The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, September 10, 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 August 26, 1996 Departmental Budget Hearing and the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on August 27, 1996 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Jim Sodergren, Marquette County Treasurer, stated that he does not support establishing a Renaissance Zone at KI Sawyer. It is not fair to the rest of the taxpayers of Marquette County.

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

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: 14) A Request to the Family Independence Agency (formerly Social Services Board) for Their Position on the A&L Recycling Project and Item 15) A Discussion of Air Fares from the Marquette County Airport.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period August 23, 1996, through September 5, 1996 in the amount of $941,990.54 be approved.

The Committee considered the County Jail Inspection Report from the Michigan Department of Corrections. The inspection is conducted to determine if the Marquette County Jail is operating in compliance with State Administrative Rule requirements. Lt. Ernie Grasso, Jail Administrator, was present and explained that this was a very thorough inspection conducted by Correction Facility Specialists. A number of areas were cited for minor violations but overall the inspection was a very good one. The Sheriff’s Department has documented the corrective action that will take place for the Department of Corrections. One area was that broncans and other items were being stored in the security garage. These items could be used as weapons by inmates. The Sheriff’s Department is working with the Facilities Department for alternative storage.

Chairperson Corkin is appreciative of the Sheriff’s Department response to the recommendations by the Michigan Department of Corrections on all reports including this one. The Marquette County Jail has had a very sterling record over the years.

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

The Committee considered a Renaissance Zone and Governance as they relate to KI Sawyer. Barry Bahrman, West Branch Township Supervisor, explained that the Base Conversion Authority urges the County Board to apply for a Renaissance Zone at KI Sawyer, however, it may not be a good fit for West Branch Township in that the property under their jurisdiction is residential. They need more answers and just don’t want to say yes or no as yet.

Comm. Minelli pointed out that Dave Gillis did an excellent job with the “Final Report on Future Service Costs and Revenue Projections” at KI Sawyer. The report shows a $1.6 million gap between revenues and costs every year for the next 15 years. Comm. Minelli suggested that the County Administrator provide a review and recommendation on the financial impact of a Renaissance Zone at KI Sawyer. It may be possible that a Renaissance Zone would fit somewhere else in Marquette County, perhaps the present County Airport or another Township or City may be interested in applying.
Chairperson Corkin noted that four Commissioners and the County Administrator attended a special meeting last Thursday at Northern Michigan University regarding these issues and requested that each Commissioner give his comments.

Comm. Angeli sensed that the Townships were concerned that the County was taking too much of the land at KI Sawyer to operate the Airport. The Townships would rather have the County participate in the whole base governance. An assistant from the Attorney General’s office says that a governance agreement can be drafted so that the County has less liability and also get more representation.

Comm. Bergdahl noted the maps show the golf course is included in the County land acquisition because we need the air space. The County should not run the golf course.

Comm. Minelli agreed with Commissioners Angeli and Bergdahl, however, the Townships are willing to work with the County on the matter. Another meeting is scheduled at Northern Michigan University for this coming Thursday night.

Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, displayed a map of the proposed lands that the County applied for to run the Airport. Staff’s basic premise was that we need a clean and secure air space to keep crash hazards out of the runway approach areas. Also, there is a cluster of buildings, similar to an industrial park, that the County wishes to procure. These buildings are related to running the Airport. It is important that this conveyance moves forward because four of the buildings will be used for the AMR Project. The air field is not as important as are the buildings.

Comm. Seppanen explained that the Township Supervisors laid out their concerns very well, however, we need a unified coalition to direct the governing activity. County Staff followed the County Board directions to make a viable airport. Now we are at the next level of discussions and the quicker we move the less the cost in the long run. With that in mind, we must move forward for the acquisition of the land. It is important that the County have a viable airport and the operational costs be kept the same as the present airport. The Assistant Attorney General says we can do this. The liability issues must be addressed clearly. There is ambiguity in the present language. The control of the Airport at KI Sawyer must remain in the County hands.

Steven Powers, County Administrator, has spent the last week going over financial numbers. We need a unified approach to govern KI Sawyer regardless of what group or entity finally is in control. County Staff did a good job protecting the County’s interests and the boundaries presented were to protect the Airport and allow the requirements to be met to move AMR to KI Sawyer. The question now is does the County Board want to be part of the whole base? Or just have a good airport and assist in the AMR Project? You may want to become a part of the whole base but we don’t have enough information yet to make that decision. Mr. Powers will do his best to compile the necessary information during the next week because the financial impact is the critical part of the information necessary for the Board to make its decision.

Comm. Corkin pointed out that the decision must be based on realistic figures. Presently there is a $1.6/$1.7 million gap between revenues and costs.

Comm. Minelli thought that if the Townships pull out of the governance because of the property takes to operate the Airport then does the County get all of the Airport? Can the County afford it?

Comm. Joseph asked if we don’t have a governance agreement, what happens?

Joan Ziegler, Office of Economic Adjustment, U.S. Department of Commerce, was present and explained that their relationship has been with the Base Conversion Authority and the Michigan Jobs Commission. She is somewhat confused over the governance issue. The operation of the Airport and governance are not separate issues in her mind. If the County makes a decision to move the Airport and procures the property, by default the property left restricts the Townships. Once the prime buildings are taken out it will be very difficult for the Townships. Once a decision is made regarding governance and the Townships agree, then that’s it. These are not two separate issues.
Ms. Ziegler then explained the differences between the two conveyances. An FAA conveyance is only for Airport operations and the property must remain in public ownership. An EDC conveyance enables the Department of Defense to convey the property for less than market value and the local government can sell these properties. The current grant relationship is with the Michigan Jobs Commission. Normally a caretaker agreement for airport closures lasts only one year. The current grant runs through March of 1997 so there is a transitional period between September 30, 1996 and March of 1997, however, a new grant could begin on April 1, 1997.

If there is no governance then the Air Force may put the land up for sale. The Air Force would be liable until the land is conveyed to a new owner. If a successor group makes a decision on what to do with KI Sawyer, then it should go to Washington D.C. Right now the Air Force is working with the State of Michigan without knowing who is ultimately take over KI Sawyer. If the County Board can demonstrate a need perhaps the Caretaker Grant Agreement can be extended over say a 10 year period.

Ms. Ziegler further noted that a Renaissance Zone could impact revenues. If on one hand the County asks for an extension of the Caretaker Agreement and then on the other hand reduce revenues by applying for a Renaissance Zone, this must be justified as part of the application a business plan. A Renaissance Zone may provide an incentive for businesses to locate at KI Sawyer.

Chairperson Corkin thanked Joan Ziegler for her comments. She made the options much clearer for County Commissioners.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board authorize the Administrator to do a financial impact analysis of governance and a Renaissance Zone as they relate to KI Sawyer and meet the time line as provided in the Memorandum of Understanding with AMR.

* * * * *

The Committee considered a recommendation from George Wright, Facilities Manager, to award the Courthouse Sidewalk Replacement Project bid. Mr. Wright was present and explained that the Sidewalk Replacement is an approved 1996 CIP project to replace deteriorated portions of the sidewalk and steps around the Courthouse grounds. Staff has been patching these areas each spring for many years. The project was advertised for bids with two local contractors responding: Menze Construction Company, Inc. and Arrow Construction. Staff recommendation is to award the project to the low bidder Menze Construction Company for the amount of $27,864 which is under the $30,000 budgeted to replace the sidewalks and steps.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board award the Sidewalk Replacement Project to Menze Construction Company for the amount of $27,864.

* * * * *

The Committee considered a memo from James F. Sodergen, Marquette County Treasurer, regarding an underground mine inventory. Mr. Sodergen was present and explained that a data base system has been developed and an initial appropriation of $200,000 to Michigan Technological University by the DNR to initiate a data base system of underground maps. Most of the information digitized thus far has been west of Marquette County. Mr. Sodergen views this a worthy project but only a first small step in solving the many problems associated with underground mining in the Upper Peninsula. Hopefully additional funds can be made so that the inventory in Marquette County can also be completed. Once the inventory is completed more funding would be necessary to solve cleanup problems.

Jim Sodergen further noted that in 1978 he initiated an inventory of underground mines in Marquette County. Henry Scarffe, Marquette County Mine Inspector at the time, had much of this information in his head. The Planning Commission did a good job and he believes it would be wise to share this information with Michigan Tech. Also, before the use of diamond drills, test pits were dug which were not included as part of the inventory. We need a system like Minnesota where they established an "Iron Range Resource and Rehabilitation Board" to oversee the proper closing
of mines, to provide funds for iron ore related problems. Cooperation is needed from CCI for all their underground maps, however, they are not responsible for all the mines in Marquette County. We should also have a 50 cents a ton royalty tax system in place.

Chairperson Corkin pointed out that County Staff attended a hearing in Lansing opposing the rescinding of the Mine Reclamation Act. Cleveland-Cliffs is also opposed to rescinding the Mine Reclamation Act. Representative Prusi is trying to procure funding in the State’s 1997 CIP Budget for continuing work on the underground mine inventory.

It was moved by Comm. Braamse, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send Mr. Sodergren’s letter to Rep. Prusi.

* * * * *

The Committee considered a letter from Robert S. Menard, Engineer/Manager, Marquette County Road Commission regarding the grant application under the MDOT TEDF Category A Program. The Road Commission supports the Category A Application, however, does not have matching funds for an EDA Grant to improve roads at KI Sawyer. Mr. Menard is concerned that because they cannot afford to use their very limited funding sources to improve roads at the base, it may jeopardize either the Category A or the EDA Grant Applications.

Comm. Joseph contended that if the Road Commission cannot get the necessary funds or the buildings necessary to maintain the roads on KI Sawyer, they don’t want to be there.

Comm. Arsenault is attending a meeting next Monday regarding this issue and will report to the Board next Tuesday.

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 direct Jay Scherbenske, EDC Director, to follow through on the matter with Robert Menard, Engineer/Manager Road Commission and Dave Gillis, CUPPAD.

* * * * *

The Committee considered a memo from J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Airport Board, regarding the barrier free bathroom project at the General Aviation Terminal. The Airport Board understands the rational behind not completing the barrier free bathroom at the General Aviation Terminal because the potential move to KI Sawyer. The project has been delayed for two years, however that is the time frame established by the American Disabilities Act for compliance. It may be several more years before the County moves the airport so a decision must be made as to whether to remodel the bathrooms, for which the money is already budgeted, or to seek a waiver.

Comm. Rapport has information regarding the American Disabilities Act that she presented to the Prosecutor to determine whether or not the County may apply for a waiver and not spend the $18,000. It was noted by several Commissioners that even if the County moves the Airport, the bathroom will most likely be required to meet ADA standards depending upon its reuse.

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 proceed with the work to make the bathrooms barrier free at the General Aviation Terminal unless a waiver can be procured for the next two years.

* * * * *

The Committee considered a memo from J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Airport Board, regarding the move of the County Airport to KI Sawyer. The Airport Board believes the move will require additional administrative help in the office of the Airport Manager. During this period the Airport Manager and the Marquette County Airport Board will be planning the phase out of the present Airport, and also planning for a new Airport at KI Sawyer and its daily operation. The Airport Board cannot identify the cost at this time, however the County Board must realize the requirement for additional help exists.

Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, was present and noted that a 1997 budget for KI Sawyer does not exist. We must do many administrative things to accommodate the AMR Project and the Airport move, and the Airport secretary is buried in work.
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  COUNTY OF MARQUETTE  SEPTEMBER 10, 1996

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board direct Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, to quantify and develop cost figures on additional administrative requirements for the County Airport move to KI Sawyer.  

* * * * * 

The Committee considered a memo from J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Airport Board, regarding the Greiner Airport Reuse Study. The Airport Board would appreciate having copies of the Reuse Study for each of its members. The Airport Manager has a copy but members of the Board do not. It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board direct staff to photocopy the Greiner Airport Reuse Study for members of the County Airport Board.

* * * * * 

The Committee considered a letter to Jon Gilbert, Airport District Office, FAA, from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, regarding the PFC revenues. Marquette County was granted an extension until September 1, 1996 which was necessary to complete the process of determining whether to relocate this Airport to KI Sawyer. It has taken longer than projected and Mr. Pawley requested that a one-year time extension for submittal of the application to used the collected PFC revenues be granted until September 1, 1997. It was moved by Comm. Arsenaught second by Comm. Minelli and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the communication on file.

* * * * * 

The Committee considered the A&L Recycling Project Appeal. Civil Counsel David Payant reported that he has yet to receive the Marquette County Medical Care Facility’s position on the A&L Recycling Project. This is needed to decide whether or not the County should proceed with an appeal. He spoke with Caroline Bridges, Chairperson of the Family Independence Agency Board and she is agreeable to meet with the County Board on the matter in the future.

Comm. Trudell pointed out that the Family Independence Agency must schedule a meeting in order to approve their official position on the A&L Recycling Project. Their regularly scheduled meeting is not until September 27th so they will have to schedule a special meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board request the Marquette County Medical Care Facility’s position on the A&L Recycling Project so it can decide either to proceed with the appeal or drop the matter.

* * * * * 

The Committee considered information from Comm. Rapport regarding air fares out of the Marquette County Airport. Comm. Rapport reported that she is overwhelmed by the air fares from Marquette to Chicago. They are $471 for a seven day advance purchase while Great Lakes charges $393 for 21 day advance. Formerly they ranged from $141 to $183 with a special $99 fare on a certain day.

Comm. Rapport further reported Northwest Airlines charges $472 from Marquette to Detroit for a seven day advance ticket purchase and $370 for a 14 day ticket purchase. Escanaba currently is only $20 less.

There are other problems besides the air fares, including the number of spaces available and the timing of the flights. There was once a committee that met with the airlines made of travel agents, the Marquette Ambassadors, Comm. Angeli, and the Airport Manager. Comm. Rapport suggested that they meet again to discuss this issue.

Comm. Angeli said that a business group started last week to work on this matter.

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 Air Fare Committee be reformed to meet with the Airlines to discuss the air fares and other related matters.

* * * * * 

5
Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Kris Hough, 1076 Suncliffe Drive, expressed concern about the time frame for the Suncliffe Subdivision soil study. Winter is only weeks away and already one homeowner has declared bankruptcy and moved out of the subdivision.

The Committee considered a proposal for Geotechnical Services from Anthony R. Palowski, P.E., Ishpeming, to study the soils and ground water and take soil borings around the Suncliffe Subdivision to make recommendations for remediation of the soil/ground water related problems. Civil Counsel Payant received a quote for this project to cost approximately $1,500 which could be paid for out of the Resource Management Department Budget. County policy requires two more bid quotations, however, home owners in Suncliffe would be satisfied with hiring Mr. Palowski and are under serious time constraints to get this work done before winter.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board waive the County’s bidding policy and awarded the bid for Geotechnical Services, Suncliffe Subdivision soil/water problem study to Anthony R. Palowski, P.E., Consulting Geotechnical Engineer.

* * * * * *

Barry Bahrman, West Branch Township Supervisor has urged the County Board of Commissioners to attend the meeting Thursday at Northern Michigan University and bring any specifics they are concerned about to the meeting. The position of the Townships is that if the County takes what they need at the Airport the Townships are not going to stonewall the governance issue but will rather support the County Board’s position.

The Committee considered a recommendation from Civil Counsel David Payant that they post their meeting with the Lake Superior Jobs Coalition regarding KI Sawyer. He pointed out that if the County Board meets with less than a quorum with the intent to avoid public discussion on a matter, it still may be considered a violation of the Open Meetings Act. If the County Board posts the meeting with the Lake Superior Jobs Coalition then all 10 Commissioners could attend if they so desire.

Barry Bahrman, West Branch Township, was present and explained that under advice from the Attorney Generals Office, West Branch Township posted their attendance at the Lake Superior Job Coalition meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Angeli, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board post Thursday’s meeting with the Lake Superior Jobs Coalition at Northern Michigan University and further, Direct Civil Counsel Payant to speak to Father Cappo, Chairperson of the Lake Superior Jobs Coalition.

* * * * * *

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]
David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 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. Renaissance Zone.
9. Recommendation from George Wright, Facilities Manager, to Award Courthouse Sidewalk Replacement Project.
10. Memo from James F. Sodergren, Marquette County Treasurer, regarding Underground Mine Inventory.
11. Communications regarding EDA Grant (County Road Commission Concerns).
12. Memo from the Marquette County Airport Board regarding 1) Barrier Free Bathroom General Aviation Terminal; 2) Marquette County Airport Move to KI Sawyer; and 3) Greiner Airport Reuse Study.
13. Communication from the Marquette County Airport Board regarding PFC Revenues.
14. [Content not legible]
15. [Content not legible]
16. PUBLIC COMMENT.
17. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
18. ADJOURNMENT.