The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, November 26, 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 November 12, 1996 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.
Larry Coehoorn, Local Community Advocate for KI Sawyer, requested to speak during the discussion on Item 12.
There being no further public comment, Chairperson Corkin closed this portion of the meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Trudell, seconded by Comm. Rapport and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: Item 13) EDC Audit Report.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Braamse and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period November 8, 1996, through November 21, 1996 in the amount of $1,135,012.62 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin read a letter of support written on behalf of NICE Community Schools to the State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Land and Water Management Division. The letter is supporting the Application for a Wet Land Fill Permit for construction of their new K-8 school.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Joseph and unanimously carried by voice vote that the letter be approved by the Committee and forwarded to the Michigan DEQ.

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The Committee considered contracting with American Microwave for tower space at Suicide Hill. Lt. Joe Van Oosterhout, MSP, was present to explain that the Central Dispatch Policy Board has recommended moving the County’s dispatch equipment to the American Microwave Tower. Four options were considered but Option 1, American Microwave (with combiner) would cost $47,627 over three years. Lt. Van Oosterhout explained that American Microwave is very amenable to work with and has agreed with whatever the County has requested. The contract would also allow the County to do maintenance work at the site. The new equipment provided is consistent with the strategic plan for providing Central Dispatch services.

Option 4 may be the cheapest at $39,620 but Lt. Van Oosterhout pointed out that no new equipment is provided in Option 4. Option 1 provides for $5,575 in new equipment which brings the cost differential down to only $2,700 or $67 per month for three years.

The contract has been given both legal and administrative review.

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 contract with American Microwave for tower space at Suicide Hill as provided in Option 1 (with combiner), total cost for three years $47,627, funds to come from the Central Dispatch fund.

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The Committee considered a request from Sheriff Elect Michael Lovelace to attend a Michigan Sheriff’s Association training session for two weeks, December 2-6, 1996 and December 9-13, 1996 in Lansing, Michigan. Sheriff Elect Lovelace was present and indicated that in discussions with members of the Michigan Sheriff’s Association he learned the New Sheriff School conducted by the Michigan Sheriff’s Association is an excellent opportunity to meet with other Michigan Sheriffs and receive a broad base education on the duties and responsibilities in the Office of Sheriff. The training program is funded on a grant to the Ionia County Sheriff’s Department from the Michigan Justice Training Commission and the majority of all costs are covered including $45 per night for room (actual cost is $50 per night) and also some breakfast and lunches. Those attending are responsible for their own travel to and from Lansing and some of the meal and room expenses. Sheriff Elect Lovelace will be staying in Lansing with a relative through the weekend so travel expenses will not be required for December 7th or 8th.

County Administrator Steve Powers has met with Sheriff Elect Lovelace and agrees that the training would be very beneficial and indicated that travel funds are available from the KI Sawyer Contract by way of a budget transfer.

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 provide the travel expenses for Sheriff Elect Michael Lovelace to attend the New Sheriff Training Session in Lansing, Michigan, funds to come from the KI Sawyer Contract.

Comm. Arsenault also thought it appropriate that Sheriff Elect Lovelace be compensated for the two weeks he attend the Sheriff School at the salary that he will receive as Marquette County Sheriff if it is legal to do so. Sheriff Elect Lovelace must take two weeks off from his job at NMU without pay in order to attend the Sheriff School. Civil Counsel Payant could not answer immediately, however, will look into the matter before the next week’s County Board meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend that the County Board compensate Sheriff Elect Lovelace for the two weeks attendance at the New Sheriff School at the salary he would receive as the newly elected Marquette County Sheriff contingent upon legal review.

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Civil Counsel David Payant provided a report on Suncliffe Subdivision, Lot 3 and Lots 5 through 11. The County hired Anthony Pawlowski, P.E., who took soil samples adjacent to all of the homes. The auger borings show that there is one to two feet of inorganic soil on top of peat next to the footings of some of the residences, but this would not have appeared to the inspector that the home was being constructed over peat since either the Contractor or the Excavator had covered the peat with inorganic soil. In his opinion Marquette County is not liable for the presence of organic soils underneath these homes.

It is also the opinion of Engineer Pawlowski that water damage suffered in several homes appears to be due to hydrostatic pressure. The water problems were caused by an unusual amount of winter snowfall resulting in a high spring water table. It should be noted that the homes went through the winter of 94-95 without serious difficulty, however, the winter of 95-96 had an enormous snowfall and a very rapid spring meltdown with flooding problems occurring.

There are also a number of drainage changes in the subdivision due to road construction in various places and a storm sewer was blocked down stream from the southern part of the subdivision. Because of the changes in the drainage in and around the subdivision Civil Counsel Payant contended that Marquette County does not have any liability for surface water runoff problems.

Civil Counsel Payant suggests that another meeting be held with the home owners which should include the Drain Commissioner, Road Commission, and County Staff.

Chris Hough, a resident in Suncliffe Subdivision, thanked the County Board for hiring Engineer Anthony Pawlowski. He did a very good job in investigating the Suncliffe Subdivision. Ms. Hough also thanked the Board for their efforts in supporting the residents of Suncliffe and look forward to the meeting suggested by Civil Counsel Payant.

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

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The Committee reviewed two letters to be sent to State Senator Don Koivisto and signed by Chairperson Corkin regarding Senate Bill 1136 and Senate Bill 1137. Senate Bill 1136 creates and exclusion from sales tax computation for parts and materials affixed in Michigan to aircraft transporting cargo or passengers. Senate Bill 1137 extends the Use Tax Exemption for materials and parts used in aircraft maintenance. These exemptions are needed by AMR Eagle.

On behalf of the Marquette County Board, Chairperson Corkin requested Senator Koivisto’s help in having Senate Bill 1136 and 1137 moved out of committee and adopted. Failure to achieve enactment of these legislations is a potential for cancellation of the lease between Marquette County and American Eagle.

It was moved by Comm. Rapport, seconded by Comm. Trudell and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole directly send these letters to State Senator Don Koivisto.

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The Committee considered a revised Environmental Health, Private Duty, and Dental Clinic Fee Increase Proposal from Dr. Randall M. Johnson, Health Department Director. At the November 19th meeting of the Board of Commissioners the motion to adopt a number of Health Department fee increases failed on a 5 to 5 vote. The most serious objection was the magnitude of the increase in the Environmental Health Fees. Based on that, a revised proposal now includes the phase in of environmental health fee increases over a two year period. However, none of the proposed fees are higher than the estimated full cost of performing the services.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Trudell and carried by voice vote 8 Ayes to 1 Nay (with Comm. Angeli voting Nay) that the Committee refer the revised Health Department fee increases to the January 7, 1997 County Board meeting for consideration.

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The Committee considered an EDC Audit Update and recommendation from Steve Powers, County Administrator. Mr. Powers reported that on November 22 Gary Yoder and himself met with Bill Patrick, Ken Salo, and Mark Poupore from the EDC and Paul Makela and Paul Nardi from Makela, Tountant and Hill regarding the status of the EDC audit for 1992 through 1995. Makela, Tountant and Hill will not be able to start the audit until March 1997 because of lack of a trial balance for all four years and commitments made to other clients. Other auditing firms have been contacted. Mark Poupore needs ten working days to complete a trial balance for 1992 through 1996.

Administrator Powers recommends that Mary Spratto, Accounts Processor in the Accounting Department, assist the EDC with accounting for no more that 40 hours and for no longer than December 31, 1996 in completion of the pre-audit work. This temporary loan would be beneficial for several reasons: 1) Mary would learn about the EDC revenues and expenditures, 2) The Pre-Audit Report would be completed by December 11, 1996 allowing an audit firm to begin the audit if available, and 3) The EDC would benefit from a knowledgeable, experienced accounting person. The cost of the time spent by Mary Spratto would be deducted from the County’s second half appropriation for the EDC when paid.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanan, seconded by Comm. Rapport, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the recommendation from Steve Powers, County Administrator, regarding the EDC pre-audit work assistance from the County’s Accounting Department.

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The Committee was provided a KI Sawyer Update from Steve Powers, County Administrator. Mr. Powers pointed out that all the agencies involved with Sawyer agree that Sawyer is the most complex base reuse project ever encountered. His report will provide an organizational and historical overview of Sawyer in order to provide information for Commissioners to give direction to Staff on how to proceed. Staff may be presently considering goals that may be out of sequence or that the County Board does not want.
Mr. Powers set up a easel with flip charts which provided the following information:

1) Goals - Where are we trying to go? 2) Needs 3) Strategies: a. Need decision making structure, b. new city, LRA, township, but not a County department, c. transfer into private ownership but not an industrial park. 4) Who is involved now? 5) CUPSRA 1 - CUPSRA 2. 6) Various critical meeting dates or organizations involved in the KI Sawyer reuse process. The Air Force is ready to help but we must decide who they will negotiate with and what it is we want. 7) What is needed to be successful. 8) Needs includes: a. Tax reverted land, b. OEA needs financial backing, c. fiscal agent for OEA grant, d. need employer service provider. 9) Risks Financial: a. bankruptcy, b. liability, c. overload on present County Staffing, d. conflicts, e. ask to make commitments without return commitments. 10) Positives: a. extended help from Air Force, b. grants, c. lease funding, d. OEA funding, e. State funding, f. consistent ordinances, g. tax reverted land, h. staff or service providers (cannot be absorbed by present County Staff). 11) Who can be the lead agency right now?

Mr. Powers ended his presentation with the following recommendations:

1) The County Board request the DNR delay its decision on the tax reverted land. 2) The County Board request that CUPSRA reconsider the Memo of Understanding.

Larry Coehoorn, Local Community Advocate for KI Sawyer, was present and displayed a map of KI Sawyer. The map showed what lands the County has requested from the DNR, the lands that Sands Township has requested, and other parcels. Mr. Coehoorn noted the tax reverted lands requested by Sands Township include 80% of the industrial base at KI Sawyer. The Base Reuse Plan calls for one entity. The Air Force needs one entity to negotiate with. CUPSRA is not recognized as that agency at this time. The County wants the airport lands, Sands Township wants the industrial part, CUPSRA got the rest, but no one wants the utilities. With KI Sawyer divided it will be very difficult to develop a plan for its reuse and negotiate with any potential businesses. The base property should be kept together for economic development and the good of the citizens of Marquette County.

Commission consensus was not to request a delay of the DNR decision on the tax reverted lands, but rather that the County Board file a request for all of the tax reverted lands.

Barry Bahrman, West Branch Township Supervisor, was present and recommended that the County Board ask for all the tax reverted lands at KI Sawyer. He believed the Air Base must be kept as one unit and any revenues generated should be kept within the fence for the future reuse and development of KI Sawyer.

Administrator Powers suggested that a request for all tax reverted lands could be justified as the best reuse of the base in order to provide for better public benefit.

Chairperson Corkin pointed out that Forsyth Township and West Branch Township agree that the goal is to keep the revenue on the base and to develop KI Sawyer as one unit.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Braamse, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board request All of the tax reverted lands at KI Sawyer from the Michigan DNR.

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 request that CUPSRA reconsider the Memo of Understanding at their December 4, 1996 meeting.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.
Sheriff Elect Mike Lovelace was present and thanked the County Board for supporting his attendance at the New Sheriff’s Training Session in Lansing. He looks forward to working with the County Board and the County Administrator. Mr. Lovelace announced that 4:00 P.M., Wednesday, November 27th (tomorrow) his swearing in will take place before Judge Weber in the Circuit Court. Cake and coffee will follow. At that time he will announce his selection for Undersheriff. He extended an invitation to Commissioners and County Staff to attend the swearing in ceremony.

Chairperson Corkin thanked Steve Powers, County Administrator, for the fine presentation on KI Sawyer. In Mr. Powers’ three months as Marquette County Administrator he has gained a tremendous understanding of this complex issue which will be a benefit to all. Chairperson also thanked Ron Koshorek and David Payant for their continuing efforts with the KI Sawyer reuse issue.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
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MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 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. Approval of Sheriff Elect Michael H. Lovelace to Attend New Sheriff Training.
8. Communication from David Payant regarding Results of Engineering Study on the Water Problems in Suncliffe Subdivision.
10. Consideration of Contracting with American Microwave for Tower Space at Suicide Hill.
11. Revised Environmental Health, Private Duty, and Dental Fee Clinic Increases.
12. KI Sawyer Update from Steven Powers, County Administrator (30 Minutes, No Packet Materials).
13. EDC Audit Report

14. 

15. PUBLIC COMMENT.
16. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
17. ADJOURNMENT.