The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Tuesday, December 30, 2003, at 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, 234 West Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.


A Salute to the Flag was given followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 16, 2003 be approved.

PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND AWARDS

Chairperson Corkin read the following resolution honoring County Commissioner Randell E. Girard on his retirement:

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION
HONORING RANDELL E. GIRARD ON HIS RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, Government has an obligation to provide its citizens the best services possible by hiring employees of the finest quality; and

WHEREAS, Randell E. Girard was hired on May 11, 1981 and served as Director of Human Resources until August 27, 1997; and

WHEREAS, Randell E. Girard was elected County Commissioner for District 3 on November 7, 2000 and took office on January 1, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Randell E. Girard will retire on January 1, 2004 after 19 years 4 months of service to Marquette County,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners gratefully expresses its appreciation for the dedicated service of Randell E. Girard; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, on behalf of all County Citizens, the Marquette County Board of Commissioners wishes Randy and his wife Debra a long, healthy, and happy retirement.

Proclaimed this 30th day of December, 2003
Gerald O. Corkin, Chairperson
Marquette County Board of Commissioners

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the County Board, thanked Comm. Girard for his years of service.

Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Sheriff Michael H. Lovelace was present and addressed the County Board regarding a memo from Marquette County Probate Judge Honorable Michael J. Anderegg entitled 2003 Budget Surplus. Sheriff Lovelace is requesting the money be used to retain 5-1/2 deputies scheduled to be laid off at the end of the month.

Dr. William Birch, Marquette, addressed the County Board advocating for Sheriff Lovelace wanting Road Patrol restored.

Emily Coyne asked to speak regarding appointment of a County Commissioner.

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

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Nordeen, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period December 12, 2003 through December 23, 2003 in the amount of $733,632.99 and bi-weekly payroll for the period ending December 20, 2003 in the amount of $561,230.33 be approved.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Nordeen and unanimously carried by voice vote that the agenda be approved with a name change to Item 10b) Lease Agreements with European Helicopters, Inc. (EHI) and Sikorsky: add Item 11a) Letter of Understanding between the Michigan Department of State Police and the County of Marquette, and 11b) Request for 2003 Budget Surplus from Sheriff Lovelace.
INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the following informational items be accepted and placed on file:

a. Communication from Marquette County Emergency Management regarding Project Completion and Certificate Report by FEMA.

b. Communication from Michigan Supreme Court State Court Administrative Office regarding Court Equity Fund.

ACTION ITEMS

10a) The County Board considered Group Life and Long-Term Disability Insurance. John Greenberg, Human Resources and Risk Manager, explained he began gathering information about agencies and carriers that might have an interest in underwriting employee benefit coverages for a group of Marquette County government employers. He became aware that Marquette County could probably reduce their cost for some of these benefits, specifically group life and disability. In September the County received a 26% increase in the disability premium. All Marquette County and Health Department full and regular part-time employees have the group life insurance benefit, and the Deputies, Central Dispatch, Health Department, and Non-represented Employees have the long-term disability benefit. Due to the bargaining agreements involved, it was necessary to seek proposals that provided benefits at least equal to those currently in place. He has now received proposals from those carriers who expressed an interest. He recommends the County place both the life and disability coverages with Fort Dearborn Life Insurance Company. This is an “A” rated company that offered these coverages, as a package, at the lowest cost and with the rates guaranteed for a two-year period. As far as the employees are concerned, this will be a seamless conversion since the coverages are the same and our contracts do not specify a carrier.

   It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board place both the life and disability coverage with Fort Dearborn Life Insurance Company as recommended by John Greenberg, Human Resources and Risk Manager.

10b) The County Board considered Lease Agreements with European Helicopters, Inc. (EHI) and Sikorsky, for Hangar 400 and a portion of Hangar 667. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that European Helicopters, Inc. and Sikorsky utilizes specially equipped aircraft for the testing of aircraft and deicing systems on trailing aircraft during in-flight. To gather and compile their data, they need to conduct their flight operations flying in simulated winter conditions. Hangar 400 is currently an unoccupied hangar located on a south quadrant of the airfield, yet currently being used by the Airport Maintenance Division for the storage of airfield snow removal and other airfield maintenance equipment. Hangar 667 is located within the main row of large hangars and is currently used for the overnight storage of corporate and general aviation aircraft. The request is for these hangars to be utilized on a very limited basis for the storage, maintenance and preflight preparation of European Helicopters, Inc. and Sikorsky Company aircraft.

   Due to a very compressed time schedule, they are requesting to begin their operations on or shortly before January 1, 2004. Staff has been working with company representatives, to provide a turn-key operation, yet the lease term will be for a period of two weeks, with any possible extensions at pro-rated rates. Staff has projected the utilities to be higher than average to cover the County’s cost during the duration of the lease term. If all aircraft storage and administrative office areas are needed to include the full cost of all gas, electric and water utilities, office furnishings, and telecommunications, the County may realize the following gross revenue proceeds, pending payment of all utility costs: $21,537 from EHI and $21,149 from Sikorsky.

   Staff recommends the aircraft hangars be assessed standard Sawyer fees for the hanging and/or storage of aircraft. Each bay of hangar 400 will be rented for $1,500 per month and hangar 667 will also be rented for $1,500 per month per aircraft, pro-rated for additional days in and above the two weeks projected as time period as requested. The office space in hangar 400 (approximately 1,050 sq. ft.) will be assessed a rental fee of $20 per sq. ft. and again, pro-rated for any additional days above the two week projected time period as requested. These companies conduct very highly specialized in-flight testing of aircraft systems for operating in extreme winter environments. Staff does not have any long-term prospects for hangar 400. The request is a good use for Sawyer’s airfield facilities with the possibility of them returning late next fall for continuing operations.

   It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board approve Lease Agreements with European Helicopters, Inc. (EHI) and Sikorsky pending review by Civil Counsel.
The attached minutes are subject to correction and approval

10c) The County Board considered an agreement with Dwight Sunday, Equalization Director. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained the County Equalization Director is one of the few positions that is appointed by the County Board. Administrator Powers is recommending the County Board extend his Employment Agreement and reduce his hours. Mr. Sunday and Administrator Powers believe he can perform the duties and oversee the equalization process with four hours per week which would result in the savings to the County which is both acceptable to Mr. Sunday and Administrator Powers. The extension of the agreement would be to May 31, 2006.

Mr. Sunday and Administrator Powers are also recommending that there be a further reduction of one day per week in 2005.

Comm. Joseph questioned Mr. Sunday’s time spent with the City of Marquette. Administrator Powers explained that the County has an agreement with the City to provide property assessment services. Mr. Sunday spends approximately 4-8 hours on average per week with the City of Marquette Contract. By law the County needs to have a Level IV Property Appraiser and they are very difficult to find. When the County advertised and recruited for this position there were only two applicants.

It was moved by Comm. Bergdahl, seconded by Comm. Wallace and carried by voice vote 7 Ayes to 1 Nay (Comm. Joseph) that the County Board approve the Agreement with Dwight Sunday, Equalization Director as recommended by Administrator Powers.

10d) The County Board considered appointment of a Magistrate for the 96th District Court. Judge Dennis Girard was present and explained that due to the medical leave of the Ishpeming District Court Magistrate he is requesting a temporary appointment of a full-time magistrate until April 2004. Judge Girard is requesting that Billie Pohlman, a full-time senior clerk, be appointed. Ms. Pohlman could perform the duties and functions of Magistrate on a part-time basis. The Magistrate and the Judge from Marquette will also perform some of the functions. By having a Magistrate full-time even though she only exercises the Magistrate duties part-time is a convenience to the police agencies and to the public. Ms. Pohlman is willing to take the appointment. The cost was worked out between John Greenberg and the Administrator.

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board adopt the following resolution appointing Billie Pohlman as Magistrate of the 96th District Court:

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION
RATIFICATION OF MAGISTRATE APPOINTMENT

WHEREAS, Billie Pohlman will be appointed by the 96th District Court as a Magistrate of the Court effective upon approval of said appointment by the County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, MCL 600.8501 provides that a magistrate appointment “shall be subject to approval by the County Board of Commissioners”; and

WHEREAS, the Judges of the 96th District Court have requested approval of the aforesaid appointment;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

The appointment of Billie Pohlman as Magistrate of the 96th District Court is hereby approved effective this date.

Adopted this 30th day of December, 2003
Gerald O. Corkin, Chairperson
Marquette County Board of Commissioners

10e) The County Board considered appointment of a County Commissioner for the 3rd District. Comm. Randell E. Girard is retiring effective January 1, 2004. MCL 46.412 provides: When a vacancy occurs in the office of Commissioner by death, resignation, removal from the district, or removal from the office, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment within 30-days by the County Board of Commissioners of a resident and registered voter of that district... The person appointed to fill the vacancy which occurs in the year which is an election year for the office of County Commissioner shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term...
The following applicants addressed the County Board: Jan Levi, Sands Township, Emily Coyne, City of Marquette, Rich Rossway, City of Marquette, Mary Lou Strisar, City of Marquette, and Lyn Nelson, City of Marquette.

On a roll call ballot Emily Coyne was appointed as Marquette County Commissioner for the 3rd District.

**LATE ADDITION**

11a) The County Board considered a Letter of Understanding between the Michigan Department of State Police and the County of Marquette. The Letter of Understanding establishes and defines a formal relationship between the department and the County regarding the administration, management, supervision, and operation of Marquette County Central Dispatch and its occupation of the Department’s work site at Negaunee. The Letter of Understanding shall remain in effect until September 30, 2008 and may be extended or amended by mutual written consent of the parties.

It was moved by Comm. Nordeen, seconded by Comm. Cihak, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the County Board approve the Letter of Understanding between the Michigan Department of State Police and the County of Marquette.

11b) The County Board considered a request from Sheriff Lovelace for the 2003 fund balance in the Child Care Fund to restore the deputy positions cut from the 2004 budget. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that the Child Care Fund will have a positive fund balance at the end of 2003. He recommends any Child Care Fund balance be transferred to the General Fund to help maintain a balanced 2003 budget. Funds not needed to maintain a balanced 2003 budget should be transferred to the Budget Stabilization Fund. The surplus that the Probate Judge and the Sheriff are estimating will exist, doesn’t exist, and won’t exist for several more months. 2003 books are not closed. He pointed out that the ending positive fund balance is a one-time revenue source and should not be used to support ongoing expenses. He reminded Commissioners that several years ago the County transferred $500,000 into the fund because it was over budget. The Probate Judge and staff have done a very good job of managing expenses, but in no way should that be understood by anyone to be an ongoing condition that we can rely on to fund ongoing expenses.

Comm. Nordeen questioned action taken by the County Board during the budget process regarding any excess money found at the end of the year be used to fund the Sheriff’s Road Patrol.

Comm. Wallace remembers the motion, but the books for 2003 are not yet closed, an intelligent decision should not be made until then.


Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Emily Coyne thanked Commissioners for the appointment as County Commissioner in the 3rd District.

Phyllis Loonsfoot, Marquette, addressed the County Board regarding Road Patrol.

Mike Quayle addressed the County Board and thanked the seven applicants who applied for County Commissioner. He will encourage others to seek election to the County Board in 2004.

Lowell Larson, Sheriff’s Department Road Patrol, informed Commissioners he will be laid off 12/31/03.

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

**COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson Corkin, on behalf of the County Board wished all citizens of Marquette County a Happy New Year.

There being no further business to come before the County Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Connie M. Brannan
Marquette County Clerk
M MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting, Tuesday, December 30, 2003, 6:00 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, Michigan 49855

1. CALL TO ORDER - SALUTE TO THE FLAG - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.
2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 16, 2003
3. PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS.
   a. Resolution Honoring Randell Girard, Commissioner District 3, on His Retirement.
4. PUBLIC COMMENT. (time limit 20 minutes total)
5. REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS.
6. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.
7. PUBLIC HEARINGS.
8. PRIVILEGED COMMENT:
9. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:
   a. Communication from Marquette County Emergency Management regarding Project Completion and Certificate Report by FEMA.
   b. Communication from Michigan Supreme Court State Court Administrative Office regarding Court Equity Fund.
10. ACTION ITEMS:
   a. Group Life and Long Term Disability Insurance.
   b. Lease Agreement with Agusta Westland Helicopters, LTD., for Hangar 400 and a Portion of Hangar 667.
   c. Agreement with Dwight Sunday, Equalization Director.
   d. Appointment of Magistrate for the 96th District Court.
   e. Appointment of County Commissioner, 3rd District.
11. LATE ADDITIONS:
   a. Sheriff Ward's Request
   b. "understanding"
12. PUBLIC COMMENT. (time limit 20 minutes total)
13. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.
14. ADJOURNMENT.

Happy New Year!!