The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, January 12, 1999 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skevis Annex, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on December 22, 1998 be approved.

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

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Wallace and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following late addition: Item 10) Ramrod Sublease Negotiation.

It was moved by Comm. Roberts, seconded by Comm. Seppanen and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period December 18, 1998, through January 7, 1999 in the amount of $1,341,934.03 be approved.

The Committee received a report by Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, on Great Lakes Airlines (GLA) announcement that they will discontinue service to the Marquette County Airport in February. Mr. Pawley outlined the number of revenue sources provided by GLA which include: rental space in the terminal for several offices, rental space in the former Simmons Hangar, fuel storage fees, landing fees, janitorial services, and utilities. GLA paid approximately $8,000 a month in revenues to the Marquette County Airport, however, some costs will no longer occur such as utilities, fuel storage, and janitorial services.

Mr. Pawley noted that the number of passengers carried by GLA has been decreasing over the past several years. In 1996 GLA flew approximately 1,350 passengers per month out of the Marquette County Airport, in 1997 the figure dropped to 1,100 passengers per month, and in 1998 it was 950 passengers per month. Mr. Pawley believes a switch in the type of plane, which were harder to maintain, caused GLA to have difficulties meeting their schedule. As a result, passengers complained and some discontinued flying on GLA. This created a downward spiral. The reduced number of passengers caused GLA to reduce to the number of flights, this in turn made scheduling flights more difficult resulting in the loss of more passenger, etc. GLA is also moving their airplanes to the more lucrative Denver, Colorado market.

GLA will continue to provide service out of Ironwood and Iron Mountain because under FAA rules they are providing an essential service. They cannot discontinue service until a replacement service is found. Although Mesaba Northwest does not fly directly into O’Hare out of Marquette passengers will still be able to continue on to Chicago O’Hare on approximately 25 flights a day either through Detroit or Minneapolis. The problem with these connections is that they take longer and cost more. Skyways has no slots at the O’Hare Airport, however does have a number of connections to the Chicago Midway Airport.

Mr. Pawley is not aware of any official AMR statement indicating they will be providing service to Chicago from Sawyer in the future. In order to attract another air carrier there must be a certain level of passengers unless the local community provides guarantees to an airline service.

On the positive side, Hal Pawley noted that we still have good service out of the Marquette County Airport. With GLA, Northwest, and Skyways there are 12 flights a day, and when GLA terminates its service there will still be 10 flights a day leaving the Marquette County Airport.

Chairperson Corkin thanked Hal Pawley for the update on Great Lakes Airlines.

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The Committee considered an Off Road Recreational Vehicle Ordinance drafted by the Marquette County Road Commission. J. Pat Farrell, Chairperson, Marquette County Road Commission, was present and noted that at the request of the County Board, the Road Commission drafted an ORV Ordinance by December 23rd with an accompanying resolution supporting its adoption. The Marquette County Road Commission needs to be a major partner in the developing of such an ordinance. If the County Board feels such an ordinance is necessary the Road Commission will back the County Board 100 percent.
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Bob Menard, Superintendent/Manager, Marquette County Road Commission, noted that all neighboring counties to Marquette have Off Road Vehicle Ordinances. Because of this the Marquette County Road Commission had several other ordinances to use as a guideline, however, Marquette County’s is a unique ordinance. Ours will require that ORV’s use the shoulder of county roads inside the right-of-way. In those areas of Marquette County where ORV’s are currently traveling, such as CR 553 and CR 480, one can see the ORV trail in grassy areas and the erosion on the slopes. The Road Commission contends it to be easier to maintain and less costly if ORV’s used the shoulders of our roads.

Although there may be penalties associated for noncompliance of the ordinance Mr. Menard noted that we must be very realistic. Very few dollars will come in as a result of any penalties incurred. If such penalties do occur he seriously doubts the fines and penalties will end up in a fund for road maintenance. So there will be some cost to the taxpayers, however the ordinance will provide the benefit of legal access from a homeowners property to trails in the forests with the least amount of damage. It is permissible to run ORV’s on roads on state forest lands and federal forest lands, unless otherwise marked. It is not legal to run ORV’s across private property. The proposed County Ordinance would exclude city streets and state highways.

Harley Andrews, Civil Counsel, noted that if the County Board wants to proceed with such an ordinance he would like time for review with the Road Commission and the Townships, and then prepare a final draft for future Board consideration.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Roberts and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole accept in concept the idea of adopting an Off Road Recreational Vehicle Ordinance and direct Civil Counsel to review and draft a proposed ordinance for the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

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The Committee considered a Contract with the Marquette-Alger Intermediate School District (MAISD) for Substance Abuse Prevention Services. MAISD has received a $162,000 grant from Eastern U.P. Substance Abuse for the Strategic Alternatives and Prevention Education (SAPE) Program. SAPE includes Marquette General Hospital, County Sheriff, Marquette County Health Department, Child and Family Services, and MAISD. These agencies work in partnership to provide substance abuse prevention services.

The MAISD Contract will compensate Marquette County for $22,033. The revenue is budgeted in the MCTV Program in the Sheriff’s Department and there are no general fund dollars required. The Contract has been reviewed and approved by Civil Counsel and Risk Management for legal and insurance sufficiency.

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 approve the Contract with Marquette-Alger Intermediate School District for substance abuse prevention services in the amount of $22,033.

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The Committee engaged in a discussion regarding the roll of County Board liaisons to various appointed County boards, committees, and agencies. Steve Powers, County Administrator, provided background information to assist with the Committee of the Whole discussion. Each Commissioner must have a clear understanding of what the major requirements of the liaison role is, know what is expected from other Commissioners in regards to their role, and agree on how those expectations may be met.

The role of a County Commission is to oversee County operations, make legislative decisions, apply community values to policy decisions, hire the administrator, set priorities, determine and achieve citizens’ desires for the County future. Staff’s role is to implement policy and deliver these services, provide responsive open communication, follow policy directions, and recommend financial administration.

The roles between policy making and policy implementation are not distinct separate functions but is a continuum involving staff and the County Board, hopefully in partnership.

A County Board liaison should: 1) Help accomplish the Board of Commissioner’s vision, issues, and goals, 2) Further the Board of Commissioners’ authority and recognize the Board only has authority when convened to do business, 3) Assist the Board of Commissioners in making decisions, 4) Contribute to the team, 5) Add to the Commission - Staff partnership, not subtract or replace from the partnership, 6) Help the Board of Commissioners evaluate policy implementation, 7) Help the allocation of Board of Commissioner time, 8) Provide valid assessment of concerns and evaluation of Board of Commissioner performance, and 9) Help the Board of Commissioners learn and understand these outside issues.
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Comm. Rapport noted she appreciates serving as a liaison and messenger on behalf of whatever Committee she may be asked to serve with. She believes it is an excellent communication tool. She noted, however, some boards only have nonvoting Commissioner liaisons where others have Commissioners who are voting members. She requested clarification regarding this matter from Civil Counsel, especially when closed sessions occur.

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The Committee considered negotiations with Ramrod for a Sublease renewal for Building No. 610 at KI Sawyer.
Comm. Arsenault, Chairperson KISEDG, explained that the Ramrod Sublease expired on February 28, 1997 but has been continuing on a month to month basis. The County Board took action approximately six weeks ago, if a lease could not be negotiated with Ramrod by December 31, 1998, it should be terminated. Ramrod has not cooperated with the KISEDGC. KI Sawyer Staff and the KISEDGC recommend that the County take the necessary action to terminate the month to month lease providing Ramrod with the required 30-day notice. The termination notice will include an appropriate sublease proposal.
It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board authorize giving notice to Ramrod U.P., Inc. of termination of the March 1, 1996 sublease as of February 28, 1999, and offer a new sublease based upon the rate of $1.75 per sq. ft. per year for the first five years with increases of 3% for each of the next five years.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. None was forthcoming.
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARRIOTT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, January 12, 1999, 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.
6. Report by Hal Pawley, Airport Manager, on Great Lakes Airlines (no packet materials).
7. Off Road Recreational Vehicle Ordinance.
9. Discussion of County Board Liaisons to Various Committees.
10. Termination of Robert Casi.
11.
12.
13.
14. PUBLIC COMMENT.
15. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
16. ADJOURNMENT.