The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, April 27, 1993 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braaamse, and unanimously carried that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on April 13, 1993 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. None was forthcoming.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: Item 15) become a resolution authorizing Equalization Director, Gerard Markey to represent Marquette County at the State Tax Commission Hearings.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried on a roll call vote, that Claims and Accounts for the period April 9 through April 19, 1993 in the amount of $697,084.41 be approved.

The Committee considered a memo from James Sodergren regarding the partial payment of delinquent taxes. Treasurer Sodergren was present and explained that delinquent taxpayers who make application to pay an amount less than the entire tax are referred to himself or his Chief Deputy for a resolution of their tax liability. The Treasurer’s Office may agree to a schedule whereby the taxpayer can make up to three payments, however, Treasurer Sodergren insures that the taxpayer understands that the entire tax must be paid prior to the tax sale or they could lose their property. The penalty for delinquent tax payments is a four percent administrative fee, which is taken out of the first payment and interest fees which are taken out at a rate of one percent per month. Out of approximately six thousand delinquent tax parcels, about thirty people have been provided the opportunity to make three partial payments. Treasurer Sodergren encourages delinquent taxpayers to open up escrow accounts with banks.

Mr. Sodergren contended that it is possible to establish a program where taxpayers could make partial payments on a monthly basis, however, it would require an increase in his staff and computer time. It takes approximately seventeen minutes to receipt in a tax payment. Treasurer Sodergren invited commissioners to contact him for an appointment and he would be glad to demonstrate the procedure necessary for receipting in a partial payment of delinquent taxes.

Comm. Potvin strongly thought the public would be better served if the Treasurer's Office allowed for the partial payment of delinquent taxes on a regular basis.

It was moved by Comm. Braaamse, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried to place the communication on file.

The Committee considered a request from Chief Circuit Judge Edward A. Quinnell for a budget amendment to increase the line item for part-time employees to fill in during vacations. Judge Quinnell and Judge Jason included only $750 for part-time employees in their 1993 budget. When either Judges' administrative aide is on vacation, there is no employee for back up.

Randell Girard, Human Resources Director, recommends that the vacation replacement be with a Unit Secretary II for an estimated additional cost of $1,400 to cover the vacation periods. That's $700 for each Judge's administrative aide.

The temporary employee filling in during these vacations has previously worked for an extended period as an administrative aide to Judge Jason and
is familiar with the circuit court system.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried on a roll call vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of a $1,400 budget amendment from contingency to cover the salary part-time line item for vacation fill-ins for the Circuit Court administrative aides.

The Committee considered a recommendation from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator regarding the furniture purchase for the Friend of the Court's Office. Administrator Aloia had reviewed several options for reducing the cost of the furniture required in the Friend of the Court's Office for the new employee that will soon be hired. The County is not an eligible agency to purchase equipment from the State Purchasing Warehouse on Wright Street. Administrator Aloia, with the assistance of George Wright, Facilities Manager, have investigated several furniture sources. He recommends purchasing from Northern Stationers for the necessary office furniture at an approximate cost of $1,128, about half of the original estimate.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board purchase the necessary office furniture for the new Friend of the Court employee from Northern Stationers as recommended by the Administrator; funds to come from the Friend of the Court budget mediation reserve line item.

The Committee considered a memo from Norman Holmes, Chairperson, Marquette County Planning Commission regarding an application for re-zoning by Dwight Barry, Ishpeming. In August of 1982, Mr. Barry requested a zoning change and filed the necessary $90 application fee. At that time, the Planning Commission informed Mr. Barry it would be better to apply for a conditional use permit and agreed that his application fee could be used towards the conditional use permit.

Meanwhile, the zoning ordinance had been amended and Mr. Barry is applying for the conditional use permit as suggested, but there has been a fee increase. Mr. Barry is requesting that he not have to pay another fee, but is agreeing to paying the difference between last year's rate of $80 and this year's rate of $120. The Planning Commission has no authority to waive fees, but supports such a waiver for Mr. Barry, especially in light of the long process involved in addressing his request.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Angeli, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board allow Mr. Barry to pay the difference between last year's rate of $80 and this year's rate of $120 rather than pay another fee for the conditional use permit.

The Committee considered a memo from David Payant, Civil Counsel, regarding the County's special appropriation of $10,000 to the Marquette County Soil and Water Conservation District. After a thorough investigation, Civil Counsel Payant could find no authority allowing counties to appropriate money to assist private land owners in the development of their forest resources. Civil Counsel Payant understands that the Soil and Water Conservation District does nothing for the County forest land, but rather assists private land owners.

County Administrator Dennis Aloia spoke with Mike LaPointe, SWCD, and requested if he could find projects that they have worked on that may be beneficial to the County. Another possibility is making appropriation to the Soil Conservation District through the EDC.

Comm. Bergdahl pointed out that Soil and Water Conservation District in every county in the State of Michigan assists any citizen with help in their forest or erosion or tree planting, etc. He thought that the contract agreement between the County of Marquette and the County Soil and Water Conservation District should go back for further review and consideration.

It was moved by Comm. Potvin, seconded by Comm. Bramme, and unanimously carried to refer the Soil and Water Conservation District contract back to Civil Counsel Payant and Administrator Aloia for further review with the Soil Conservation District.
The Committee considered a memo from Ron Wilson, Senior Legislative Coordinator, Michigan Association of Counties regarding the next MAC taxation committee meeting to be held Friday, April 30th. The main item on their agenda is MAC’s position on the state property tax/school finance reform proposal to be presented to Michigan voters on June 2nd. Comm. Potvin, a member of the MAC taxation committee, pointed out that the MAC is opposed to another property tax freeze and any further property tax reductions without replacement revenues. The proposal also raises many questions regarding the administration of property taxes should it be adopted. Between now and June 2nd, many groups will be considering their position on the proposal. The legislature is currently specifically addressing the Constitutional Amendment for an interpretation to be prepared by June 1st. Comm. Potvin also pointed out that MAC is trying to get the legislature to adopt a bill to get rid of TIF Districts. Comm. Potvin asked fellow commissioners if the County Board is willing or ready to take a position on this issue, if so, what should be present to the MAC’s tax committee meeting.

The Committee discussed some of the positives and negatives regarding the state proposal and several commissioners provided their personal interpretation and position. Chairperson Corkin ended the discussion by contending that the County Board should continue to collect information regarding the tax proposal. If necessary, there is still time to take a position before June 2, 1993.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Angeli, and unanimously carried to place the communication on file.

The Committee considered a memo from Ron Wilson, Senior Legislative Coordinator, Michigan Association of Counties regarding federal payment in lieu of taxes (PILT). The memo requested help from County Commissions in urging the Michigan Congressional delegation to co-sponsor PILT legislation. Currently none of the Michigan delegation is co-sponsoring either S455 (which authorized an increase from $105 to $227 million over five year period) nor HR1181, which would authorize the same increase over a one-year period.

In the past, the Michigan delegation has played an important role in PILT legislation, however, it has lately become reluctant since a large majority of these funds goes to Western States. It is important that counties suggest modest fee increases for grazing and timber cutting on timber lands which President Clinton has proposed be directly tied to increasing PILT.

Comm. Angeli expressed concern about the Federal Government not paying their fair share for the large amounts of acreage that they hold in the Upper Peninsula and thought it very appropriate that the Marquette County Board send letters to its Michigan Congressmen supporting the fee increases as suggested by MAC.

It was moved by Comm. Angeli, seconded by Comm. Potvin, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send letters to the Michigan Congressional delegation urging them to officially sign on as co-sponsors of Federal PILT legislation.

The Committee considered the 1993 Annual OEDP Report from the CUPPAD Regional Commission. The Annual OEDP Report has been submitted to the EDA since 1970. The six County Boards of Commissioners within the CUPPAD region annually review the report which provides statistical analysis of last year's activities, demographic information regarding population and the economy, environmental issues, and development strategies for the future.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve and concur with the 1993 Annual OEDP Report and adopt the necessary resolution.

The Committee considered an announcement from Bob Taylor, Director of the Employment Programs, to all Marquette County Units of Government, public and private, non-profit entities in Marquette County explaining that the
County of Marquette has applied for federal funds in which to administer the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program for the twelfth consecutive year. In anticipation of receiving funding, they are developing a needs inventory and potential work site list where the placement of eligible youths would be mutually beneficial. Attached to the notice was a work site agreement and job description forms for units of government and non-profit entities to file their requests.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried to place the communication on file.

The Committee considered a resolution authorizing County Equalization Director Gerard Markey to represent Marquette County at the preliminary and the annual equalization hearings set by the State Tax Commission. Mr. Markey was present and explained that as per administrative procedure, the State Tax Commission requires that each County designate the individual to represent them at these hearings. The resolution is mainly precautionary resolution but necessary, just in case any problem arises and Marquette County needs representation.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsennault, and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt the resolution authorizing Gerard Markey, Equalization Director to represent Marquette County at the State Tax Commission Equalization Hearings.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. None was forthcoming.


Chairperson Corkin declared a brief recess in order to clear Commission Chambers.

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CLOSED SESSION

The Committee of the Whole came back into open session and took the following action:


Announcements

Comm. Trudell, as Board liaison to the Marquette County Social Services Board, pointed out that two years ago general assistance termination was brought on by the Engler Administration, which was designed to reorganize welfare and social service programs throughout the State of Michigan. Our State may be saving some money, however, statistics are showing that there are many, if not more individuals, who have been evicted, slept in temporary shelters, have no permanent housing or go a day or more without food. In other words, the State-wide reorganization of Social Services is not helping.
Comm. Angeli announced that the Marquette County's Director of Social Services is now covering the whole Upper Peninsula and Marquette County has an interim director, so there are some changes taking place in the Department of Social Services.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]
David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk

April 27, 1993
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Tuesday, April 27, 1993 at 4:30 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.
   Memo from James Sodergren, County Treasurer, regarding payment of delinquent taxes.
   Budget Amendment request for staff vacation coverage from Edward A. Quinnell, Chief Circuit Judge.
   Memo from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator regarding Friend of the Court furniture purchase.
   Memo from Norman Holmes, Planning Commission Chairperson, regarding waiver of a conditional use permit fee.
   Memo from Civil Counsel, David Payant, regarding special appropriation for the Marquette County Soil and Water Conservation District.
   Report from the Michigan Association of Counties Taxation Committee on State-wide Ballot Proposal A.
   A Memo from MAC regarding federal payment in lieu of taxes (PILT).
15. Equstration
16. Action

17. PUBLIC COMMENT.
18. Closed Session to discuss pending litigation regarding the Ishpeming City TIF District.
19. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
20. ADJOURNMENT.