

Minutes are Subject to Correction and Approval

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 6:00 P.M., in Room 231 of the Henry A. Skewis Annex, 234 W. Baraga Avenue, Marquette, Michigan.

Chairperson Corkin called the meeting to order. Present: Comm. Arsenault, Comm. Cihak, Comm. Joseph, Comm. Pellow, Comm. Struck, Comm. Wallace and Chairperson Corkin. Absent: Comm. Bergdahl, Comm. Heikkila..

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by a voice vote that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on February 11, 2009 be approved.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Pellow, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Agenda be approved as presented.

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

It was moved by Comm. Pellow, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the Period February 13, 2009 through February 19, 2009 in the amount of \$460,368.31, be approved.

Comm. Wallace pointed out that were a series of checks payable to Semco Energy Gas Company for heating various County buildings, amounting to approximately \$62,000. He explained that five or six years ago an energy audit was performed on the buildings. He requested a follow up to that audit to try and conserve energy. Comm. Wallace requested a report in the near future.

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The Committee considered the Youth Home Evaluation. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that in August of 2007, the Board of Commissioners approved funding for a review of the Marquette County Youth Home operations. Proposals were requested and Great Lakes Center for Youth Development was found by the Honorable Judge Anderegg, Family Court Judge, and the Administrator to be the best proposal.

Work began with the understanding the contract amount would be \$10,000, within the policy limits were approval by the County Administrator. Once the evaluation work began, it became clear that additional and different information, and time, would be needed to accomplish the objectives. As a result, an additional \$4,000 is recommended. The additional amount brings the contract to \$14,000 and above the County Administrator's approval limit.

The scope of work has been reviewed with Judge Anderegg and the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development. The information collected and evaluated will assist the court and Board of Commissioners in making decisions about the future of the Youth Home.

The increase is necessary to ensure an evaluation that meets our needs. At \$14,000, the work is still very cost competitive. The contract amount of \$14,000 is in the 2009 amended budget.

Discussion followed. Comm. Cihak questioned whether there were any other proposals and the proposal amount. He also requested information regarding what Teaching Family Homes offers and whether

there would be a connection to the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development. The information will be provided next week.

Comm. Pellow supports the recommendation, however she has concerns spending additional monies in such tough budget times.

It was moved by Comm. Arsenault, seconded by Comm. Struck, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board authorize the contract with Great Lakes Center for Youth Development in the amount of \$14,000.00.

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The Committee considered a Content Management Software Purchase. Brent Nault, Information Systems Manager, was present and introduced Jennetta Clark, Systems Analyst, who discussed and explained the software purchase. Marquette County currently maintains the following websites: Marquette County; Marquette County Health Department; K.I. Sawyer Airport; SmokeFreeUP; UPPrevent; FitUP; Marquette County Intranet; and Marquette County Health Department Intranet. Mr. Nault explained that except for K.I. Sawyer, which was commercially refurbished a short time ago; these websites are in need of a serious makeover. The lack of consistency among the sites in regards to the design and navigational structure, and a department-oriented approach, often makes it difficult for the citizens of Marquette County to obtain the services and information they seek. Those not familiar with County government, are not automatically aware that a birth certificate is available from the Clerk's office, a well permit can be obtained from Environmental Health, or that you can purchase a dog license from the Treasurer. In addition, after several years of adding content, and several iterations of web design software, we have been left with an abundance of extraneous code hiding behind the scenes in each of our websites. Although not apparent to visitors, this unnecessary and messy code adds to the time it takes for our web pages to load, thus frustrating users who have a slow Internet connection. It also increases the time required to maintain the sites. The maintenance of eight websites is no small feat. A ninth will be added when we create a new site for the County Road Commission. It is time to re-design all of our sites from the ground up, give them a fresh new look, and make it easier for the citizens to find what they need.

The best way to rectify the issues mentioned above is to purchase a website tool used by many government agencies today, a content management system. A content management system provides a professional interface to support the construction of, and facilitate the management of, a website. Without a content management system, re-designing our site could take many months, and the result could still be inferior to what a content management system could help produce.

In addition, because a content management system enforces the strict separation of design and content, we can allow designated staff-secure access through an Internet browser so that departments can update their own information as they deem necessary without any harm to the design or structure of the site.

To evaluate the numerous vendors that supply Content Management Software, and aide in the redesign of the websites, a Website Committee was created. The Website Committee established the selection criteria, reviewed potential vendors, and chose Revize Software Systems of Troy, Michigan. A complete evaluation process from the Website Committee was distributed. Also distributed was a cost breakdown for the complete system.

The Technology Fund will fund this purchase at a cost not to exceed \$25,000. This estimated amount will be used to purchase the software and training from Revize Software Systems. The cost also includes the

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required hardware components to be purchased separately. Annual maintenance of the software, with website hosting, is \$3,190.

Mr. Nault recommends the County of Marquette purchase the Content Management Software from Revize Software Systems and required hardware in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.

Discussion followed.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Arsenault, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board purchase the required software, hardware, and training from Revize Software Systems to re-design our numerous websites into citizen friendly sites, at a cost not to exceed \$25,000, and an annual maintenance of the software in the amount of \$3,190.

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The Committee considered a 2009 Budget Update. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that Commissioners were informed in November 2008 of a \$696,000 revenue reduction from the amount in the 2009 adopted budget and that a recommendation to balance the 2009 budget would be provided after the 2008 fiscal year was closed.

Except for some minor adjustments, the 2008 fiscal year is closed. Sue Vercoe, Finance Manager, is preparing the first quarter 2009 budget amendments for an April Committee of the Whole meeting. Rather than waiting an additional two months, this recommendation is provided as information for the Committee of the Whole or as a committee recommendation to be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners.

This recommendation balances the 2009 General Fund budget and allows time for the departments and Board of Commissioners to plan for 2010 and beyond. Careful management by department directors and elected officials, and their prudent fiscal and budget policies and oversight of the Board of Commissioners, enable the board to approach the \$696,000 problem carefully and strategically. This approach also provides an opportunity for the Board of Commissioners to provide policy and strategic direction prior to the departments preparing their 2010 budget requests. Such policy discussion and direction could be a good topic for the Board 's April planning session.

The recommendation uses unspent fund balances and under expenditures to maintain a balanced budget. While increasing rather than decreasing fund balances may be a wiser approach in these uncertain times, the current reserves provide reasonable protection, as defined by County policy and auditor's recommendations, against sudden economic changes, mistakes, or unknown budgetary changes. The revenue shortfall is \$696,000. The plan to balance the 2009 General Fund is as follows:

- 2007 equity not needed in 2008 \$165,000
- Unused 2008 contingency \$173,000
- Reduced 2009 General Fund Appropriation to Child Care Fund \$ 93,000
- Reduced 2009 General Fund Appropriation to Friend of the Court \$ 50,000
- Three Months Community Corrections Center 2009 Operating Budget \$225,000
- \$706,000

The Child Care and Friend of the Court funds have sufficient fund balances to allow the reduction in 2009 appropriations. Appropriations from the General Fund are made annually and comprise 54% and 38% of the funds, respectfully. The Community Corrections Center will not open in March.

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Discussion followed. Commissioners questioned Mr. Powers further on the plan to balance the 2009 general fund budget. They also questioned what effect this would have on the 2010 budget.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Wallace, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the budget recommendation as explained by Steve Powers, County Administrator.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment. Pete Mackin, Chocolay Township, requested that a member of the public be included on the Website Committee. There being no further public comment, Chairperson Corkin closed this portion of the meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Corkin updated the Committee regarding the DEQ hearings on the use of the Humboldt Project. He stated that Comm. Pellow read a letter from the County Board into the record. A letter from James Sodergren, Retired County Treasurer, was also read. Comm. Corkin commended everyone for their overwhelming support. He also announced that Republic Township sponsored a seminar relating to economic development in the Township.

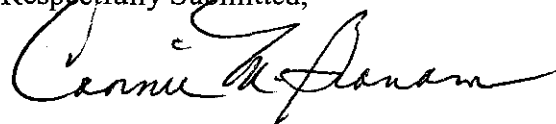
Comm. Pellow spoke regarding the Humboldt Project meeting and the Republic Township seminar. She stated that both events were very well attended. She was impressed with both the turnout and the support. Comm. Pellow also announced that Cliffs Mining is sponsoring a program at both Tilden Township and Richmond Township this week on the nugget process.

Comm. Cihak spoke regarding Senator Prusi's letter in the Mining Journal setting the facts straight regarding a DVD that has been sent out. He appreciated that Senator Prusi corrected the record. He also spoke regarding a MAC Judiciary meeting he attended. One of the speakers was the Chief of Staff for Senator Cropsey, Appropriations and Corrections Committee. He reiterated to those in attendance that when County Commissioners contact their legislators, they are heard!

Steve Powers, County Administrator, updated the County Board regarding the State Tax Commission letter to Dwight Sunday, Equalization Director.

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Connie M. Branam
Marquette County Clerk