The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, September 26, 1995 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. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on September 12, 1995 be approved.

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

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved as presented:

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period September 8, 1996, through September 21 in the amount of $1,747,682.25 be approved.

The Committee considered the Financial Condition Projection Report and Budget Amendments from Gary Yoder, Finance Manager. Mr. Yoder explained that the Projection Report is prepared on the General Fund Financial Data as of the end of August and indicates a positive balance of $10,543. Revenues and expenses were both down by $112,421. The major adjustments are to the Specific Ore Tax Revenue and an appropriation that was made to the Budget Stabilization Fund. After adoption of Proposal A it appeared that the County’s portion of Specific Tax would increase but being unsure of its actual receipt we placed the increase in an appropriation to Budget Stabilization so that it could be adjusted if necessary. Specific Ore Tax revenue is down $221,121 and other adjustments make it necessary to eliminate the appropriation of $296,666 to the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Mr. Yoder further reported that other major expenditure adjustments ($20,000 or more) were made for:

1. Circuit Court Legal Fees - Budget adjusted from $130,000 to $150,000.
2. Probate Child Care Appropriation - Adjusted from $683,171 to $705,268.
3. Building Authority Appropriation - $30,000 added.

On the revenue side major adjustments were made for:

1. Indian gaming taxes - We have received $30,000, estimated we will receive $52,000 (plus $22,000).
2. State shared revenues - To date are $33,000 above projected amounts, expect this to be $50,708.
3. Register of Deeds - Refinancing and home sale activity is down causing a reduction of $25,000.
4. Interest Earned - The rate has risen, and a $25,000 increase is realistic.

Mr. Yoder further reported that the County was notified in August by the State of Michigan of a 3% increase in Judges’ salaries for calendar year 1995. The money has been placed in the budget but it should be noted the Prosecutor’s salary is tied to the District Court Judges’ salary. County Administrator, Dennis Aloia, recommends that the County Board approve the Budget Amendments with the funds as presented but not approve the salary increases at this time. He has requested that our Civil Counsel contact the Attorney General’s Office regarding retroactive pay provided for Judges which it has been ruled illegal for the Sheriff.
It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend that the County Board approve the General Fund Financial Condition Projection Report as of August 31, 1995, and General Fund Budget Amendments No’s 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34, and further that the salary increase provided by the State of Michigan for calendar year 1995 for the Judges not be paid until a legal opinion is received from the Attorney General regarding retroactive pay.

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The Committee considered a Contract to house Keweenaw Bay tribal inmates. Ernie Grasso, Jail Administrator, was present and explained that the County Board approved an agreement between Marquette County and the Keweenaw Bay Tribal Council back in February of 1993. The Contract was never signed and returned by the Keweenaw Bay Tribal Council, however, they would now like to have the Contract reconsidered. The Keweenaw Bay Tribal Counsel will agree to pay $42 per day, the same rate as provided for federal inmates. The Keweenaw Bay Tribal Counsel also agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Marquette County and its employees for liabilities or claims or losses, injuries, etc. for housing its inmates and also pay for all transportation costs.

Mr. Grasso further reported that under the present agreements with the State and Federal Government the jail has provided approximately $350,000 of revenue to the General Fund. This Contract does not guarantee space for the Keweenaw Bay Tribal inmates. If our jail is filled to capacity with local Court inmates and the ten guaranteed federal beds, the tribal inmates ill have to wait.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Contract to house Keweenaw Bay Tribal Inmates at a rate of $42 per day.

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The Committee considered a request for an easement from the Wisconsin Electric Company to allow construction of a 138 KV transmission line across County property in Wells Township. County Administrator Dennis Aloia recommends that the County Board accept the offer and grant the smaller of the two easements requested. The construction of the transmission lines will not interfere with the extraction of gravel at the property and the price being offered appears to be an equitable consideration. Also, granting the easement will not interfere with the beneficial public use of this property or the transfer of ownership of the lands to the Road Commission should that occur.

Civil Counsel David Payant further recommended that the Agreement should include the following paragraph:

"It is understood that this easement overlaps an easement already granted to the Lakewood Pipeline Company. This easement is granted by Marquette County subject to the existing easement to the Lakewood Pipeline Company."

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board grant the request for easement to Wisconsin Electric with the additional language included.

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The Committee considered a letter from Russell and Theresa Gust, County Road 492, Marquette Township, regarding the railroad crossing on County Road 492 between Deertrack Village and the Marquette Township Hall. Mr. Gust contended that several years ago the tracks were raised so high as to create a bump in the road as cars crossed the tracks. Last week (first week in September) the railroad again raised the tracks even higher and have created a larger traffic hazard. Mr. Gust is requesting that the County Road Commission get the railroad to make the proper repair to the crossing, otherwise, there will be an accident caused by lack of traction as somebody drives over the tracks during the winter months.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a letter to the Marquette County Road Commission asking them to respond to the letter from Russell and Theresa Gust.

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The Committee considered a resolution from Wexford County urging that registration numbers be visibly displayed upon snowmobiles. Civil Counsel David Payant was present and reported that last year a law passed which repealed the display of letters on snowmobiles, but requires a decal. He recommends the adoption of a similar resolution in that displaying snowmobile registration numbers in a visible place on a snowmobile would assist law enforcement to identify snowmobiles.

Comm. Angeli and Bergdahl pointed out that snowmobile owners make a large investment in the purchase of an attractive machine and may not wish to paint or stick large numbers on the side. It would be similar to buying an expensive automobile and then having to paint numbers of the side of the vehicle. Perhaps a system could be devised by the manufacturer to make letter placement more attractive, or a license plate system provided for by the State of Michigan.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt a similar resolution urging registration numbers be placed on all snowmobiles in a visible way to allow for identification by law enforcement.

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The Committee considered a letter from John Tuttle, Financial Vice-President of the Marquette County Fair Board, which indicated that the Marquette County Fair would be able to pay $1,750 per year on the debt they owe Marquette County. The Marquette County Fair presently owes approximately $75,000. Comm. Seppanen felt it to be reasonable and fair that the County accept the $1,750 and to match this payment and any future payments with an equal amount to be forgiven by the County Board.

Comm. Arsenault suggested that the $1,750 is insignificant to the County’s budget but may be very important to the Marquette County Fair’s budget. He suggested a moratorium on the debt for two years to allow the Fair Board to find ways to expand their revenues.

Comm. Bergdahl, President of the Marquette County Fair Board, added that the closure of K.I. Sawyer has affected the Marquette County Fair in a similar manner that it has affected other business in Marquette County. He also explained a recently missed opportunity to have a Go-Cart racing track installed by the Go-Cart manufacturers at a cost of approximately $100,000. Go-Cart racing at the Fair Grounds would have been a family event which attracted many participants and spectators, however, Sands Township would not give its approval. The manufacturers got tired of waiting and built the track in Escanaba.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Rapport, to accept the $1,750 from the Marquette County Fair Board and forgive an equal amount. Motion failed 2 Ayes (Comm. Seppanen and Rapport) to 6 Nays (Comm. Angeli, Arsenault, Braamse, Minelli, Trudell and Corkin), 1 Abstain (Comm. Bergdahl), 1 Absent (Comm. Joseph).
It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse and carried by voice vote 6 Ayes (Comm. Arsenault, Angeli, Braamse, Minelli, Trudell and Corkin) to 2 Nays (Comm. Rapport and Seppanen), 1 Abstain (Comm. Bergdahl) and 1 Absent (Comm. Joseph) that Marquette County not accept the $1,750 payment from the Marquette County Fair Board at this time but rather provide a two-year moratorium to the Marquette County Fair Board which would enable them to find ways to improve and increase the revenue at the Fair Grounds.

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The Committee considered a list from Jay Scherbenske, EDC Executive Director, of equipment, supplies, and personal resources that were provided by him to the Economic Development Corporation Offices of Marquette County. Debra Kangas has recently left employment at the EDC Office and was one of only a few people aware of the list of resources that Jay Scherbenske provided to the office, therefore, the EDC thought it was a good idea that Mr. Scherbenske list these resources for his protection.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the list of equipment, supplies and personal resources on file.

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The Committee considered a memo from Norman Holmes, Chairperson, Marquette County Planning Commission, regarding the flow control of solid waste in Iron County. Iron County’s solid waste flow proposal will have no impact on solid waste management in Marquette County.

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

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It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried that copies of communications from James Sodergren, County Treasurer, to Tom Schmucker, Minerals Tax Division, Minnesota, regarding the specific taxes on iron ore in Michigan be placed on file.

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The Committee considered a NACO Legislative Alert regarding HR 1617 - The Careers Act. HR 1617 was developed jointly by Representative William Goodling (R-PA), Steve Gunderson (R-WI), Randy Cunningham (R-CA), and Howard McKeon (R-CA), and has received substantial bipartisan support at the Committee level. The Bill provides for a substantial roll for local elected officials and private representatives in the development of local work force areas. That means local elected officials and local work force development boards would be responsible for developing, implementing and overseeing job training programs within their areas, including responsibility for establishing integrated career center systems. The failure of the House to approve this Bill may be the end of locally based job training programs.

Both Chairperson Corkin and Comm. Arsenault sit on CUPPAD’s Private Industry Council and believe strongly that local officials and local work force development boards should be responsible for developing and implementing and overseeing job training programs. County Administrator Dennis Aloia received a fax from Congressman Stupak’s Office just before the meeting which gives a summary of this legislation and it will be provided for Commissioners in the next packet.

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Chairperson Corkin announced that the U.P. County Commissioners meeting will be held on October 13th and 14th, 1995 in Menominee.

Chairperson Corkin also reported on a meeting in Escanaba regarding land issues. It was a Senate Hearing conducted by State Senator Don Koivisto and State Senator George McManus, State Representative Paul Tesanovich was also there. Chairperson Corkin gave testimony that approximately 45 to 50 percent of the land in Marquette County is not on the tax rolls. The average ad valorem tax per acre is $3 in Marquette County, however, the State pays $2 per acre and the Federal Government pays 68 cents per acre. There are other U.P. Counties who have a worse situation, such as Luce County, when approximately 60% of their land is off the ad valorem tax rolls.

Comm. Angeli and Rapport announced that they will be out of town next week and not be able to attend the October 3rd Regular Board Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, September 26, 1995, 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.
7. Contract to House Keweenaw Bay Tribal Inmates at the Marquette County Jail.
8. Request from Wisconsin Electric for Easement for Power Line Construction in Wells Township.
9. Letter from Russell and Theresa Gust regarding Railroad Crossing on County Road 492 in Marquette Township.
10. Resolution regarding Snowmobile Registration Numbers.
11. Letter from John Tuttle, Financial Vice-President, Marquette County Fair, regarding Debt Retirement.
12. List from Jay Scherbenske, EDC Director, of Equipment, Supplies and Resources He Personally Provided to the EDC.
13. Memo from Norman Holmes, Chairperson, Planning Commission, regarding Flow Control of Solid Waste in Iron County.
14. Copy of Communications from James Sodergren, County Treasurer, to Tom Schmucker, Minerals Tax Division, Minnesota, regarding the Specific Taxes on Iron Ore in Michigan.
16.
17.
18. PUBLIC COMMENT.
19. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
20. ADJOURNMENT.