The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, September 24, 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. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on September 10, 1996 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Henry DeGroot, Wells Township Supervisor, was present and requested to speak under Item 15 regarding the County Road weight restrictions in Wells Township.

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

It was moved by Comm. Seppaney, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following changes: Item 11a be added: Renaissance Zone Analysis from County Administrator Steve Powers, and Item 15: Regarding the County Road Weight Restriction in Wells Township be moved up to Item 5a.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period September 6, 1996, through September 19, 1996 in the amount of $1,642,388.57 be approved.

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The Committee considered a letter from Bill Usher, Owner of the Usher Sawmill, Wells Township, regarding weight restrictions that the Marquette County Road Commission is enforcing. By enforcing the 72,000 lb weight limit, farmers, loggers, and the Usher Sawmill will be in serious financial trouble.

Henry DeGroot, Wells Township Supervisor, was present and explained that the State of Michigan allows 80,000 lbs throughout the whole state, which is a uniform weight limit enforced in all of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Upper Peninsula Counties, except in Marquette County. All other counties ignore that 72,000 lb weight limit and allow the 80,000 lbs because it is a standard set by the State of Michigan. Marquette County used to also ignore it, but now the new superintendent of the Road Commission is imposing the 72,000 lbs. Wisconsin truckers are charging Wells Township farmers for a full load of 80,000 lbs, but can only haul 72,000 lbs, which is a substantial loss of revenue for several hundreds loads.

The Road Commission suggested that the tandem-tandems add an additional axe, or else the truckers may pay a cash bond of $500,000.00 to cover any damages caused to the roads. Truckers cannot afford such cash bonds, and more axles is not necessarily the answer. Logging trucks with more axles can haul 180,000 lbs, but will do more damage to the roads than the 80,000 lb trucks. Mr. DeGroot requested that the County Board support Wells Township in their efforts to get the Road Commission to lift the 72,000 lb weight restriction and allow 80,000 lb tandem-tandems on County Road 426 and MSG in Wells Township. This is only 12 miles of road.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Minelli, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board direct the Chair to send a letter to the Road Commission asking them to consider changing the policy and act on the matter at the very next Road Commission Meeting.

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The Committee considered the Annual Overall Economic Development Program Report from the CUPPAPD Regional Commission. A letter from David C. Gillis, Executive Director, explained that each year the CUPPAPD Regional Commission submits certain documentation to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain the eligibility to receive EDA funds. Each year they receive concurrence of the document option from each of the county boards. CUPPAPD is requesting that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners' concur with the preparation of the Annual OEDP Report by adopting the appropriate resolution.

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 adopt the resolution of the approval of concurrence of the 1995 Annual OEDP Report.

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The Committee considered a contract between the County of Marquette (Project MCTV) and Danny L. Peterson, Rural Justice Management Services to Provide Evaluation Services, which require County Board approval. Mr. Peterson has been retained to provide evaluation services for the portion of Project MCTV grant which was approved in June, and is funded by the Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP). The upper limit specified in the contract is $1,600.00, which has been budgeted in the grant, and is 100% funded through the grant.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the contract between the County of Marquette (Project MCTV) and Danny L. Peterson.

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The Committee considered the FY 1997 Local Emergency Management Work Agreement proposed for Marquette County and prepared by Michael Zorza, County Emergency Program Manager. This agreement is an administrative tool designed to provide a summary of projects and activities that the County intends to carry out during 1997 to further enhance emergency services and community safety. The local work agreement requires the approval and signature of the Chairperson of the County Board prior to forwarding the document to the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management Division.

It was moved by Comm. Minelli, seconded by Comm. Trudell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the FY 1997 Local Emergency Management Work Agreement as proposed.

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The Committee considered a memo from Gary Yoder, Finance Manager, regarding adjustments to the 1997 budget. Mr. Yoder was present and explained that the 1997 budget has already been recommended for adoption as submitted by the Interim County Administrator. He has been maintaining a short list of minor changes to be made to the budget, and was assuming they would be made during the mid-year budget review.

However, with the news that the Sheriff's Department no longer has the K.I.Sawyer security contract, Mr. Yoder believes the 1997 budget should be adjusted prior to its adoption on the 8th of October. The budget currently contains almost $250,000 for this activity, which should be removed. Adjusting this amount, along with some fine tuning would bring the 1997 General Fund Budget down by $233,517, to a total of $13,254,736, and at the same time could increase the Contingency Account from $140,000 to $144,044.

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 adjust its FY 1997 budget recommendation to show General Fund Revenues and Expenditures balanced at $13,254,736.

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The Committee considered a letter from Greg Nicholas, Community Development Services, Michigan Jobs Commission, regarding Marquette County’s notice of intent to apply for an Economic Development Implementation Grant under the 1996 Michigan Community Development Block Grant Program. Based upon the information contained in the Notice of Intent the project appears to warrant further review and evaluation, and therefore Marquette County is invited to submit a full economic development application for 1.4 million dollars for the AMR infrastructure project at K.I.Sawyer.

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 adopt the resolution for the AMR Community Development Block Grant application and hold a public hearing at the October 1, 1996 County Board meeting, and authorize the Chairperson to sign the necessary documentation prepared by the CUPFAD Regional Commission.

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The Committee considered an interlocal agreement to create a Local Reuse Authority (LRA) at K.I.Sawyer. Civil Counsel, David Payant, distributed a copy of the "Interlocal Agreement Creating Planning and Redevelopment Entity Known as the Central Upper Peninsula Sawyer Redevelopment Authority Pursuant to the Provisions of the Urban Cooperation Act of 1967 of the State of Michigan (PA 7 of 1967), as Amended."

Civil Counsel Payant summarized the agreement as follows: The Agreement sets up a Local Reuse Authority and provides for a successor organization, which is already being developed. This would be a separate authority. By establishing this separate authority several things can be accomplished. The LRA can do the necessary studies required, secure grants, manage the property, and eventually create a business plan for base reuse. The LRA however, cannot acquire property, nor commit to long term contracts, nor acquire debt without the written approval of all of the townships and the County. Civil Counsel Payant will bring the final document to the County Board meeting next week for their consideration. All that is needed at this time is that the Committee of the Whole recommend that the County Board form a Local Reuse Authority.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board become part of the agreement to form a Local Reuse Authority and consider the final document at the October 1, 1996 County Board Meeting.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from Steve Powers, County Administrator, regarding the establishment of a Renaissance Zone. Mr. Powers was present and explained that while an application could be prepared in time to meet the September 30, 1996 deadline, he believes that the lack of a business and development plan for the Base could jeopardize the LRA success in gaining federal support for operations. The energy and time that would be needed to prepare a Renaissance Zone Application would be better spent by the EDC and others in developing a strategy for the County. Administrator Powers recommends that Marquette County not apply for a Renaissance Zone status.

Several Commissioners noted that the gap between the operational costs and revenues at KI Sawyer is approximately $1.6 million. Marquette County is in the process of applying for federal and state grants to fill that gap so it makes no sense to widen that gap by eliminating any tax revenue that may be available. What is really needed is an extended caretaker agreement.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Trudell and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole direct Staff to work with the LRA to negotiate with the federal and state governments to address the funding shortfalls at KI Sawyer with an extended caretaker agreement.

Chairperson Corkin pointed out that a request was sent two weeks ago to the Townships and Cities of Marquette County to determine if there was any interest in applying for a Renaissance Zone. No answer has been received. Chairperson Corkin thanked Administrator Powers for the work that he has done in a short period of time.
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It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Trudell and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole concur with Mr. Powers' recommendation and not apply for a Renaissance Zone.

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The Committee considered a previous recommendation from the Committee of the Whole that the County Board proceed with work to make the bathrooms barrier free at the General Aviation Terminal, Marquette County Airport, unless a waiver can be procured for the next two years. Civil Counsel, David Payant, distributed a review of the American Disabilities Act and explained that even though there is an undue hardship provision in the American Disabilities Act, it is his opinion that the Marquette County Airport would not qualify. The overall Airport budget is approximately one million dollars, and the bathroom alteration expenses are about $18,000.

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 proceed with the work to make the bathroom barrier free at the General Aviation Terminal, Marquette County Airport.

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The Committee considered a letter from J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Airport Board, and Susan Opolka, Business Agent, Teamsters Local Union 328, regarding the relocation of union employees. The union concern is that during the relocation process and the hiring of temporary employees that some bargaining unit jobs may be lost.

Civil Counsel Payant pointed out that the County employees will move under the same contract provisions that they have at the present Airport. Several Commissioners noted it is the intent of the County Board to honor the contract.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, added that the County Airport and Marquette County will comply with the contract, and staffing will be many of the issues that will have to be discussed during the relocation process. Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, does not anticipate moving the County Airport employees for 1-1/2 to 2 years.

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 send a letter to the bargaining unit at the Marquette County Airport with the assurance that it is not the intent of the County Board to change the bargaining agreement in any way, and that all County employees will eventually be moved to the new Airport. The move will not be a reason to cut jobs or to privatize services.

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The Committee considered meeting schedules for October and November, 1996 from David Roberts, Marquette County Clerk. October 1996 is a 5-Tuesday month, and the first Tuesday in November is Election Night. Clerk Roberts suggests that the County Board change their schedule and move the Regular Board Meeting to October 29, 1996 and schedule no Board meeting on November 5, 1996.

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 amend its meeting schedule for October and November, 1996 by moving its November 5, 1996 Regular Meeting to October 29, 1996.

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

Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, distributed an announcement regarding a meeting with the FAA on the relocation of the County Airport to KI Sawyer. The FAA plans to be in Marquette on September 26th and 27th to provide information on the process of relocating. The specific purpose of this meeting is to provide the County with detailed information on specific items that have to be accomplished in the relocation effort. The meeting place and time on September 27th has yet to be established but an announcement will be forthcoming in the next couple of days.
Comm. Bergdahl reported he took a tour of the Marquette County road system. The County Road Commission has opened several new sand and gravel pits. For the amount of dollars they have to work the Road Commission is doing a good job. They did a nice job on the Northwoods Road Project and County Road 545.

Comm. Joseph passed along thanks from the Ishpeming City Council for the County Board’s decision to drop the appeal of the A&L Recycling Project.

Chairperson Corkin pointed out that the soil erosion and drain code issue will have to be monitored by the County’s Legislative Committee. State Legislation may attempt to shift responsibilities for these matters back to the local units of government.

Chairperson Corkin also announced that Community Mental Health met with Luce County last Thursday regarding the consolidation of the Marquette-Alger and Luce County Mental Health Services. A decision should be made on the consolidation by the first of the year. From the proceedings so far, the consolidation looks doable and all three counties are now investigating the costs involved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996
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 SEPTEMBER 10, 1996.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
6. Annual Request from CUPPAD Regional Commission for Marquette County Board
   Concurrence and Approval of the 1995 OEDP Report.
7. Contract between County of Marquette (Project MCTV) and Danny L. Peterson,
   Rural Justice Management Services to Provide Evaluation Services.
8. Proposed FY 1997 Local Emergency Management Agreement from Mike Zorza,
   Emergency Program Manager.
10. Invitation to Submit a Full Economic Development Application for $1.4 million for
    the AMR Infrastructure Project from the Michigan Jobs Commission.
11. Agreement to Establish a Local Reuse Authority for KI Sawyer.
12. Recommendation to Make the Bathrooms Barrier Free at the General Aviation
    Terminal, County Airport.
13. Memo from Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, regarding Meeting with FAA on Relocation
    to KI Sawyer.
14. Memo from J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Airport Board, and Susan
    Opolka, Business Agent, Teamsters Local 328, regarding Relocation of Union
    Employees to KI Sawyer.
15. Letter of Concern from Bill Usher, Owner of the Usher Sawmill, Wells Township,
    regarding County Road Weight Restrictions.

19. PUBLIC COMMENT.
20. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
21. ADJOURNMENT.