The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, March 12, 1996 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 27, 1996 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Don Potvin, Marquette resident, contended that tradition may be good but the proposal for a portrait of Retired Judge Ray Jason is no appropriate. He requests that the County never fund such things again. The County Board has made several bad decisions in recent years, yet he tough decisions regarding the budget have not yet been made. The County should be funding only those things necessary for the public welfare.

The newly appointed Judge John Weber may only serve for one year. Would the County Board consider hanging a portrait should he not be elected to a full six-year term? Mr. Potvin suggested a new tradition. There are over 100 attorneys practicing law in Marquette County and if each one contributed a little bit the portrait would be paid for. Mr. Potvin placed a $10 on the podium towards a fund raising effort for Ray Jason’s portrait.

Mr. Potvin also pointed out that he paid $85 out of his pocket to have photographs taken of the old County Board and the new County Board. These photographs have yet to be hung. He believes those who serve on the County Board should also be honored. If money is the problem why the picture hasn’t been hung, Mr. Potvin volunteered to pay for that also.

Mr. Potvin also suggested that the County Board not react to the Mining Journal editorials. There must be employees of the Mining Journal who live in every Commissioner district in Marquette County for which there is an opening this fall.

Comm. Rapport, in response to comments by Mr. Potvin, pointed out that the Marquette County Courthouse is a historic place and the portrait is not gift to Ray Jason. She is gratified to learn that Commissioners as individuals will contribute towards the purchase of the portrait.

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

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

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Rapport and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period February 23, 1996, through March 7, 1996 in the amount of $51,098,015.26 be approved.

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The Committee considered a presentation by K. Ross Childs, Consultant, hired to assist in the search for a new County Administrator. Mr. Childs distributed an outline of the process for the County Board to review and follow as he made his presentation. Mr. Childs has used this process successfully for twelve years but will include or change items as Commissioners feel necessary.
Marquette County used Mr. Childs to assist them in hiring Administrator Dennis Aloia 12 years ago. At that time a consensus was reached by County Staff, County Commissioners, Department Heads, and Elected Officials on the criteria and qualifications needed for a County Administrator. Mr. Ross will hold a one on one interview with each member of the County Board to determine what qualifications they expect. He expects Marquette County to get approximately 100 applicants with about 70 of them not qualified. Mr. Childs’ hiring process is summarized as follows:

* As applications are received Randell Girard, Human Resources Director, will screen out those who are not qualified and provide a list of all applicants.
* Mr. Girard will apply a point factoring system and summarize the data for Commissioners of those applicants who are qualified.
* Interview questions will be drafted and sent back to Randell Girard for tabulation. Mr. Childs recommends a final set of 10 questions to be asked of every candidate interviewed.
* Mr. Childs provided a list of lawful and unlawful pre-employment questions.
* Commissioners complete interview rankings including tabulation of the 10 questions for discussion purposes.
* Board reaches consensus on last few applicants and then does a detailed background investigation as authorized by the applicants on the signed release information form.
* Department Heads, Elected Officials, and the public can be present during the interview process and provide Commissioners their thoughts and input on the interview.
* Should the County Board not be able to reach a consensus they then turn to their gut feelings for rankings. In the end the County Board should provide full support for whoever is hired as a new Administrator.

Commissioners asked questions and discussed the process with Mr. Childs. It was noted that all applications will come to Randell Girard, Human Resources Director, who will do the scoring. Mr. Childs will also review the applications. A complete application list will be provided to Commissioners including those deleted as unqualified. No one will be ruled out that meets the basic qualifications and the County Board will decide on how many applicants will be interviewed. April 19, 1996 is the deadline for applications. Mr. Childs expects that in less than a week after the deadline the list of all who qualify will be provided to the Board. Interviews should probably take place in the first half of May.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board follow the hiring process formatted and presented by Mr. K. Ross Childs.

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The Committee considered an update by Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, on interim administration. He is preparing a recommendation for the County Board, which will be complete by tomorrow. He believes that it is best to hire an Interim Administrator. Mr. Aloia and Staff reviewed several options which included: No Interim Administrator be appointed, an Interim Administrator from the outside be hired, a team of in-house Staff provide interim administration, or an in-house individual be appointed as an Interim Administrator. Administrator Aloia further recommended that the County Board take a maintenance position on County affairs until a new County Administrator is in place. He requested the Committee to affirm the concept of hiring an Interim Administrator and he will present the details to the Board in his recommendation.
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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 affirm the concept of having an Interim Administrator and that the County Board consider the details of Administrator Aloia’s recommendation at their next meeting.

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The Committee considered the CDBG Revolving Loan Fund Status Report from Jay Scherbenske, EDC Director. Mr. Scherbenske distributed a report showing the total cash balance as of December 31, 1995 amounts to $228,858.48. However, he noted that as of 12/31/95 no loan funds are available because of several projects being considered at K.I. Sawyer.

Mr. Scherbenske has been providing information to the State regarding CDBG Loans, some paid off, defaults, and bankruptcies. A discrepancy exists in the dollar amount the State believes the Marquette County EDC should have in its Revolving Loan Fund, however, their records do not match ours. The State needs the information from Marquette County to give them a bench mark because they have kept poor records. They are trying to identify funds that are not active and funds that are active. For example, Cliffs Ridge went bankrupt but the State still has that loan on its records. Though a Court action the dollars are gone. Mr. Scherbenske is working with the State and will reach a final figure in two weeks.

Comm. Rapport expressed concern about these reported discrepancies with no EDC audit for three years. The County Board is nervous because ultimately the County is responsible. She urged Mr. Scherbenske to clear this matter up as soon as possible, preferably before Administrator Aloia leaves.

Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, pointed out that the County EDC records are better than the State records and we soon won’t be in a situation where the State figures disagree. What is missing, however, is the information regarding our more recent loans which needs to be separated out.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board direct the EDC to provide the final CDBG report by the March 26, 1996 Committee of the Whole meeting.

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The Committee requested an update on the EDC’s efforts to change its policies to comply and follow Marquette County policies. The County Board reviewed EDC policies in August of 1995 and compared them to County policies. Several areas that differ were noted and the EDC was requested to either comply or respond to the County Board why they could not comply.

Administrator Aloia explained he received a very thick personnel policy from Mr. Scherbenske several weeks ago modeled apparently after a Six County Consortium policy. He has not had the time to review this personnel policy and frankly did not think it was the County Board’s intent for Staff to be doing an extensive review on a new personnel policy.

Mr. Scherbenske explained that the personnel policy he provided to Administrator Aloia is a computer generated policy from Six County Consortium software that has been made available to the EDC. It can then be made to fit any organization. He was acting under the directives made by his EDC Board in providing the personnel policy.

Comm. Rapport requested that the minutes showing where the EDC Board of Directors won’t follow County policy and the rationale for not doing so to be provided to Commissioners.

Comm. Joseph also suggested that if the matter does not seem to be making progress towards a resolution that the County Board set a deadline similar to what was done with the EDC audit.

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the Committee of the Whole, thanked Mr. Scherbenske for the update and looked forward to further information at the March 26, 1996 Committee of the Whole meeting.

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The Committee considered an employee incentive plan that was adopted by the Marquette County Board of Health. This incentive plan must be reviewed and approved by the County Board of Commissioners before it can go into effect.

Dr. Randall Johnson, Health Department Director, was present and pointed out that when the 1996 budget was adopted in October of 1995, a resolution clarifying the responsibilities of the Board of Health was also adopted, which included the following provision:

"In order to create incentives to improve efficiency, increase year-end fund balances, and eventually achieve department financial self-sufficiency, year-end Health Department fund balances exceeding $70,000 (if any) will be utilized in the following manner:

1. Apply 20% to an employee incentive plan designed to increase productivity, reduce costs, and improve staff morale.

2. Apply 20% to a Health Department "Reserve Fund" which would be allowed to accumulate from year to year with interest.

3. Apply 60% to the next year’s annual County appropriation to the Department."

Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, pointed out that he would rather see an incentive plan that is performance based and is not comfortable with the idea of using year-end balance as a marker of success. However, he believes it is better to attempt the Health Department’s idea for a year or two. If anyone can successfully implement such a plan, the Marquette County Health Department can. We must find more ways to get more productivity for less dollars. Administrator Aloia also recommends a cap placed on incentive bonuses to employees.

Commissioners expressed concern that this plan could be abused by employees not providing the services. Dr. Johnson contended that even though the Health Department had large fund balances in the past he believes they could have done better if such an incentive policy was in place. It would provide incentive for employees to be even more efficient. Also, the incentive policy won’t be abused because in the past the Health Department has always taken advantage of new opportunities (grants) funds. The fund balances were not the result from "not doing" things but rather attempting to do more.

Comm. Rapport added that the Health Department has a long history of providing quality services particularly to the underinsured. It would be totally out of character for Health Department Staff and Employees to abuse this incentive plan.

Administrator Aloia suggested the County Board consider this as a pilot plan. It may be that other departments that have fund balances will also want to install similar incentive plans, but many County departments don’t have the opportunity to increase revenues. This is why Administrator Aloia thought a performance based incentive plan to be best, but recommended that Commissioners give this plan a try.

Comm. Seppanen added that if the Health Department is successful in weaning itself off of the County General Fund, it will help all other County departments because more funds will be available.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Marquette County Health Department Employee Incentive Plan as presented, with a cap of $1,000 per employee, and review and report of the plan in one year.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, regarding the Health Department 1995 year-end fund balance. As per the budget hearings last year, the County Health Department was to have a $100,000 year-end fund balance available to meet your approved 1996 Health Department budget. The Health Department’s 1995 year-end balance sheet and statement of revenues and expenditures demonstrates a year-end fund balance of $100,061. It is necessary for the County Board to appropriate $100,000 from the 1995 Health Department fund balance to the 1996 Health Department budget.

Administrator Aloia further explained that the Board of Commissioners made an initial appropriation to the Health Department for 1996 of $450,000 with the understanding that an additional appropriation of $100,000 would be made from the Health Department’s 1995 fund balance. The total appropriation of $550,000 is necessary so that the Health Department can meet their state “Maintenance of Effort” requirement and therefore remain eligible for state cost sharing, cigarette tax revenues, and state support for agency infrastructure.

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 approve of the $100,000 appropriation from the 1996 Health Department fund balance to the 1996 Health Department budget.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, for an appointment to the Building Authority. The present members of the Building Authority include Gary Walker, Prosecutor, Girard Markey, Equalization Director, and Administrator Aloia. Due to Administrator Aloia’s resignation, and the time lapse before a new County Administrator is in place, he recommends that the Building Authority Position be filled on an interim basis with Ron Koshorek, Director, Resource Management Development Department.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board appoint Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Development Director to the Marquette County Building Authority.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Dennis Aloia, County Administrator, to move the Risk Management Position from 4/5 time to full-time. Administrator Aloia explained that during the budget deliberations it was hoped that Risk Management Staff would be able to complete the work in four days instead of five, however, since the budget process three things have occurred to impact that decision:

First, Administrator Aloia’s decision to resign necessitates that the position be reinstated to full-time.

Second, Kelly L’Huillier, a Unit II Secretary, who worked in the Risk Management Department has taken a position in the Treasurer’s Office. A new person will require extensive training in that Ms. L’Huillier was responsible for filing all the claims and the necessary paperwork for the department. The only one that can adequately provide the training is Cyndi Beaudry.

Third, it is Administrator Aloia’s opinion that the part-time position is not working as well as hoped. There are often decisions that have to be made on very short notice and sometimes these occur on Fridays when Ms. Beaudry is scheduled off.

Administrator Aloia recommends that position be reinstated to full-time and it will not require any additional funds from the General Fund because earlier this year Ms. Beaudry was able to negotiate a reduction in our insurance premium with MMRMA. In addition there will be approximately $3,000 saved during the period it takes to fill the Unit II Secretary Position.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board return the Risk Management position from 4/5 time to full-time.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Corkin reminded Commissioners that if they are interested in attending the Upper Peninsula Association of County Commissioners’ meeting in May in Manistique please sign up with Karla in the Administrator’s Office by April 25th.

Chairperson Corkin reported that at the K.I. Sawyer Base Conversion Authority meeting today the Townships were requested to present their Governance Plan at the April Conversion Authority meeting.

Ron Koshorek, Director, Resource Management, requested that he be allowed to come directly to the Board next week with a Subordination of Mortgage request.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Rapport and unanimously carried on a roll call vote 8 Ayes (Comm. Trudell, Bergdahl, Braamse, Joseph, Minelli, Rapport, Seppanen and Corkin) to 0 Nays that the Committee of the Whole go into closed session to discuss labor negotiations with the following bargaining units:

Senior Officer’s Association  
Sheriff’s Deputies  
Courts and Courthouse Union  
Health Department Union

Chairperson Corkin declared a 5 minute recess at 7:58 p.m. to clear commission chambers.

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CLOSED SESSION

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The Committee of the Whole came back into open session at 10:12 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli and carried 7 Ayes to 1 Nay (with Comm. Joseph voting Nay) that the Committee of the Whole recommend that the County Board ratify the settlement reached with the Senior Officer’s Association.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts  
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1996, 6:00 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 27, 1996.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
6. K. Ross Childs *(NPM)
7. Update on Interim County Administration from Dennis Aloia (NPM)
8. Update on CDBG from Jay Sherbenske, EDC Director (NPM)
9. Continuation of Employment Skills Initiative Program (Kellogg Grant) through the
Juvenile Division.
10. Health Department Employee Incentive Plan.
11. Health Department 1996 Budget Appropriation Amendment.
12. Appointment to the Building Authority.
14.
15.
16. PUBLIC COMMENT.
17. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
18. CLOSED SESSION: LABOR NEGOTIATIONS
19. ADJOURNMENT.

*(No Packet Materials)