The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, April 9, 1996 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


There were no minutes to approve.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Rebecca Zhulkie, Ishpeming, Michigan, Marquette County Health Department Dental Hygienist and Health Educator, stated that the AFSCME Local 2914 Health Department Chapter is still without a contract. They will be addressing the County Board at every meeting until they have a settled contract. They are also prepared to do media releases and informational picketing. The Health Department Negotiating Team was told that the Board of Commissioners are responsible for setting the parameters for Health Department contract negotiations. Ms. Zhulkie stated that the Board has already approved a 9.5% wage increase for other County employees over the next three years. All they are asking for is wage equity for their 21 professional staff members, which would only be an additional 6% for the professional staff. They protest contract delays, and urge the Board of Commissioners to allow Health Department management to give the Health Department Professional staff fair wage equity. She thanked the Board for their time and consideration.

Arlene Hill, MCTA, addressed the Committee regarding the request from Republic and Powell Township for appraisal assistance. She urged Commissioners to support Powell Township at this time.

Chairperson Corkin asked permission to clarify a point to the Health Department employees. He stated that the Board of Commissioners is not involved in negotiating specifics of a contract. As far as lack of communication, he emphasized the fact that the Board of Commissioners are always available.

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

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

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period March 22, 1996 through April 4, 1996 in the amount of $1,027,775.72 be approved.

The Committee considered a memorandum from Gerard T. Markey, Equalization Director, regarding a Ogemaw County Resolution favoring an extension of the ten day notice of assessment requirement to a 30 day notice. Mr. Markey disagrees that the time frame allotted for mailing change of assessment notices should be extended beyond ten days. He explained that if a taxpayer wished to know what may be in store for their property in the ensuing year, they can contact his department or their assessor by mid January and ascertain what the tentative ratio is for a particular class of property. The taxpayer can also obtain copies of the information used to establish the tentative ratio and conduct their own study to determine what kind of increase they may expect well before the ten day time frame.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the communication on file.
The Committee considered the Memorandum of Understanding and the Amended Agreement between the County of Marquette and the State of Michigan Department of Agriculture. These changes are necessary to extend the completion date of the Soil Survey to April 1, 1998, and provide the County with digital soil maps.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Memorandum of Understanding and the Amended Agreement between the County of Marquette and the State of Michigan Department of Agriculture.

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The Committee considered a communication from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, regarding the Airport Facility Lease Agreement. This agreement is for space the Soil Survey group is occupying in the Airport passenger terminal.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the Airport Facility Lease Agreement.

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The Committee considered a request from Republic Township for assistance with the Republic Mine tax assessment. Civil Counsel, David Payant, stated that the state statute provides that the assessment of mining properties is to be done by the state geologist. There is no provision for the County financing an appraisal of the property. He further explained that since the state geologist has the sole authority to do the appraisal, the County would have to get the state geologist to agree with the results of the appraisal, if the appraisal was done by an outside expert. Civil Counsel Payant contends that for this reason it does not appear legally possible for the County to get involved. He questioned whether or not the appraisal will get done if a State geologist doesn’t do it?

Chairperson Corkin explained that the state geologist doesn’t have the staff or the money to do the appraisal.

Civil Counsel Payant indicated that one possibility is to sue the state geologist and the state government to require them to carry out their statutory duties.

Discussion continued between Commissioners and Staff. Civil Counsel Payant recommends talking to Republic Township about the possibility of trying to get the state geologist to do the appraisal. He would like to do some further legal research.

Comm. Seppanen is concerned that if the state geologist does do the appraisal, someone with expertise will have to look at what the state geologist did. He questioned whether or not the County has the mechanism to have this done. Civil Counsel explained that the mechanism would be the same one that is involved in Powell Township, that is, if there is an appeal of the assessment then the County can spend money in an appeal situation. Ron Koshorek, Interim Administrator, stated that it is not an appropriate expenditure of County dollars to do the original appraisal for tax purpose.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice to direct Civil Counsel, David Payant, to work with Republic Township and bring back a recommendation to the next Committee meeting concerning the best way to proceed with the Republic Mine Appraisal.

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The Committee considered a memo from Ron Koshorek, Director, Resource Management/Interim County Administrator, regarding a request for Appraisal Assistance from Powell Township. This is in response to the Committee request to formulate a policy and procedure to assist Powell Township with unique tax appraisal projects. The assessment responsibility should remain with the local unit of government and the County Board should become involved in only the most extraordinary circumstances, if at all.
Mr. Koshorek recommends that the County Board agree to participate financially in the appraisal of the Huron Mountain Club property in proportion to the amount of non-homestead tax levied by the County. In the case of Powell Township, 20.78%. There is an estimate of $50,000 for the entire project. Participation should be contingent upon the other taxing jurisdictions agreeing to share in the expenses. Mr. Koshorek further recommends that the County request Powell Township to submit a budget for the work and ask them to approach the other taxing entities. When the County actually makes an appropriation to fund their share, the County should pay the applicable percentage of each invoice when submitted by the Township.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and carried by voice vote 9 Ayes to 1 Nay (with Comm. Joseph voting Nay) that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board concur with the recommendation from Ron Koshorek, Interim Administrator, and agree to participate financially in the appraisal of the Huron Mountain Club property in Powell Township, contingent upon the other taxing jurisdictions agreeing to share in the expenses.

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The Committee considered a request from David J. Roberts, Marquette County Clerk for a half-time Court Clerk position in the County Clerk’s Office. One full-time Court Clerk position was eliminated during the 1996 budget process. The following factors support the addition of a half-time Court Clerk: Personal Protection Orders (PPO); In Pro Per Divorces; Circuit Court Trials; 1996 Elections; and the newly added function in the County Clerk’s Office - Passports. These are just a few functions in the Clerk's Office, but ones that require much more assistance.

In the past the County Board has used the ability to raise funds as a criteria to reinstate or add new positions to departments. Revenue will be generated to reinstate this position part-time as follows: The application fee is $10.00 per passport - will generate $5,000.00 for the rest of 1996; Certified copies of vital records will increase from $7/3 to $8/3 - will provide a minimum of $4,000.00 in revenue; In pro per divorce packets will increase from $10.00 (with children) to $30.00, and $5.00 (without children) to $20.00 - will generate a minimum of $2,500.00.

In summary, the County Clerk’s Office needs a part-time Court Clerk and will generate the funds to cover the expense with new revenue.

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 approve the request for a half-time Court Clerk position in the County Clerk’s Office.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Rebecca Zhulkie, Ishpeming, Michigan, asked if the Board would meet with the AFSCME Chapter Chair and a Staff Representative. Chairperson Corkin stated that the County Board does not get involved directly with any negotiations.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chairperson Corkin announced that on Saturday, April 13, 1996 at 8:15 a.m., Representative Stupak will be at Wahlstrom’s Restaurant to discuss County issues, and urged all elected officials and other interested citizens to attend.
It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried on a roll call vote 10 Ayes (Comm. Seppanen, Angeli, Arsenault, Bergdahl, Braamse, Joseph, Minelli, Rapport, Trudell and Corkin) to 0 Nays that the Committee of the Whole go into closed session to discuss pending litigation RE: Carlson V. County, Sheriff’s Dept., Grasso, Small (lawsuit and worker’s compensation); Waarala V. County; Maki V. Alger/-Marquette CMH Board; County, et al; Sundberg V. Giggs V. Sundberg and Menard; Melear V. Sheriff, et al; Rochon V. County; Brandon V. Walker and County of Marquette; Aho V. Marquette County Medical Care Facility; Wirtanen V. County of Marquette.

Chairperson Corkin declared a brief recess to clear Commission Chambers.

CLOSED SESSION

The Committee came back into Open Session. No action was taken as a result of the Closed Session.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie M. Branam
Deputy County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1996, 6:00 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855

1. ROLL CALL.
2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: NONE.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
6. Informational Item from Gerard Markey, Equalization Director, regarding the Ogemaw County Resolution.
8. Soil Survey Lease.
10. Request for Half-Time Court Clerk in the County Clerk’s Office.

12.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT.
14. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
15. CLOSED SESSION:
   RE: Carlson v. County, Sheriff’s Dept., Grasso, Small
      (lawsuit and worker’s compensation)
      Waarala v. County
      Maki v. Alger/Marquette CMH Board; County, et al.
      Sundberg v. Giggs v. Sundberg and Menard
      Rochon v. County
      Brandon v. Walker and County of Marquette
      Aho v. Marquette County Medical Care Facility
      Wirtanan v. County of Marquette

16. ADJOURNMENT.

HAPPY EASTER!!