The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, January 9, 2001, 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, Courthouse, Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the December 27, 2000 meeting be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Frank Verito, E. Ridge Street, Marquette, expressed his concern regarding eight State Police Towers being constructed in Marquette County. State-wide cost of this network of police towers is $187 million throughout Michigan of which $10 million will be spent in the Upper Peninsula. When this gridwork of towers is complete a person will be able to stand anywhere in Michigan and see a tower, but they will not speed up emergency 911 calls or improve service to the citizens of the State of Michigan. The environmental damage and taxpayer cost for these towers is unjustified.

Lt. David Lemire, Sheriff’s Department, 1920 Neidhardt, Marquette, noted that he is a member of a National Guard unit out of Kingsford which will be assigned to Hungary for six months. He will be placed on active military duty.

Commissioners wished him well.

The Committee considered a request from the Airport “Wall of Fame” Committee for seed money to provide for initial costs of their project. Joe Pietro, Committee Chairman, was present and explained that they are planning for a large wall mural within the terminal building. The mural will provide a view of the sky with aircraft indicative of the type our pilots have flown, there will be a view of the ocean containing aircraft carriers, and a view underneath the ocean showing the Darter and Dace Submarines.

Mr. Pietro also noted the Airport Wall of Fame Committee is recommending the new North Access Road be called “Kelly Johnson Memorial Drive.”

Robert Moore, Committee Vice-Chair, further explained the funding request for the Wall of Fame Project. Four quarter page advertisements will appear in The Mining Journal at a special price of $250 each. The ads will include a facsimile of the nomination form and run four successive Sundays. The first ad has been pledged for by Mary Tverenini, President of At Your Service of Marquette. The Wall of Fame Committee is requesting an advance from the County Commission of $1,500 to provide additional operating capital. These funds will be matched through future fundraising efforts. The total cost of the “Wall of Fame” project is not yet known.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, recommended that should the Board decide to provide funding these funds should come from the Airport Fund by a transfer from the KI Sawyer Development Fund and set up as a cost sharing fund for up to a certain amount. Civil Counsel Andrews agreed with Administrator Powers’ recommendation.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and carried by voice vote 9 Ayes to 1 Nay (Comm. Moore), that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board provide up to $1,500 in funding as a cost share for expenses for the Aviator “Wall of Fame” Project, funds to be transferred from the KI Sawyer Development Fund to the Airport Fund.

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The Committee considered the Snowmobile Purchase for the Marquette County Sheriff’s Department. Lt. Dave Lemire, Sheriff’s Department, was present to discuss the snowmobile bid and answer questions. The low snowmobile bid is from Honda of Marquette at $6,699 of which the Michigan Department of Natural Resources will reimburse the County at 75% ($5,024). The County share of $1,675 is available in the Rescue Safety Fund. The Sheriff’s Department currently has three snowmobiles, with this purchase they will have four. The Sheriff’s Department regularly patrols snowmobile trails and also provides additional services for special events such as the Negaunee Winterfest, the Lake Independence Ice Fishing Derby, etc. The bid from Honda of Marquette meets all specifications required by the Sheriff’s Department including all auxiliary equipment on the snowmobile.
It was moved by Comm. Moore, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the purchase of a snowmobile from Honda of Marquette, the low bidder for $6,699, the County's share to come from the Rescue Safety Fund.

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The Committee considered a Letter of Support for the establishment of a Negaunee Township Industrial Development District.

Chairperson Corkin noted that Marquette County has property within the Industrial Development District which includes the former Pelletec/Pellestar property. Economic Development tools that make the property attractive for development will benefit the public. Tax revenues will increase above the current amount and jobs would be added to the local economy.

It was moved by Comm. Berdaal, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a letter of support for the establishment of a Negaunee Township Industrial Development District.

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It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee accept and place on file a notice from the United States Federal Energy Regulatory Commission of a request for a license amendment by the Upper Peninsula Power Company for the Escanaba River Recreation Plan Project.

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The Committee considered a recommendation from the KI Sawyer Economic Development Committee regarding KI Sawyer personal property disposal. Tom Rumora, KI Sawyer Development Director, was present and noted that the County Board previously approved an auction to dispose of personal property. The Committee now recommends two auctions be authorized which will cost the County no additional funding. The auctioneer will still receive the same 14% commission. The Committee believes a follow-up auction will allow for a more thorough personal property disposal with more opportunity for citizens to bid.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Bergdaal, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board accept the KI Sawyer EDC recommendation to provide for two auctions to dispose of Sawyer personal property.

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The Committee considered a letter of support to the Michigan Works! The Job Force Board. Chairperson Corkin noted that the Job Force Board and its Career Connections Education Advisory Group is developing a comprehensive workforce development and career preparation plan for our region. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to develop a comprehensive workforce system which creates a workforce with the knowledge and skills necessary to sustain and improve the economy of the Central Upper Peninsula.

Chairperson Corkin further noted that Marquette County has been a partner in this planning process and the letter of support will continue our commitment to work together with the Michigan Works! The Job Force Board and its Career Connections Advisory Group supporting strategies necessary for regional workforce development.

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 provide a Letter of Support to Michigan Works! The Job Force Board for its Comprehensive Workforce Development and Career Preparation Plan.

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The Committee considered a breakdown of funds awarded to Marquette County by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community totaling $94,399.25. This funding includes the following items that were requested by Marquette County: $52,000 for DARE, $15,899.25 to the Marquette County Dental Clinic, and $7,500 for the South County YMCA. The funding also includes an additional $19,000 for a problem gambling task force, AMCA, Iron Mining Museum, and Triad.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, noted that the KBIC requires a letter from Marquette County stating that they will accept these 2% payments from the Tribe. The County of Marquette is under no legal obligation to forward these funds to any particular department or agency, however the KBIC trusts that those organizations that have been identified as being worthy recipients will benefit from the 2% gaming distributions. Before the distributions are made the County will review all agencies to see if they can receive pass through funds.
It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Moore, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board accept the 2% Keweenaw Bay Indian Community gaming distributions in the amount of $94,399.25.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Frank Verito, E. Ridge Street, Marquette, continued with his concerns about the State Police Towers being constructed in Marquette County. Mr. Verito contended the State Police did not provide adequate public notice. When he requested information regarding the towers he was given the runaround between Motorola, the State Police, and the Michigan DEQ. He contended the State Police Tower Grid is illegal. Public process was not provided. One of the towers is built nine miles from Sawyer International Airport in direct line with the runway.

Joe Pietro, Forsyth Township, and member of the Michigan Bureau of Aeronautics noted that the State Police Tower constructed nine miles from the Airport was thoroughly reviewed before its construction and is in total compliance with all aviation laws.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steve Powers, County Administrator, noted that the interviews have been completed with two applicants for the Equalization Director. A recommendation will be forthcoming in the next two weeks for hiring an Equalization Director. The County Equalization Director is one of three positions that is directly hired by the County Board of Commissioners.

Comm. Wallace noted that the Marquette County Health Department has paid off its loan of $67,000 ahead of schedule. The Health Department budget is doing well and in the black.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, January 9, 2001, 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 DECEMBER 27, 2000.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
5. Review of Claims and Accounts.
6. Airport “Wall of Fame” Committee Request for Initial Operating Capital.
7. Purchase of Snowmobile for Sheriff’s Department.
   Peninsula Power Company Amendment to Escanaba River Recreation Plan Project.
10. [Handwritten text]
11. Letter of Support—Comprehensive Workforce Development Plan
12. [Handwritten text]
13. PUBLIC COMMENT.
14. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
15. ADJOURNMENT.