BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  COUNTY OF MARQUETTE  FEBRUARY 25, 1997

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 25, 1997 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. Roberts, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 11, 1997 be approved.

Chairperson Corkin read the following resolution honoring Joe Levandoski on his retirement:

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION HONORING JOE LEVANDOSKI

WHEREAS, the people of Marquette County have had the good fortune of being served by diligent public servants; and

WHEREAS, the work of public servants is exemplified by the dedicated service provided by Circuit Court Bailiff Joe Levandoski; and

WHEREAS, Joe Levandoski after 28 years on the City of Marquette's Police Force, before retiring as a Detective/Lieutenant, was hired as a part-time Circuit Court Bailiff on August 27, 1986, and became a full-time Bailiff on October 5, 1988; and

WHEREAS, Joe Levandoski has served the citizens of Marquette County for over ten years and will retire on March 1, 1997; THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that on behalf of the citizens of Marquette County the Board of Commissioners hereby extends its sincere appreciation and thanks to Joe Levandoski for his commitment, dedication, and professionalism in his work as Circuit Court Bailiff; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners wishes Joe Levandoski and his wife Barb the best of luck in his retirement years.

Proclaimed this 25th day of February, 1997
Gerald O. Corkin, Chairperson
Marquette County Board of Commissioners

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

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Angeli and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following changes: Item 12) Housing Rehabilitation Grant Application and Item 13) Recreation Grant Application for Perkins Park were removed from the agenda. The following were added: Item 17) KI Sawyer Update, Item 18) Appointment of a Township Official to the Commission on Aging (this item was moved up on the agenda to 6a), and Item 19) MAC Taxation Committee Appointment.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Roberts and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period February 7, 1997, through February 20, 1997 in the amount of $1,238,475.71 be approved.

The Committee considered a request from the Marquette County Townships Association to reappoint Doreen Takalo as a Township Representative to the Commission on Aging.

Debbie Pellow, MCTA President, and District No. 2 Director for the Michigan Townships Association, was present and explained that when the Township Association received word that the County Board did not reappoint Doreen Takalo they were very surprised. Ms. Takalo has served on the Commission on Aging for the past six years and has done an excellent job.
Comm. Tuominen reported that the Commission on Aging Executive Committee recommended to the Commission on Aging, which in turn unanimously recommends to the County Board that Doreen Takalo be reappointed. The Commission on Aging Bylaws allows them to make recommendations on appointments.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board reappoint Doreen Takalo to the Commission on Aging for a three year term ending December 31, 1999.

The Committee considered a presentation from the Lake Superior Jobs Coalition Airport Redevelopment Sub-Committee regarding the reuse of the County Airport. Richard Anderson of Northern Initiatives and a member of the Sub-Committee was present and distributed information regarding requests for proposals (RFP). The consensus of the Sub-Committee was that a good Marquette County development option would be to put the existing airport "up for bids" to the private sector. This would require a well written RFP and the Sub-Committee provided a number of provisions that should be followed.

Comm. Chihak expressed concern about abandoning the current airport before the funding is in place to support the new Airport. He believed the County Board should be cautious and prudent.

Chairperson Corkin hoped the timing for developing a reuse at the present airport would coincide closely with moving the new airport. The County does not want to drag out the reuse project for many years. Chairperson Corkin assured Commissioners that the County would not enter into any legal and binding contract regarding the present airport until everything was in place for the new Sawyer Airport.

Administrator Steve Powers also noted that included in our grant application for KI Sawyer is funding for the reuse of the Negaunee Airport. The County Board could contract with Northern Initiatives or do the request for proposals in house.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board consider the option of placing the existing Airport "up for bids" to the private sector and that a time line be established for the RFP development process.

The Committee considered a recommendation from County Administrator Steve Powers regarding the establishment of a KI Sawyer Development Commission (KISDC). Mr. Powers explained that part of the KI Sawyer Implementation Plan already approved by the County Board is to create a commission to oversee the conversion of the Base to civilian use. Public Act 46 of Michigan Statute allows the County Board of Commissioners to create an Economic Development Commission whose purpose is to aggressively pursue the accomplishment of the County’s mission and vision for KI Sawyer.

Mr. Powers outlined the Commission’s responsibilities to do such things as: Provide recommendations to the County Board for short and long term financial resources required to redevelop KI Sawyer; oversee development of a marketing plan and strategy; establish lease parameters and approve lease agreements; oversee utility studies and provide recommendations to the Board regarding ownership; facilitate coordination of information between Sawyer and business and economic development entities.

Mr. Powers’ recommendation is that the Development Commission Staff will be supervised by the KI Sawyer Director. The KI Sawyer Director will be supervised by the County Administrator. Policy, direction, and oversight, consistent with County Board of Commissioner’s policy would be provided by the KISDC. Proposed membership would consist of seven members with one appointed from each of Forsyth, Sands, West Branch Township. The remaining four would be appointed by the County Board of Commissioners and the members must have the desired characteristics of “experience and interest” necessary to remain focused on the reuse of KI Sawyer. The Commission would be a public body subject to the Open Meetings Act and encourage public participation. The next recommended step would be to advertise and actively solicit members for the KISDC. Administrator Powers recommends this commission be appointed by April 1st or soon thereafter.
Commissioners centered their discussion around the potential makeup of the KISDC. Commissioners generally agreed that politics should be kept at a minimum and that the Commission should have at least one or more County Commissioners as members. Comm. Cihak believed that more time was needed by Commissioners to consider the recommendation and moved to table the matter until the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Motion to table failed 1 Aye (Comm. Cihak) to 7 Nays.

County Administrator Steve Powers further reported that the federal agency which will provide the funding is concerned that the County Board won’t have the time or the staff necessary to provide the needed policy and staff focus. The reuse of KI Sawyer involves public funds so some elected or appointed officials must oversee this process, but not necessarily the County Board. This Commission also needs to interface with the private sector and economic development agencies.

Administrator Powers also indicated that his staff will do whatever the County Board deems to be appropriate, however, the KISDC requires focus only on KI Sawyer which includes business plans, leases, utilities, marketing, etc. If Commissioners feel the County Board wants to do that, staff can work with them. We will have to justify this with the federal agencies. The grant proposal submitted by Marquette County to the Office of Economic Adjustment indicates that the County Board is forming an Economic Development Commission pursuant to Act 46 that deals specifically with KI Sawyer development issues and leases.

Chairperson Corkin emphasized that it is the County Board’s ultimate responsibility for the financing and development of KI Sawyer. He felt Commissioners should be directly involved. There have been problems in the past with the County Board giving up its authority to outside boards only to have problems come back to the County Board later.

Ron Koshorek, Director of Resource Management, pointed out that the Planning Commission was expanded by the County Board to include three Township members. The Office of Economic Adjustment encourages Township involvement. The KISDC was perceived (as per Act 46) to give sanction to economic activity at KI Sawyer, however, the statute does allow County Commissioners to be members.

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and carried by voice vote, 6 Ayes to 2 Nays (Comm. Angeli and Comm. Roberts voting Nay), that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board appoint a KI Sawyer Development Commission comprised of a standing committee of five Marquette County Commissioners, with staff available as needed, contingent upon the review of Civil Counsel and the OEA.

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The Committee considered a presentation by Gregory J. Hokans, Executive Director, or the Marquette County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, regarding a proposed new Marquette County theme/logo. Mr. Hokans explained that the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau has recently completed two years of travel industry research. Their research finds that Marquette County currently has no image in the minds of the traveling public. The MCCVB believes that an overall “brand identity” is a critical step in any marketing program and to that end has spent the last year working with Triad Marketing and Advertising in the development of a logo. In an effort to increase the exposure and effectiveness of this logo this MCCVB invites Marquette County to formally adopt this new logo and theme line “Discover how civilized our wilderness can be” as part of its organizational and corporate structure. The MCCVB will also be offering this new image to other Marquette County business organizations and local governmental groups.

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Arsenault and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole refer the MCCVB Logo Proposal to Civil Counsel for review of its legal implications and costs.

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The Committee considered the 1996-1997 UPSET Sub-Contract for the Sheriff’s Department from the Michigan Department of Community Health, Office of Drug Control Policy. The grant amounts to $50,910 of which $25,455 would come from the Office of Drug Control Policy. The remainder is a local match.
Gary Yoder, Finance Manager, reported that the UPSET Grant has been an ongoing program for several years and has been budgeted for 1997 at $56,823. Administrator Steve Powers recommended that the County Board accept the grant and make the required budget adjustment.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and carried by voice vote 7 Ayes to 1 Nay (Comm. Cihak), that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the grant agreement UPSET 96-97 (Contract No. 9710) between the Sheriff’s Department and the Office of Drug Control Policy and the appropriate budget amendment.

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When the Committee of the Whole met on Tuesday, February 25, 1997, they considered a request from the Marquette County Road Commission for County Board support in making an application for an ISTEA Demonstration Grant to upgrade County Roads 426 and 557 to Class A all season standards.

Comm. Arsenault met with one of the Road Commission members and noted that this is a joint effort by three counties, Delta, Dickinson, and Marquette, for a ISTEA Project costing $17,250,000. Congressman Stupak has requested that the Road Commissions apply for this project. The proposed improvements would greatly enhance the economic viability of the areas served by these County Roads.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board support the Marquette County Road Commission’s application for an ISTEA Demonstration Grant to upgrade County Roads 426 and 557.

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The Committee considered a resolution from Midland County to support legislative proposals to reduce or eliminate the personal property tax paid by businesses. The proposals would provide a tax break to businesses sooner than current legislation that has been introduced in the Legislature.

The Midland proposal was reviewed by County Treasurer James Sodergren and County Equalization Director Girard Markey. They both recommend that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners oppose the Resolution and notify our Legislators. Personal property taxes account for 12% of the State’s taxable value and should this source of revenue be eliminated there is a possibility the Legislature will increase the six mill limit to cover the loss. In reality, the real property tax owners would be supporting the losses of the personal property class. This is just another attempt to reduce the taxes on a special group of taxpayers. Article IX, Section 3, of the State’s Constitution states in part:

"The Legislature shall provide for the uniform general and ad valorem taxation of real and tangible personal property not exempted by law.”

It was moved by Comm. Roberts, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board oppose the Midland County proposals for legislation reducing and eliminating personal property tax for business.

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The Committee considered a request from the Kellogg Youth Initiative Partnerships for a resolution from the County designating the week of April 21-25, 1997, as "Excellence in Education Week” for Marquette County. They also request the participation of the Chairperson or his designee at a dinner on April 21 to present the resolution to a selected Marquette County School Administrator.
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  COUNTY OF MARQUETTE  FEBRUARY 25, 1997

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board adopt the Resolution in honor of "Excellence in Education Week" for presentation at the awards banquet on Monday, April 21, 1997.

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At the recommendation of County Administrator Steve Powers, it was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Cihak and unanimously carried by voice vote that a strategic planning session be postponed until after April 1st to allow Administrative Staff to focus on KI Sawyer.

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The Committee considered a KI Sawyer Update from County Administrator Steve Powers. Administrator Powers reported that there are three very important documents coming before the Board within the next week. First is the copy of the Grant Application to the Office of Economic Adjustment which has been prepared by Ron Koshorek and Planning Staff and has been forwarded to the OEA. Mr. Koshorek will review this grant application with the Committee tonight.

Second, a draft Caretaker Agreement will be coming to the County Board Meeting of March 4th for consideration. The Agreement provides for an estimated $2 to 3 million from the Air Force to support the operations at KI Sawyer for an initial six to eighteen month period.

Third, Marquette County has received the Airport Lease from the Air Force Base Conversion Authority. It is a 25 year lease which will allow access to the equipment, this along with title to the State land, will allow the County Board to operate the Airport. The lease document is several inches thick and Administrator Powers along with Civil Counsel Andrews are in the process of reviewing the Lease. A copy of the Lease will be placed in the Commissioner's Mailroom for their review. Administrator Powers and Civil Counsel Andrews will be providing a summary of the lease for the March 4th County Board Meeting; however, the summary will not be ready in time for the packet. Commissioners requested that Administrator Powers either contact them by phone or distribute the summary to Commissioners prior to the meeting, hopefully, by Monday.

Ron Koshorek, Director, Resource Management reviewed Marquette County's Application for Federal Assistance to the Office of Economic Adjustment. The funding agency has an Internal Review Committee which should provide an answer in approximately two weeks, which should be in time for the April 1, 1997 takeover. Staff has been working with the Office of Economic Adjustment and is confident the grant application will be fully funded.

Mr. Koshorek noted that the grant application provides for funding for 9-1/4 full-time positions and also some contractual services for several plans and studies. The grant also will provide approximately $103,000 for operating expense of which about one-half is for computer hardware and software. The grant provides OEA assistance amounting to $1,243,230, a State share of $288,500 and a County match of $124,000. The second year funding will be at almost the same level because it will not include studies.

Mr. Koshorek reviewed Attachment C which is the Budget Summary and answered questions about the various positions.

Administrator Powers noted that a KI Sawyer Budget is forthcoming. An accountant has been hired and is working closely with Finance Manager Gary Yoder. He thanked Ron Koshorek and Jim Kippola for their many hours of work. The grant application is a very sound document and the County has an excellent opportunity to receive this funding.

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the County Board, thanked Administrator Steve Powers, Ron Koshorek, Resource Management Director, Jim Kippola, Senior Planner, and Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, for their time and excellent work.

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The Committee considered a request from the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC) that Commissioner Fran Roberts be appointed to the MAC Taxation Committee. Comm. Roberts has indicated he is interested in serving.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board authorize Comm. Fran Roberts to serve on the MAC Taxation Committee.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Roberts reported he attended a recent UPCAP meeting. The State of Michigan intends to take over the management of long-term care in Michigan by January 1, 1998. This is a complex process and UPCAP will be playing a significant part in providing services. UPCAP has also established a nonprofit corporation known as Great Lakes Retirement Advisor which will provide financial planning and advice for the general public for a fee.

Comm. Joseph reminded the Committee that the Paul Bieltia Memorial Tournament is scheduled for March 1st and the 110th Invitational Ski Tournament for March 2nd at the Suicide Bowl Ski area. The Continental Cup is planned for both days. Teams from 12 countries will compete. Ishpeming ski jumping needs support or it may not be able to continue in the future. Also, a Ski Hall of Fame benefit night will be from 2-10 p.m., Thursday, March 27th at the Burger King in Ishpeming and Marquette.

Chairperson Corkin reported that the Legislative Committee, County Treasurer, and members of staff, met with Representative Prusi last Friday for two hours. The main topic of discussion was financial help from the State for the conversion of KI Sawyer. The Committee is also trying to find out how other states have supported local communities in their State where bases have closed. The Committee also discussed a number of mining issues and roads. The Legislative Committee hopes to meet on a monthly basis with Representative Prusi.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, February 25, 1997, 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 11, 1997.
3. County Board Resolution Honoring Joe Levandoski on his Retirement.
4. PUBLIC COMMENT.
5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
7. Reuse of Old County Airport (no packet materials).
8. Sawyer Economic Development Commission Information. (materials for review)
9. New Marquette County Theme/Logo Presentation.
10. UPSET Sub-Contract.
11. Road Commission Request for County Board Support for ISTEA Grant
    Application to Upgrade County Roads 426 and 557.
12. Housing Rehabilitation Grant Application.
13. Recreation Grant Application for Perkins Park.
14. Midland County Resolution regarding Personal Property Tax Legislation.
17. Update on R.I. Sawyer
18. Turn over to OEA
19. MAC Taxpayers Committee
20. PUBLIC COMMENT.
21. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
22. ADJOURNMENT.