil Counsel, David Payant.
Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Don Potvin, Marquette Resident, expressed his displeasure at paying Harry Scott, former Administrator, a consulting fee. Mr. Potvin contended it is obvious to anyone who followed the Newspaper accounts leading to Mr. Scott's resignation that confidence in Mr. Scott had eroded and that the County would like to see him leave. It seems ironic that the County is now paying Mr. Scott as a consultant to assist in hiring his successor. Mr. Potvin insisted this is similar to the Gwinn School Board payoff to Dr. Osborn, and this is misuse of taxpayers money.

Ron Heighs, DSS Board Chairperson, pointed out the Mining Journal had misquoted, the DSS Board is not paying Mr. Scott to help them find a successor. The consulting fee is for other professional matters regarding the Facility.

Chairperson Corkin made it clear the County Board does not have any direct authority or responsibility for running the Valente Medical Care Facility. There being no further public comment, this portion of the meeting was closed.

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk