The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, June 11, 2002, 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Courthouse Annex, Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.


It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the May 28, 2002 Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with the following additions: Item 14) Sawyer Water System Fluoridation, Item 15) Red Fox Properties Master Agreement Amendment, Item 16) Juvenile Services Budget, and Item 18a) Closed Session to Discuss Confidential Attorney/Client Communication.

It was moved by Comm. Moore, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period May 31, 2002 through June 6, 2002 in the amount of $611,868.72 be approved.

Dr. Randall Johnson, Director, Marquette County Health Department, was present to discuss the Michigan Local Public Health Accreditation Program On-Site Review Summary of the County Health Department. Dr. Johnson noted the Marquette County Health Department was an on-site accreditation pilot project in May of 1998 and received a status of accreditation with commendation. The State of Michigan provides for this accreditation review to evaluate local health departments to see if they are accredited to receive state funding. The state sends a self-assessment tool six months in advance which allows the health department to review and prepare for a 5-day on-site visit.

During the recent on-site review the State reviews Health Department policies, procedures, funding mechanisms, and the quality of the local Board of Health. There are 319 elements in the on-site review of which Marquette County missed 27. The next step is for the Health Department to provide the State a plan of corrections and how they will improve in those 27 areas by the 1st of July. Marquette County’s Health Department should have no problem in complying with these matters.

Dr. Johnson noted there are 45 local health departments in the State of Michigan, none meets all the criteria. In many cases the State officials conducting the on-site review interpret policies and procedures different than a local health department. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly what is required until the officials come for the on-site review, procedures and policies seem to be changing and shifting. The Marquette County Health Department spent approximately $20,000 of its resources in staff time in preparation for this review but it is a necessary step if the County Health Department is to be accredited and receive State funding.

The County Board commended Dr. Johnson and the Health Department Staff for providing citizens of Marquette County excellent service and thanked him for the report.

It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Seppanen, and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the Michigan Local Public Health Accreditation Program On-Site Review on file.

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The Committee considered a proposal by Sands Township to “unzone” the Sands Township property that was formerly part of the KI Sawyer Air Force Base.

Dotti Lewis, Staff Planner, was present and reported at the regular Planning Commission meeting held on June 5, 2002 the Marquette County Planning Commission reviewed the zoning amendment being considered by the Sands Township Zoning Board. After evaluating the proposed “unzoning” as per the County’s Comprehensive Plan and the Sands Township Zoning Plan, the Marquette County Planning Commission has found the proposed “unzoning” to be inconsistent with County planning policy. The County Planning Commission does not support the Sands Township “unzoning” proposal. The Marquette County Planning Commission has already forwarded its comments to the Sands Township Board which is meeting (tonight) Tuesday, June 11, 2002.

Chairperson Corkin read a draft letter to be forwarded to Sands Township noting Marquette County supports the Planning Commission comments and will not assume the responsibility for zoning or administering the Land Division Act for the properties involved.
It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the Chairperson be authorized to sign and forward the letter to Sands Township regarding their proposed "unzoning" of certain described areas within Sands Township that were formerly part of the KI Sawyer Air Force Base and also to accept the Planning Commission comments.

The Committee considered an Agreement with the City of Marquette to provide assessing services and also to amend the Employment Agreement with Dwight Sunday, County Equalization Director.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained the City of Marquette has been without a Level IV Assessor since January, 2001 and has been unsuccessful in finding a suitable replacement. The State of Michigan requires certain reports and documents to be approved by a Level IV Assessor. The County Administrator and the City Manager have been discussing how intergovernmental cooperation could benefit the public by the County providing some assessing services for the City. The Marquette City Commission has now approved an agreement which may be interim or permanent. The County Administrator, City Manager, and the Equalization Director intend to monitor the agreement to determine whether it adequately addresses Marquette City's needs and is reasonable to the County.

The Agreement provides that the City will continue to employ appraisal staff and is hiring a Community Development Director that will supervise assessing, planning, zoning, and City Clerk functions. The County, through the Equalization Director, shall manage, supervise, and sign all necessary documents, reports, and recommendations as the City Assessor. An estimated 16 to 20 hours per month will be required.

The City will pay the County $20,000 annually for the Agreement of which $9,000 will be provided to Mr. Sunday for additional compensation for the additional responsibilities. The net benefit to the County is approximately $11,000. No additional overtime or staff time are needed by the County through the Equalization Department to provide these services.

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 approve an Agreement with the City of Marquette for the provision of Level IV assessing services and also amend the Employment Agreement with Dwight Sunday, Equalization Director.

The Committee considered a request from West Branch Township to transfer the ski hill property at KI Sawyer at no cost to West Branch Township.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that West Branch Township has requested ownership of the ski hill and intends to improve and operate the ski hill. Transferring the ski hill to the Township will place the property back into recreational use. This property is not marketable for developmental purposes. The actual conveyance would take several months, however the Township Board is requesting action at this time with a County commitment to transfer the property to allow the Township to make improvements to the property. The total property involved is approximately 16 acres.

Hal Pawley, SIABC Director, was present and supports the proposal which would get Marquette County out of liability for the ski hill. He noted the warming shack is still usable, however West Branch Township intends to make improvements. Commissioners discussed the transfer at no cost and whether or not to require a reverter clause to guarantee the land would be used for recreational purposes. Staff will contact the West Branch Township Supervisor to see if this would be agreeable.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the transfer of the ski hill at Sawyer to West Branch Township for recreational purposes, the appropriate documents to be prepared by Civil Counsel.

The Committee considered a resolution for change MERS benefits. Sue Vercoe, Finance Manager, was present and explained the recent union contract with Courthouse Employees for January 1, 2002 through December 31, 2005 increased the employee contribution rate for employees covered by MERS Defined Benefit Plan to 3%. This increase was implemented effective January 1 of this year.

MERS requires a resolution by the County Board of Commissioners to officially adopt the change.

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 adopt a Resolution for changing Marquette County MERS benefits.
The Committee of the Whole met on Tuesday, June 11, 2002, they considered the final draft of the U.P. Area Agency on Aging’s (UPAAA) Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2003.

Jackie Boxer-Silta, Commission on Aging Director, was present and noted the UPAAA Plan contains objectives and budgets that would designate funding for services and programs provided to elderly residents. She is pleased to note the current year funding will continue into FY 2003.

Ms. Boxer-Silta noted a number of changes will be in the UPAAA Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2003 including implementation of a limited vision impairment program for the elderly. She also noted a decreasing amount of escheats funds for respite care, however more funds are available from other sources. The UPCAP Board of Directors has unanimously approved the Updated Annual Implementation Plan which requires review and approval by individual County Boards.

It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Moore, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the UP Area Agency on aging FY 2003 Annual Implementation Plan with the appropriate resolution.

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Jackie Boxer-Silta, Director of Commission on Aging, announced through the National Prescription Health Plan, the Marquette County Commission on Aging is offering a Prescription Discount Program for senior residents of Marquette County. The program has been made possible through the Benefits Controls Methods, Inc. which is endorsed by the Michigan Association of Counties.

Eligibility requirements include a citizen must be 60 years of age or older, have no other insurance coverage for prescription drugs, no annual income guideline are necessary, there is a $12 annual application fee for the care, and the program provides for 15% to 30% savings on prescription drugs.

Ms. Boxer-Silta noted local pharmacies who are participating in the program and the Commission on Aging has developed an application process and informational brochure to be mailed to potential enrollees. Approximately 300 applications have been sent to qualified seniors in Marquette County and about 150 of them are returned. This program is a culmination of efforts by Commission on Aging Staff which began in March of 2001 to provide for a senior discount program. Should any Commissioners know of any qualified seniors please have them contact the Commission on Aging.

Chairperson Corkin thanked Jackie Boxer-Silta on behalf of the County Board for their efforts in providing this program.

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

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It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee accept and place on file the Monitoring Report for the Neighborhood Preservation Program Grants to the City of Ishpeming. Chairperson Corkin noted MSHDA commends Marquette County on a successful NPP Program in the City of Ishpeming. Kathryn Koryba, Community Development Specialist, noted it is encouraging and fulfilling to witness positive outcomes from the use of State funds in the Marquette County, City of Ishpeming community.

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The Committee considered a MAC memo from Jerry Griffin, MAC Director of Legislative Affairs regarding proposed state budget cuts for FY 2003. The Speaker of the House Rick Johnson and the Senate Majority Leader Dan DeGrow have met several times and have issued recommendations to deal with the State’s 2002-03 budget deficit. These recommendations include approximately $60 million in cuts which would have significant impact on County funds distributed by the State.

Comm. Bergdahl further noted he received a call from Linda Rossberg, Cooperative Extension Director, that the State is consideration reducing funding for the Chatham Experimental Station and reducing funds and consolidating Cooperative Extension Offices, perhaps having only two offices in the Upper Peninsula.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried by voice vote to place the communication on file and direct the Chairperson to contact our State Legislators noting Marquette County’s opposition to cutting funding to the Chatham Experimental Station and reducing funding for the Cooperative Extension Offices/4-H Programs in the Upper Peninsula.

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The Committee considered the Sawyer Water Supply Fluoridation System. Hal Pawley, SIABC Director, and Scott Erbisch, Sawyer Utilities Coordinator, were present to discuss the Sawyer Water System Fluoridation.

In January, 1999 the Air Force denied a County request to reintroduce fluoride into the Sawyer water supply at Air Force expense. In March of 1999 Ed Bailey, Director of Operations at Sawyer, presented a staff recommendation to fluoridate the Sawyer water supply with the estimated annual cost at $2,000. This
recommendation came to the County Board and was unanimously approved to fluoridate the Sawyer water supply with use of Sawyer Development funds.

George Hough, Water and Sewer Superintendent, recently learned for the County to continue to provide fluoride in the water system the County must spend approximately $6,000 to install sampling taps on four water wells as required by the Michigan DEQ. Superintendent Hough further noted introduction of fluoride into the water system is not mandated. The water and wastewater staff spends at least one hour per day testing the fluoride, a DEQ requirement, when water systems are fluoridated.

Staff has revisited this program and determined the annual cost to fluoridate the water supply at Sawyer is not $2,000 but approximately $10,525. This cost is comprised of $1,341.48 for fluoride and $9,183.40 for labor. Labor cost is based on the average hourly wage of a WWTP employee plus benefits multiplied by 365. Before Sawyer Staff authorizes Superintendent Hough to proceed with the installation of the sampling taps in all four wells, Staff needs County Board confirmation of its intent to continue the fluoridation program.

It was moved by Comm. Moore, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board authorize Staff to continue the fluoridation of the Sawyer water system and proceed with the installation of the sampling taps in the four water wells as required by the Michigan DEQ.

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The Committee considered a Red Fox Master Agreement Amendment. Harley Andrews, Chief Civil Counsel, was present and explained the Master Agreement with Red Fox provided no property could be sold as an eat-in restaurant at Sawyer until January, 2004 giving Red Fox exclusivity.

Mr. Andrews noted Red Fox now has agreed to waive the food exclusivity requirement as of June 1, 2002. When they return a signed Master Agreement revision Mr. Andrews requests the County Board authorize the Chair to execute the Amended Master Agreement.

It was moved by Comm. Girard, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Amended Red Fox Master Agreement and authorize the Chairperson to sign.

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The Committee considered a budget amendment of $5,000 from the Child Care Fund to the General Fund.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained Probate Judge Michael Andereg and Barry Sullivan, Juvenile Services Director, are requesting a half-time probation officer be temporarily assigned to full-time status to provide coverage for a medical leave of absence taken by another Probation Officer. This medical leave would be for 2 ½ months. Judge Andereg noted the absence would increase overtime or decrease the time spent with the youth which could increase the likelihood of out-of-home placements.

The estimated cost to increase the hours of the part-time employees is $5,000. The source of funding for the budget amendment would be the 2002 budgeted General Fund transfer to the Child Care Fund. The recommended action would allow the Department to maintain contact with youth while continuing to remain within the budget.

It was moved by Comm. Seppanen, seconded by Comm. Girard, and unanimously carried by voice vote, that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve of the Juvenile Services Budget Amendment of $5,000 from the Child Care Fund to the General Fund.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment, none was forthcoming.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Corkin will be attending a U.P. Business/CUPPAD meeting in Escanaba on Wednesday on behalf of Marquette County. Comm. Arsenault will also be attending as a member of the First Step Board.

It was moved by Comm. Tuominen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl and unanimously carried by roll call vote 9 Ayes (Comm. Tuominen, Arsenault, Bergdahl, Girard, Joseph, Moore, Nordeen, Seppanen, and Corkin) to 0 Nays that the Committee of the Whole go into Closed Session to discuss a confidential attorney/client communication.

Chairperson Corkin declared a recess at 7:06 P.M. to clear Commission Chambers.

............................................................... CLOSED SESSION...............................................................
The Committee of the Whole came back into open session at 7:14 P.M.
It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Tuominen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee concur with the recommendation made by Civil Counsel during the closed session regarding the confidential attorney/client communication.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]

David J. Roberts
Marquette County Clerk
MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, June 11, 2002, 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. Michigan Local Public Health Accreditation Program On Site Review Summary of the Marquette County Health Department.
7. Sands Township Zoning Amendment.
8. Agreement with the City of Marquette to Provide Assessing Services.
9. Request from West Branch Township for Ski Hill at Sawyer.
15. Bird Fox Proprietorship Master Agreement.
16. Juvenile Services Budget
17. PUBLIC COMMENT.
18. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
19. ADJOURNMENT.