The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 1, 1994 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


A Salute to the Flag was given followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the February 15, 1994 County Board meeting be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. James F. Sodergren, Marquette County Treasurer, and Ishpeming Township Resident, made the following remarks:

Good evening. I'd like to speak to you this evening on the iron ore tax law known as the Mack/Jacobetti Bill.

In 1978 the specific tax law was amended so that the base from which the tax was structured was determined by Cleveland Cliffs and known as the published price. This amendment was drafted by C.C.I. and was opposed by the County Board because it gave C.C.I. control over the amount of tax they pay. It wasn't long before C.C.I. lowered the published price and then the price was further manipulated so that they were paying on what was termed a prevailing price. Between 1983 and 1990 the tax went from $7.4 million down to $4.6 million when Gary Johnson the Supervisor of Republic Twp. decided enough is enough and he assessed the Republic mine according to the published price. This prompted C.C.I. to appeal their 1989, 1991 and 1992 taxes.

Subsequently the schools and County joined Republic Twp. in the appeals process and thus far over $175,000.00 has been spent to litigate the matter. Lengthy depositions and testimony were taken to determine and define terms in the law such as: How and who sets the published price? What are the lower lake transportation costs? What is an idle mine? How is the rated capacity of a mine determined? What and how is the percent of completion determined? All of this must have been too much for the tax tribunal judge to comprehend so she just recommended to the full tribunal that C.C.I. shouldn't have to pay any taxes ("0" taxes) on the Republic Mine. The full court however decided that the place should be worth something and that the property should be placed on the Advallorom Roll. Attorneys from both sides didn't think that was right so they appealed the ruling to the Court of Appeals.

What is clear is the law is not clear. It needs to be changed. It needs to be changed so that Twp., County, and State officials can determine what the tax should be. It needs to be changed so that the judges who sit on the tax tribunal can understand what the law says. It needs to be changed so that there is some sense of equity in our property tax system.

We have drafted a proposal which does away with all the garbage. Our proposal clearly defines the terms and provides a formula for computing the tax. I know that some folks, including some of our legislators, are suggesting that the mines be put on the advallorom rolls. And certainly that is an alternative but I believe our proposal will be better for local units of government and the mining company because it will eliminate the cost of property assessment and appeal.
Once again I'd like to thank Bresnan for the free time this evening and again I'd like to encourage folks to contact our legislators and ask them to support our proposal to change the iron ore tax law. At the next County Board meeting I want to talk about the profits that C.C.I. is receiving via the Empire and Tilden mines. Can they afford to pay a more equitable tax in Marquette County? How does the iron ore tax compare with other Marquette County land taxes? How much is the iron ore tax in Minnesota?

Thank you and good evening.

There being no further public comment, Chairperson Corkin closed this portion of the meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: that item 1la) be a request from the MSU Cooperative Extension Office for a letter of support for their application for a Youth and Family Strategic Planning Grant.

Informational Items

It was moved by Comm. Potvin, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the following informational items be accepted and placed on file:

a) Letter from Representative Dominic Jacobetti to Governor John Engler concerning State of Emergency Declaration for municipalities within Marquette and Alger Counties.

b) Letter and Resolution from Marquette Township regarding the U.S. 41/M-28 Business Corridor Study.

c) Letter from Representative Dominic Jacobetti to Doug Roberts, State Treasurer, regarding reimbursement of costs related to the 1994 Michigan Homestead Exemption Affidavit forms.

d) Letter from Representative Dominic Jacobetti to Doug Roberts, State Treasurer, regarding reimbursement of costs related to the 1994 Michigan Homestead Exemption Affidavit forms.

e) Update from Randall Johnson, M.D., Health Dept. Director, regarding Radon Services and 1993 Dental Clinic Statistics.

Informational Items Cont'd.

9b) The County Board considered a proclamation of a State of Emergency from Governor John Engler. Broken and frozen water lines have resulted in disruption of service to many homes in Marquette County due to the sub-zero temperatures. Comm. Bramse questioned the significance of the March 9, 1994 ending date indicated in the last paragraph of the Governor's proclamation.

Lt. Michael Zorza, Emergency Program Manager, was present and explained that the Governor's declaration is limited to 14 days by law; however, the Legislature can petition the Governor to extend the declaration. This is similar to the process that the County Board used when the Chairperson declared a State of Emergency and then the County Board reaffirmed that Declaration which was then forwarded on to the State.

It was moved by Comm. Potvin, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board direct Administrator Aloia to call Lansing during business hours so that we are sure that our Legislators will be seeking an extension, and that the communication be placed on file.
9e) The County Board considered a letter from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, to Jimmie Walker, Mgr., Minneapolis Control Center, FAA, urging the continued use of the K.I.Sawyer radar for civilian aviation after the base closes.

It was moved by Comm. Potvin, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board send a similar letter to Mr. Jimmie Walker urging the continued use of the K.I. Sawyer radar for civilian aviation, and that Mr. Pawley's communication be placed on file.

Action Items

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Action Items 10b), 10c), and 10d), be approved as follows:

10b) A Committee of the Whole recommendation that the County Board approve the appointment of Robert S. Regis, Assistant Professor of Earth Sciences, NMU, as Marquette County Deputy Drain Commissioner.

10c) A Committee of the Whole recommendation that the County Board allow the Administrator's contract to be automatically renewed for a four-year period beginning July 1, 1994 and ending July 1, 1998.

10d) A Committee of the Whole recommendation that the County Board turn down the offer to purchase the Accocks Property and terminate further negotiations with the Maplewood Development Group, Inc.

Action Items Cont'd.

10a) The County Board considered a memo from Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, regarding the selection of an architect for the Shooting Sports Complex. Mr. Koshorek was present and explained that the County Board has historically assigned project oversight, including architect selection, to the County Building Authority. Mr. Koshorek is assembling a Management Team to evaluate proposals for architectural and engineering services to finalize the design of the Shooting Sports Complex. He would like to add the three members of the Building Authority to the Management Team concurrently consisting of the Senior Planner, Building Official, Facility Manager, and Mr. Koshorek himself.

Comm. Angeli thought it would be a good idea to have some of the private sportsman clubs involved in the planning and design of the Shooting Sports Complex. Administrator Aloia explained that once an architect has been selected the County intends to have shooters organizations reviewing the design of the complex, but felt it unwise to have them participate in the selection of an architect.

It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Angeli, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board approve of the County Building Authority working with the Management Team in the selection of an architect, and eventually the oversight of the design process, for the Shooting Sports Complex.

Late Additions

11a) The Marquette County MSU Cooperative Extension Service is seeking a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for Outreach Grant Funds for an upcoming community based effort in Alger and Marquette Counties entitled "Communities Committed to Youth and Families."

Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, explained that this would be a 100% grant, and what the MSU Extension Office is requesting is a letter of support from the County Board. The objectives of the grant would be to
develop local, community based strategic plans to address the needs of youth and families, and to implement actions developed as a result of a long range plan for youth and families on a County-wide basis. The time line for this community process and development of action plans is 18 months.

It was moved by Comm. Seppane, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board approve of a letter of support for the grant application by the MSU Extension Office for "Communities Committed to Youth and Families."

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

Commissioners Comments, Staff Comments and Announcements

Chairperson Corkin read an announcement of the 11th Annual "Pigs in Heat" Charity Hockey Game to be held on Wednesday, March 9, 1994, at 7:00 p.m. at Lakeview Arena. Donation of $1.00 for attending the game, with a car as the grand prize donated by Advantage Ford. The event is co-sponsored by the Mining Journal and since its inception in 1984 the Pigs in Heat Hockey Game has raised over $95,000.00, of which $70,000.00 has been disbursed to fire victims throughout Marquette County.

Chairperson Corkin also reported that the Job Corps proposal was approved by the K.F.Sawyer Base Conversion Authority on a eight-to-three vote with conditions. He voted against the project, although initially in favor of it, because of a large number of comments he received from concerned citizens opposing it and because of the split County Board over the issue. Also, up until the last minute the specific details of what buildings and streets the Job Corps wanted were not known.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting, Tuesday, March 1, 1994, at 7:00 p.m.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex
Marquette, Michigan 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.
4. PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS.
5. PUBLIC COMMENT. (time limit 20 minutes total)
6. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
7. PUBLIC HEARINGS. (None)
8. PRIVILEGED COMMENT.
9. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:
   a. Letter from Representative Dominic Jacobetti to Governor John Engler concerning State of Emergency Declaration for municipalities within Marquette and Alger Counties.
   b. Declaration of State of Emergency in Marquette County from Governor John Engler.
   c. Letter and Resolution from Marquette Township regarding the U.S. 41/M-28 Business Corridor Study.
   d. Letter from Representative Dominic Jacobetti to Doug Roberts, State Treasurer, regarding reimbursement of costs related to the 1994 Michigan Homestead Exemption Affidavit forms.
   e. Letter from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, to Jimmie Walker, Mgr., Minneapolis, ARTCC, FAA, urging the continued use of the K.I.Sawyer radar for civil aviation after the base closes.
   f. Update from Randall Johnson, M.D., Health Dept. Director, regarding Radon Services and 1993 Dental Clinic Statistics.
10. ACTION ITEMS:
    b. Committee of the Whole recommendation to appoint Robert S. Regis as Deputy Drain Commissioner.
    c. Committee of the Whole recommendation to allow the County Administrator’s contract to automatically renew for a four-year period beginning July 1, 1994.
    d. Committee of the Whole recommendation to turn down the offer to purchase the Acocks property and terminate further negotiations with the Maplewood Development Group, Inc.
11. LATE ADDITIONS:
    a. **MSS 176 34 28 04.tif**
    b. [Text not legible]
12. PUBLIC COMMENT. (time limit 20 minutes total)
13. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
14. ADJOURNMENT.