The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 9, 1993 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


The Finance/Personnel Committee caucused to elect their Chair and Vice-Chair. Comm. Seppanen was elected Chairperson and Comm. Minelli was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Finance/Personnel Committee.

The Committee of the Whole meeting proceeded. It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 26, 1993 and the special Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 1, 1993, be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Paul Churchville, 222 Cherry Street, Marquette Township, reported that he was very impressed with the new Interim Director of the Landfill Authority, Richard Aho. Mr. Churchville has spent time with Mr. Aho who seems to want to look hard at better landfill procedures and will give serious consideration to better compaction methods.

Chairperson Corkin informed Mr. Churchville that his information regarding compaction has been sent to the Landfill Authority for review and comment. There being no further public comment, Chairperson Corkin closed this portion of the meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault and unanimously carried that the agenda be approved with the following additions: Item 17) be a thank you letter to Representative Jacobetti and Item 18) be a proposal for DNR reorganization.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault and unanimously carried that claims for the period January 23 through February 5, 1993 in the amount of $2,199,940.02 be approved.

Department Head Introductions: The following department heads were present to introduce themselves and give a 5-minute presentation as to the duties of their various departments:

Gary Yoder, Finance Manager
Dennis Aloia, Administrator
F/Ltn. Van Oosterhout and Jeff Selesky, Central Dispatch
Lynn Emerick, Director, Commission on Aging
Dr. Richard Klahn, Interim Director, EDC
John Beerling, Superintendent/Engineer, Road Commission
Pat Manley, Register of Deeds
Randell Girard, Human Resources Director

The Committee considered a request from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager that the County Board send a letter thanking General Rudolf F. Peksena, Brigadier General USAF, Commander of K.J. Sawyer Air Force Base for not implementing proposed reductions in RAPCON operating hours. Hal Pawley, Airport Manager was present and explained that the Sawyer Radar Approach Control, (RAPCON) uses their radar to maintain aircraft separation around the Marquette Area and controlling airport approach and departure at the airport. When Sawyer's RAPCON isn't operational, air traffic control is provided by FAA's Minneapolis Center Radar and because of the distance, that radar is not effective below 6,000 feet elevation. For safety reasons, the Minneapolis Center would place aircraft in circling patterns or delay them
on the ground until the landing aircraft reported it had landed or they could see the aircraft on the radar. This resulted in delays and increased operational costs.

Brigadier General Peksns decided not to reduce the operational hours of their RAPCON. This is a very favorable decision for the Marquette County Airport and the surrounding community, and Mr. Pawley requests the County Board send a letter thanking Brigadier General Peksns for making such a decision.

This decision serves as another example as to the value of K.I. Sawyer to Marquette County and the Upper Peninsula, and Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the Board, thanked Hal Pawley for his efforts on the County’s behalf.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Potvin and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a letter to Brigadier General Pekns, Commander at K.I. Sawyer AFB for not reducing the Sawyer RAPCON operating hours.

The Committee considered a memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator regarding the Economic Development Corporation EDA Grants that were applied for 3 years ago. The grants have been approved for a total amount of $960,000. Of this amount, $671,000 is federal money, $277,400 is local cash contributions, and $12,000 is a local in-kind service.

Of the $277,400 that is required as a local match, $230,000 has been pledged by the County from the CDBG revolving loan fund. In addition, the County Board is on record as pledging $10,000 towards the highway project. That leaves a balance of $37,400 of local match that must be provided for. Administrator Aloia pointed out that should the County Board approve and accept the terms of this grant, they are committing to provide the additional match of $37,400, if the EDC is not able to do so. Administrator Aloia recommends that the County Board encourage the EDC to do everything possible before the February 16th Board meeting to assure that the local match be provided by the private sector.

Committee members generally agreed that they would be disappointed if the EDC could not come up with the additional match funds for which they committed to do so several years ago. Perhaps part of the grant could be accepted and others not, for example, the highway project could be discontinued and the $10,000 the County Board has already, be committed be used elsewhere.

Dr. Richard Klahn, Interim EDC Director was present and explained that there is a 45-day time line for acceptance for the grant and that the EDC has 6 months to employ a permanent director. He believes that the EDC cannot shuffle funds between grants but was not sure at this time where the remaining $37,400 local match would come from. The EDC is meeting tonight in the Airport Conference Room at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Klahn thought that the EDC and the County Commission should explore jointly the availability of matching funds and if possible, proceed with all three projects.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried that the EDA grant acceptance be placed on the Regular County Board Agenda for Tuesday, February 16, without a recommendation from the Committee of the Whole.

The Committee considered the 1993 Rescue Services Vehicle Bids. Undersherriff Michael Quayle was present to explain the bids and answer questions. The Sheriff’s Department is recommending that the low bid from Frei Chevrolet/GEO, Inc., be accepted in the amount of $20,990.30 for the 1 ton 1993 Chevrolet 4 x 4 with the 454 V8 engine.

Commissioners questioned whether the 454 V8 engine was necessary, rather than the 350 V8 engine which would get considerably better gas mileage. Undersherriff Quayle explained that at present the Chevy Suburban rescue vehicle has a 350 V8 engine and when it’s fully loaded and pulling the Marine Division boat up long grades, the top speed is approximately 30 to 35 mph. The dealer also contends that the 454 V8 pick-up when fully loaded and pulling a trailer, will get better gas mileage than the 350 V8. Undersherriff Quayle further explained that during the five months summer period, the Sheriff’s boat is used daily. If not in use for emergency or
rescue operations, then it is on patrol in one of Marquette County’s inland lakes as per the Michigan DNR Marine Safety Grant. The County gets reimbursed 25 cents per mile.

Several Commissioners contended that with the proper rear axle ratio, the 350 V8 should perform very satisfactorily. Comm. Arnautul felt that the County Board should follow the Sheriff’s Department recommendation. They are the people who deal on a day to day basis with the use of the vehicle. The difference in price of the two vehicles is less than $200.


The Committee considered a renewal of contractual agreements for supplemental police services with Marquette and Tilden Townships. The existing agreements have been in effect since January and February of 1991 and both townships have indicated a desire to renew.

Undersheriff Michael Quayle was present and explained that the contracts have both received administrative and legal approval.

It was moved by Comm. Tredell, seconded by Comm. Arnautul and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the contract for police services between Tilden Township and the Marquette County Sheriff’s Department for the period January 1, through June 30, 1993, and the contract between Marquette Charter Township and the Marquette County Sheriff’s Department for police services for the period January 1, through December 31, 1993.

The Committee considered a contract to allow the Kewenaw Bay Tribal Council to lodge inmates arrested on the reservation to be placed in the Marquette County Jail. Undersheriff Michael Quayle was present and in response to Commissioners questions and concerns pointed out that presently the Sheriff’s Department has contracts with the Federal and State Government for housing inmates at $35 per day. That same rate must be applied to this contract with the Kewenaw Bay Tribal Council. The 72 hour notice requirements for removal of Tribal Council inmates from the County Jail is realistic and is the same requirement that’s in place with Federal and State inmates. As far as liability is concerned, the Kewenaw Bay Tribal Council agrees to indemnify and hold harmless, Marquette County, its agents, employees, officials, volunteers for any liability arising out of the housing of inmates from the Kewenaw Bay Tribal Council at the County Jail. Civil Counsel Payant pointed out that Marquette County's insurance carrier helped draft the agreement.

Commissioner Seppanen complimented the Sheriff’s Department on fully utilizing the jail facility. He further added that although the daily rate of $35 appears to be a break even proposition, it does help to pay for fixed costs in operating Marquette County’s Jail.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Bramme and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve an agreement between Marquette County and the Kewenaw Bay Tribal Council to house inmates in the Marquette County Jail.

The Committee considered a communication from the Marquette County Solid Waste Authority regarding the Authority's request for changes to the Intergovernmental Agreement. The changes are being requested for the following reason: to allow consideration of a candidate for Executive Director who may not be an engineer, but who has a proven track record in administration of a landfill or similar enterprise. The Authority has no specific person in mind, but believes the Intergovernmental Agreement should be changed to allow consideration for non-engineers.

County Administrator Dennis Aloia has spoke with both Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director and Jim Kippola, Senior Planner, and they...
indicated there should be no problem in allowing the Authority to consider an Executive Director who may not be an engineer. In fact, just because an engineer is hired, it does not mean that they would have better administration of the landfill operation.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Angeli, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board concur with the requested changes to the Intergovernmental Agreement from the Marquette County Solid Waste Authority.

The Committee considered a communication from William Maki, past Mine Inspector which listed owners of property that contain abandoned mine areas. These owners should be contacted immediately should there be any problems. Rudy Lafreniere, Mine Inspector was present and explained that he is familiar with this list and understands that these owners must be notified for any immediate attention. Mr. Lafreniere also reported that he has had four cells since becoming the Mine Inspector where he went out to inspect properties and in one instance brought along former mine inspector, Bill Maki. He wondered if arrangements had been made yet for Mr. Maki to receive payment during these inspections. Administrator Aloia is preparing a recommendation and budget amendment will be presented at the next Committee meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried that the Committee place the communication on file.

The Committee considered a communication from Jim Kippola, Senior Planner, regarding a presentation made by Paul Churchville at the January 19, 1993 County Board meeting. Mr. Kippola pointed out that Mr. Churchville made the same presentation at a Planning Commission meeting on January 13th, and arrangements have been made for Mr. Churchville to give his presentation to the Solid Waste Planning Committee.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Trudell and unanimously carried that the communication be placed on file.

The Committee considered proposals for audit services for Marquette County for the 1992, 1993, and 1994 audit years. Gary Yoder, Finance Manager was present and explained that proposals were sent to six auditing firms with a deadline of February 5th. Three proposals were submitted to Marquette County from:

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<th>Firm</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Tackman, and Company</td>
<td>$70,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroncich &amp; Associates, PC,</td>
<td>$60,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marquette, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dennis, Garland, and Niergarth,</td>
<td>$89,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traverse City, Michigan</td>
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Commissioners know that the County has received good services from Anderson, Tackman, and Company, but a change in auditors might be beneficial for the County. Anderson, Tackman, and Company, however, bid nearly $10,000 lower than the others. For that amount of money, it would not be worth changing auditors.

Gary Yoder, Finance Manager, explained that the request for proposals (RFP) this time called for a change in the scope of the audit. Prior audits called for an audit opinion on the "combined statements", while this RFP called for an opinion on the "combined, combining, and individual statements". This will provide a more in-depth review of each county fund. In other words, Marquette County will get some benefit from a change in audit procedures, while utilizing the same auditor. Administrator Aloia and Finance Manager Yoder are satisfied with the audit services provided by Anderson, Tackman and recommend that they be awarded the three year audit contract.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board accept the proposal from Anderson, Tackman, and Company for the next three-year audit period at a cost of $70,800.

The Committee considered a proposal by Comm. Potvin that the State continue the freeze on property taxes. Comm. Potvin contended that our
State Legislature is not getting the job done on property tax reform. At this time, there are a multitude of proposals in the works, but meanwhile, assessments will jump all over the State an average of around 13%. Comm. Potvin felt that the first step should be to continue the freeze until a solution is found, which would put pressure on the Legislature.

It was moved by Comm. Potvin that the Committee of the Whole recommend our County Board write our State Legislators to urge them to continue the property tax freeze on assessments until they legislatively solve the property tax problem. Motion died for lack of support.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Angeli and unanimously carried that the County Board send a letter to State Representative Dominic Jacobetti under the signature Chairperson Corkin, thanking Rep. Jacobetti for his efforts on behalf of the Upper Peninsula.

The Committee considered a request from Commissioner Angeli that a letter be sent opposing the proposed DNR cuts. A recent newspaper article pointed out that a proposal before the Natural Resources Commission would eliminate 17 employees from the Upper Peninsula, including 9 from the Marquette Office and 5 from Escanaba. These employees would be transferred downstate. Presently, out of the DNR’s 3,000 employees, only 385 are stationed in the Upper Peninsula, even though more than half the land held by the State of Michigan is in the Upper Peninsula. The proposal also calls for reducing the four district and one regional office in the Upper Peninsula to three zone offices. The present district offices are in Newberry, Baraga, Escanaba, and Crystal Falls and Marquette is home to the U.P. Regional Office.

State Representative David Anthony, 108th District, said he will urge the Natural Resources Commission to reject this proposal. He will also call for a public hearing to be held in the Upper Peninsula.

Dave Holli, the NRC’s only member from the Upper Peninsula, indicated he would oppose any front-line field cuts in DNR personnel, while the bureaucratic DNR jobs in Lansing are protected.

It was moved by Comm. Angeli, seconded by Comm. Bramse and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board oppose the proposal before the Natural Resources Commission to restructure the DNR operations in the Upper Peninsula by eliminating 17 employees and reducing the four district and one regional office to three zone offices, and send a letter of opposition to the Governor, our State Legislators, and members of the Natural Resources Commission.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment:

John W. Blelberg, CPA Partner, Anderson, Tackman, and Co. was present and thanked the County Board for their continuing confidence in their audit services. Mr. Blelberg pointed out that Anderson, Tackman, and Co. works closely with Administrator Aloia and Finance Manager Yoder, but does not work for them, but rather works for the County Board. If the County Board wants more information from the audit, they only have to let them know.

Governmental auditing is a very specialized field which is demonstrated by the fact that the County sent out 6 proposals and only received 3 bids. The first audit that Anderson, Tackman did for Marquette County cost about $40,000, but in recent years, costs have gone down.

Paul Churchville, Marquette Township resident, contended that if the legislature is going to "fix" the property tax system, there are some things that must be kept in mind, such as: Education must continue, and the roads must still be plowed. Will there be breaks for seniors and low income property owners? Property taxes provide stable revenue for local units of government. A shift to the income tax or the sales tax would subject local tax revenues to ups and downs in our economy.

There being no further public comment, Chairperson closed this portion of the meeting.
Chairperson Corkin announced that the Executive/IGR Committee meeting will be at 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, February 11 in the Commission Chambers. County Administrator Dennis Aloia pointed out that mail slots for each Commissioner have been provided in the back Commissioner Chamber Room.

Comm. Potvin requested that a copy of the "White Papers" for the retention of K.I. Sawyer be provided to Commissioners when available. Comm. Potvin also pointed out that the 1993 road construction schedule includes 4 projects in Marquette County, totalling about $940,000.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, February 9, 1993, 4:30 p.m.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855

** 4:30 p.m. Finance/Personnel Committee will meet to elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson.
** 4:35 p.m. Committee of the Whole meeting begins.

1. ROLL CALL.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
6. Departmental Introductions.
7. K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base RAPCON Support
8. Consideration of EDA Grant acceptance.
9. Bids for the 1993 Rescue Services Vehicle
11. Agreement to house Keweenaw Bay Tribal Council inmates in the County Jail.
12. Request from Solid Waste Authority for changes to the inter-governmental agreement.
13. Property owner listing for active and non-active mine areas. (informational)
14. Churchville Allegations/Solid Waste Plan Update Delay (informational)
16. Discussion of continuing the State freeze on property taxes. (no packet materials)
17. Letter to Judge (Amended for 3/8/93)
18. PUBLIC COMMENT.
19. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
20. ADJOURNMENT.