The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 27, 1996 at 6:00 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 February 13, 1996 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.
Arnold Sirtola, Ewing Township Supervisor, was present. Ewing Township has nine miles of seasonal roads. Mr. Sirtola pointed out that the maintenance of these seasonal roads is the obligation of the County Road Commission. This includes bridges and culverts which must be maintained in the same general manner as the roads. The County Road Commission is liable for defects causing any property damage and a Township has no legal obligation to match funds for maintenance of county roads. By vote of the electors a township can pass millage up to six mills for roads.

One mill would raise $4,000 in Ewing Township. Mr. Sirtola got a quote from Payne and Dolan that it would cost $45,500 per mile with a minimum of five miles to place two inches of asphalt on a road. The Road Commission gave a figure of $99,000 per mile. Using the amount of funds that one mill raises it would take Ewing Township 40 years to pay for one mile of road, and no private contracting is allowed according to the Road Commission.

The main road in Ewing Township is called Maple Ridge Road which is a primary road in Delta County but not in Marquette County. Other County Roads in Marquette County such as County Road 480, County Road 553, seem to get fixed and fixed and fixed at no cost to their Township residents, however, the maintenance of Ewing Township roads is virtually nonexistent. None of the roads are up to standard. Why should the citizens of Ewing Township have to pay? Logging trucks travel our roads but there is no money coming to Ewing Township.

Mr. Sirtola contended that Ewing Township is sadly in need of road improvements but it seems that Ewing Township cannot start a road program with the County Road Commission. The residents of Ewing Township are paying for things that we don’t get and we need things that we can’t afford.

Frank Honkala, Ishpeming resident, was present to speak out against the moving of the County Airport to K.I. Sawyer. He asked the County Board to consider the present location of the Marquette County Airport. It is in the population center of Marquette County, six miles from Marquette, four miles from Negawanne, seven miles from Ishpeming. The people using the Airport are generally business people from such organizations like Marquette General Hospital, Northern Michigan University, and Cleveland-Cliffs. Most of these people reside in the three cities area.

Some businesses such as Federal Express, UPS, Shop-Ko, Wal-Mart, have their own planes. These people should be surveyed to see where they would prefer the County Airport to be. Perhaps there may be one or two that would like to see it moved to K.I. Sawyer but generally Mr. Honkala believes that most of these business people would prefer to keep the Airport where it is.

Mr. Honkala flies to Lansing two to three times a week. The Lansing Airport has a 7,000 foot runway and plenty of jets landing there. The Marquette County Airport has a 6,500 foot runway and jets used to regularly land there before federal subsidies for airlines were discontinued.

Mr. Honkala noted that in the American Association of Airport Executives Manual there was a general aviation report showing that the Marquette County Airport had 52,500 enplanements in the years 93/94. The manual also points out the average fuel flowage fees are about $.04 per gallon, however, Marquette County is charging $.30 to $.45 per gallon. He brought this to the Commissioners attention because he is concerned over the salaries for the Airport Manager and the Assistants. The manual indicates that for non-hub airports the average annual wage is approximately $45,000.
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  COUNTY OF MARQUETTE  FEBRUARY 27, 1996

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

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late additions: Item 16) Become the Perkins Park Water Meter Project Invoice, (item 17) An Update on the Hiring of a County Administrator and 18) A Letter from Skandia Township to the Michigan Department of Transportation Regarding the Condition of U.S. 41 Between M-28 and M-94. Also delete Item 11) Contract Between Marquette County and the Soil and Water Conservation District (postponed to a future meeting in March).

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Arsenault and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period February 7, 1996 through February 22, 1996 in the amount of $937,878.19 be approved.

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The Committee considered a request from Cynthia L. Beaudry, Risk Management Specialist, for a budget amendment of an additional $1,300 to cover vehicle physical damages. The Resource/Management Department has experienced only a few losses in the past five years, therefore, only $200 was requested for their department for FY 1996, however, an accident resulting in $760 damage occurred as another driver pulled out and struck the County vehicle at an intersection. Another accident resulted in a broken windshield with a loss of $406. As a result of these two losses the line item within the Risk Management Budget is approximately $1,000 short, therefore, Ms. Beaudry requests $1,300 in additional funds to cover these two losses, leaving some funds for the remainder of the year.

Commissioners noted Ms. Beaudry’s letter indicated another driver was at fault in the $760 claim. Would this be covered by their insurance? Administrator Aloia will check into the matter before the regular County Board meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve a budget amendment for the Risk Management Budget, to cover vehicle physical damage line item, funds to come from Contingency, amount dependent upon which driver was at fault.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from the Central Dispatch Policy Board and the Advisory Operations Committee on their reorganization. Arlene Hill, Chairperson of the Central Dispatch Policy Board and Lt. Mike Zorza, Emergency Programs Director, were present to answer questions. The recommendation is that the Policy Board and the Advisory Operations Committee be combined and then known as the Central Dispatch Authority, the combined boards making up a total of 18 members which would include one County Commissioner, three City Representatives, four Township Representatives, one citizen at large, three police, three fire, three EMS. All the above would be appointed by the County Board and the Central Dispatch Authority would serve in an advisory capacity to the County Board.

Arlene Hill pointed out that in reaching its recommendation the Central Dispatch Policy and Advisory Boards surveyed eight counties. On March 14, 1996 there will be a public hearing on the engineering study and there will be some sizeable bills to pay which could be paid under P.A. 29 because it permits a telephone surcharge.

Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, has reviewed the recommendation and is not against the combination of the two boards into one board known as the Central Dispatch Authority, however is concerned about the reorganization under P.A. 29. He recommends that Civil Counsel be given an opportunity to review the matter before the Board makes a final decision.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote to send the recommendation from the Central Dispatch Policy Board/Advisory Operation Committee for Reorganization to Civil Counsel for further review.

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The Committee considered an application to the State of Michigan Office of Community Corrections/Department of Corrections for a Community Correction Center Jail Expansion Project. Funding is potentially available for up to $8,000 per bed through the Michigan Department of Corrections. Marquette County has less than the State’s average of 1.6 beds per thousand population. The State is willing to accept an application from Marquette County for the additional floor on the Marquette County Jail holding 58 beds for a total of $464,000. The remainder of the cost associated with the construction will have to be paid through local funding sources.

Sheriff Joseph Maino was present and explained that Marquette County is at a juncture. The County Jail has a rated capacity of 80 inmates and the average daily population in 1995 was 76. We have the opportunity now to get $464,000 from the State of Michigan. We are steadily increasing in the number of inmates, and rather than wait until the County is in a liability situation by housing more inmates than rated capacity, Sheriff Maino urged the County to apply for the grant and set up an ad hoc committee to study the issue. Sheriff Maino is not ruling out other options, but regardless whether or not the County receives the grant dollars we will still have to solve the problem of jail overcrowding. Lyn Nelson, Community Corrections Coordinator, distributed a summary of project costs and an estimated operational budget for the jail expansion project. Construction costs are approximately $1.4 million with a local funding requirement of $964,000.

County Administrator Dennis Aloia recommends that the County Board allow the application to the State of Michigan for this project, which has to be in by March 1st, and also direct Staff to work with the Sheriff’s Department on the financing of the local share. Administrator Aloia believes that should the County proceed with this project, much revenue could be generated by renting the beds, additional grant funds, etc. It may be feasible.

It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Application to the State of Michigan Office of Community Corrections for the Marquette County Jail Expansion Project.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Gary Yoder, Finance Manager, to increase the Judges salaries to allow the pass through standardization increase received for 1996 from the State of Michigan. Mr. Yoder distributed a communication from the State Court Administrator’s Office indicating the maximum salaries allowable for 1995 and 1996 and also a brief review of the salaries of the Judges and Prosecuting Attorney for the years 1994 through 1996. The Prosecuting Attorney is included as a result of the County Board action several years ago setting his salary at 85% of the amount to be paid to the Probate/District Judges.

Mr. Yoder further explained that by approving the budget amendment the action would continue to make our Judges currently paid $400-$500 less than the maximum allowable. It would require another $2,921 to bring all up to the maximum allowable limit.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenaught, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the budget amendment to provide for the 1996 pass through standardization payments for the Judges salaries and tie bar salary for the Prosecutor.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding the hours of work/hours the Courthouse is open to the public. Administrator Aloia presented several surveys and background information which includes the present office hours and staffing times for county offices, hours of operation for Upper Peninsula Counties, and hours of operation for the Marquette County labor market.

Generally, Mr. Aloia recommended that offices for Marquette County should be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to the public unless there is insufficient staff to cover a lunch period. Also, employees should work eight hours a day with a one hour lunch period.
It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board set County office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and all employees work eight hour days with one hour lunches.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, and Larry Bussone, County Representative for Remonumentation, regarding the selection of qualified survey firms for County remonumentation. Mr. Bussone was present and explained that this year they have expanded to two qualified survey firms. They recommend the authorization for the County Representative to negotiate a three-year contract for remonumentation services with Sundberg, Carlson, and Associates, Inc., and also enter a separate one-year contract with Engineering Consultants, Inc. for 13 corners in Michigamme Township because of their unique experience with these corners.

Mr. Bussone further explained that selection of qualified survey firms is not a direct bid process. Counties are required to use a qualifications base selection process which first screens interested firms to determine which one is the best qualified, then negotiates a fee with the one selected. In the end, the most qualified firm usually has the best price.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Arsenaault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the selection of qualified survey firms for Marquette County remonumentation and the County Representative be authorized to negotiate a three-year contract with Sundberg, Carlson and Associates and also a one-year separate contract with Engineering Consultants, Inc. for 13 corners in Michigamme Township.

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The Committee considered a Reciprocal Solid Waste Disposal Agreement between Delta and Marquette Counties.

County Administrator, Dennis Aloia, explained that both Marquette County’s and Delta County’s Solid Waste Plan already provide, in an emergency situation, that solid waste can be brought to the other County’s landfill. According to the DNR no further contract would be required between the two Counties. Administrator Aloia would like this contract sent to Planning Staff, Civil Counsel, and the Solid Waste Authority before the County Board gives it final consideration. Mr. Aloia is concerned that Marquette County could lock itself into a problem situation.

Comm. Arsenaault further explained that Delta County may be forced to close its landfill by the DNR. We must be very careful as to what we are approving.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenaault, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board follow Staff’s recommendation to forward the Reciprocal Solid Waste Disposal Agreement to Civil Counsel, Resource Management Planning Staff, and the Solid Waste Authority for their review before the County Board gives its final consideration.

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The Committee considered the 1996 Representatives for County participation with UPCAP. The 1996 County Board Appointee to the UPCAP Board of Directors is Commissioner Peg Braamse. The 1996 nomination from the Commission on Aging for the UPCAP/AAA Advisory Council is Doreen Takalo.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board concur with the Representatives appointed for County participation with UPCAP.

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It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole place the Road Commission Policy on removing seasonal roads or portions of roads from seasonal road status on file.

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The Committee considered an invoice from Powell Township for the installation of water meters at Perkins Park in Big Bay in October of 1995. The total charges for this project is $13,188.66.

Comm. Arsenault explained that this work has been needed for several years. He spoke with Sarah Pelto, Powell Township Supervisor, and the Powell Township Board has agreed to accept one-half payment now and the other half payment in January of 1997.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the half payment of $6,595.00 from Contingency and the remaining half payment to be paid in January 1997 from capital outlay.

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The Committee considered an update from County Administrator Dennis Aloia regarding the hiring of a new County Administrator. Administrator Aloia explained that K. Ross Childs could not attend this meeting because of the bad weather. He will be available at the March 12th Committee of the Whole. If Commissioners desired, he could come earlier. Mr. Childs has several other important meetings on his schedule during the next two weeks, but a special meeting could be arranged.

Administrator Aloia met with Randy Girard, Human Resource Director, and recommends that the County Board authorize Mr. Girard to begin preparing the ads, and to review the ads with Mr. Childs by phone. In this way, the process will not be delayed. It will take up to six weeks for all the ads to appear in various publications and then several more weeks to allow for response time from prospective candidates. During this period Mr. Childs will be able to meet with Commissioners and Staff and conduct his interviews and develop parameters for the hiring process.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board direct Administrative Staff to prepare the advertisements for the County Administrator’s position, review them by phone with K. Ross Childs and distribute the ads for appropriate publication.

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The Committee considered a copy of a letter from Skandia Township to the Michigan Department of Transportation provided to Comm. Bergdahl regarding the conditions of the roads. Comm. Bergdahl pointed out that there will also be letters coming from West Branch Township, Chocolay Township and probably others. Highway U.S. 41 between M-28 and M-94 is a real mess with large pot holes that is doing damage to cars and tires.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that a letter be sent from the Committee of the Whole to our Federal and State Representatives, and the Governor’s Office, and further that the letter include an invitation to the Governor to visit the Upper Peninsula to see first hand the condition of our roads.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Bob Beams, Richmond Township, was present and pointed out that he could hear better tonight. The speaker system seems to be working. He noted there was a motel at one time in Negaunee called the Jail House, but it never did very well. Now it is called Quartz Mountain and it does pretty good business.
Mr. Beams noted that in the jail population chart distributed during the meeting shows that in 1985 the rated jail capacity was 60 with an average daily population of 47. In 1992 the rated capacity of the Marquette County Jail jumped to 80 and since 1992 the average daily population has increased from 59 to 76, in spite of Marquette County’s declining population. It appears to him this is a case of the tail dragging the dog. Why do we have to rent jail space to other agencies? It seems as though as we get more space, we get more inmates, we then need more deputies and then we need more space to house more inmates, etc., etc.

Mr. Beams also pointed out that the Marquette County Airport Manager wants a new three-year contract. If the Airport Board turns him down will Mr. Pawley come to the County Board for the new contract?

Gary Walker, Marquette County Prosecutor, was present and disputed Mr. Beams’ suggestion that because the population in Marquette County is decreasing that correspondingly crime must go down. The reverse is actually the case. The crime rate has gone up and we must put the violators somewhere. If Judges and the Prosecutor don’t send criminals to jail then it leaves a message that crime is okay. Bed space is not the only issue involved here.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Minelli thanked Frank Honkala for the information regarding the Airport.

Comm. Joseph asked what took place at the Special Meeting on Governance held by the Townships on Saturday. Chairperson Corkin reported that the Townships would like to govern the rest of the Base and let the County run the Airport. It is a complicated issue that will need new legislation. At present we are no further along than before and the same questions exist. How much will it cost and who is going to pay for it?

Comm. Bergdahl pointed out it is a credit to the Township Supervisors that at least they are trying to do something whereas the Michigan Jobs Commission isn’t doing anything.

Comm. Arsenault announced he will be in Washington D.C. next week and while there will meet with Senator Levin and Congressman Stupak. If there are any issues that Commissioners would like brought to their attention please let him know.

Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, announced there will be a meeting on March 14th at 6:00 P.M. in the Marquette County Circuit Courtroom on the final report from W.M. Montgomery and Associates regarding the Public Safety Communications Analysis (Central Dispatch).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, February 27, 1996, 6:00 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. Recommendations from the Central Dispatch Policy Board, Advisory Operations Committee, on their Reorganization.
8. Community Corrections Center: Jail Expansion.
10. Hours of Work - Hours Courthouse is Open to the Public.
11. Contract Between Marquette County and the Soil and Water Conservation District.
12. Selection of Qualified Survey Firm(s) for County Remonumentation.
13. Reciprocal Agreement Between Delta County and Marquette County for Contingency Solid Waste Planning.
14. Nominations for County Participation with UPCAP.
15. Road Commission Policy on Removing Roads or Portions of Roads from Seasonal Road Status. (Info)
16. Public park
17. Administration Reg.
18. PUBLIC COMMENT.
19. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
20. ADJOURNMENT.