
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING – TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2011 – 6:00 P.M. – ROOM 231, HENRY A. SKEWIS ANNEX, MARQUETTE, MI 49855

1. ROLL CALL.

- Call to Order by Chair at 6:00 p.m. – Room 231 Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette.
- Roll Call: Present: Commissioner Cihak, Commissioner Quayle, Commissioner Heikkila, Commissioner Corkin, Commissioner Joseph, Commissioner Pellow, Commissioner Nordeen, and Chairperson Bergdahl. - Absent: Commissioner Arsenault.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2011.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Joseph moved to approve the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on February 22, 2011 with the following correction: On Page 2 Agenda Item a) TIF & Development Plan Presentation – add the loss in tax revenue per year for the County and the City. Second by Commissioner Corkin. Motion adopted.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Heikkila moved to approve the Agenda with the following change: Move Item 8) Public Comment and Item 9) Commissioner Comments, Staff Comments and Announcements, before 7) Closed Session. Second by Commissioner Nordeen. Motion adopted.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Chairperson Bergdahl opened the meeting for public comment.

- Lowell Larson, Jr., Negaunee Township, President of the Sheriff's Department Deputies Union, spoke regarding collective bargaining for the Sheriff's Department Deputies. He also spoke regarding past cuts to the Sheriff's Department, part-time officers and the conditions at the Sheriff's Department.
- Lisa Johnson, Community Hand UP, requested to speak to Item 6e) Sawyer Fitness/Community Center.
- Pam Fjeldheim, Friends of Blueberry Ridge, thanked the County Board for their support of the project.

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

5. REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Corkin moved to approve Claims and Accounts for the period February 25, 2011 through March 3, 2011 in the amount of \$279,168.39. Second by Commissioner Pellow. Motion adopted.

6. AGENDA ITEMS:

a. Republic Township Update re: Republic Michigamme River Basin.

Gary Johnson, Republic Township Supervisor, presented the following information.

The Republic Michigamme River Basin Authority will be holding a public hearing on an expansion of the existing TIFA, March 24, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. at the Republic Township Hall.

Due to the negative cost of living last year, the cash projection for the TIFA, as it was implemented, will not provide sufficient capitol over its projected life span to retire the bonds necessary to purchase, refurbish and retrofit the dam to hydroelectric, as was originally planned. The low-head hydroelectric concept has been projected by our engineering firm as financially sound, and will provide the income for permanent maintenance of the facility after the TIFA sunsets.

We project the extra area, which is an inclusion of a relatively undeveloped portion of the river frontage to the west of the existing Authority boundary and a small portion of a riverfront residential section of South Republic, will provide us with sufficient bonding capitol to be able to achieve our goal. Large scale maps of the area to be annexed are available for viewing at the Township Hall.

We ask that the Board of Commissioners help a struggling community that is trying to pick itself up by it's own bootstraps, and to allow us to use the captured increases in value for the affected expansion area for the 18 years remaining on the existing TIFA.

Charles Hurst, Michigamme Basin Authority, was present to answer questions. Commissioner Quayle requested the amount of County dollars to be captured by the expansion.

Commissioner Quayle questioned the revenue loss for Marquette County.

Committee of the Whole Action: After discussion, Commissioner Pellow moved that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board approve the request from Republic Township to allow them to use the captured increases on the annexation of parcels to the currently existing TIFA District. Second by Commissioner Cihak. Motion adopted.

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b. Consideration of MNRTF Grant Application for Little Trout Lake Park Phase I.

Dottie Lewis, Planner, was present and explained the following:

Background

Little Trout Lake Park was adopted as a Marquette County owned Recreation Facility and included in the County of Marquette Recreation Plan in 2010. A Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application was submitted last year for park improvements such as the construction of a public restroom, new playground equipment and trails linking all features of the park. The grant application did not receive enough points to qualify for funding.

Sawyer Community meetings are conducted monthly and the community continues to request amenities to the park because it is the only park in the area. As such, revisions to the original grant application have been made to strengthen last year's application.

Little Trout Lake Park - Phase I is a development project to include the following improvements to the park:

- *Build a new restroom facility with hi-low outdoor drinking fountains. The restroom will be energy efficient with reduced water output, skylights for natural light and energy efficient motion lights.*
- *Remove the existing beach sand up to the permitted distance from the shoreline and replace with fresh, clean sand.*
- *Playmart playground system which is made from recycled structural plastic from recycled milk jugs. These playground systems meet the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines - Final Rule, are considered indestructible, graffiti proof and come with a 100 year warranty.*
- *Purchase and install a Mobi-Mat to lie on the beach. The Mobi-Mat provides access for wheelchairs, strollers, and pedestrians on sand or grass. It is light, portable polyester matting that is temporarily installed to provide access to Little Trout Lake.*
- *Develop the first phase of a three phase trail system that will ultimately link the residential areas to the elementary school and the school to the park. The first phase will link the school to the park.*
- *Four Road Commission approved signs will be purchased and installed throughout the Sawyer area to assist drivers with locating Little Trout Lake Park.*

The total estimated costs for Little Trout Lake Phase 1 are \$314,745. Trust fund grants require a minimum 25% match. This project would obligate the County of Marquette to \$78,687 if the grant is selected for funding by the MDNR.

Public Hearing

On March 2nd, 2011, the Marquette County Planning Commission conducted a public hearing to gather public comment on the proposed Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Application for Little Trout Lake Park. A notice of the public hearing was placed in the Mining Journal on Thursday, February 24, 2011.

Recommendation

The Marquette County Planning Commission discussed components of the proposed project. Commissioners voted unanimously in support of the proposed grant.

The Marquette County Planning Commission recommends the Marquette County Board of Commissioners support the Michigan Natural Resources Grant Application for Little Trout Lake and designates Chuck Bergdahl to sign a resolution committing up to \$78,687 or 25% of the matching funds for the project.

Committee of the Whole Action: After discussion, Commissioner Nordeen moved that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board support the Michigan Natural Resources Grant Application for Little Trout Lake and designate the Board Chair to sign the Resolution committing up to \$78,687 or 25% of the matching funds for the project. Second by Commissioner Pellow. Motion adopted.

c. Communication re: Negaunee Township Land Acquisition Grant Application.

Dottie Lewis, Planner, explained that the Marquette County Planning Commission has expressed their support of the grant application. She presented the following Letter of Support for approval:

The Marquette County Planning Commission and the Marquette County Board would like to express their support for the proposed Negaunee Township land acquisition grant application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Commissioners recognize the benefits to the township to secure land closest to their existing trail system while providing direct access to the Iron Ore Heritage Trail. In addition, this important acquisition will allow the Michigan Iron Industry Museum to have direct access to the Iron Ore Heritage Trail. This collaboration between government entities is a model of cooperation and furthers the goal of recreational trail development for our local citizens and tourists.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Corkin moved that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board Support the Proposed Negaunee Township Land Acquisition Grant Application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Second by Commissioner Heikkila. Motion adopted.

d. Communication re: Friends of Blueberry Ridge.

The following communications from the Resource Management/Development Department were presented regarding Marquette County Planning Commission support of the Friends of Blueberry Ridge project to construct a warm-up building at the Blueberry Ridge Ski Trail Head on County Road 553:

Dear Friends of Blueberry Ridge:

The Marquette County Planning Commission would like to express their appreciation on your mission to develop a warm-up building at the Blueberry Ridge Ski Trail Head on County Road 553 in Marquette County. Commissioners agree there is a need for the type of facility proposed. This facility would enhance winter recreation opportunities for active retirees that choose to live where these opportunities exist and provide a safe, warm location for younger skiers while they are waiting to be picked up by their parents. In general, public facilities that support recreation activity enhance our quality of life and make our county a desirable and healthier place to live.

Commissioners also understand that any recreation facility costs money to build and maintain. The proposed warm-up building would be a nice addition to other county owned recreation facilities but resources are limited for our existing facilities that we are committed to maintain.

*Sincerely,
Ken Kaiser, Secretary
Marquette County Planning Commission*

*Mr. David Kallio
Supervisor, Sands Township*

Dear Mr. Kallio,

On Wednesday, March 2, 2011 the Marquette County Planning Commission received a presentation by the Friends of Blueberry Ridge. As you know, it is the mission of this group to develop a warm-up building on the trailhead of the Blueberry Ridge Ski area and their current direction is to receive commitment from a local unit of government to enter into a lease agreement with the State of Michigan.

The Marquette County Planning Commission fully supports the concept and agrees the facility being proposed would enhance local recreation activities. Furthermore, the Commission believes the appropriate local unit of government to lease lands from the State of Michigan is the township where the land is located. The Marquette County Planning Commission agreed to consider some level of collaboration between the County and Sands Township should this project develop further.

Sincerely,

*Ken Kaiser, Secretary
Marquette County Planning Commission*

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Corkin moved to accept the communications for file. Second by Commissioner Joseph. Motion adopted.

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e. Sawyer Fitness/Community Center.

When the Committee of the Whole met on Tuesday, March 8, 2011, they considered the Sawyer Fitness/Community Center. Steve Powers, County Administrator, presented the Staff Review of Sawyer Fitness Center-Community Hand UP Business Plan. The review was done by Scott Erbsch, Sawyer Operations Manager, and Sue Vercoe, Finance Manager. Lisa Johnson, Community Hand Up, was present and responded to the Staff Review Summary of the Community Hand UP Business Plan.

Committee of the Whole Action: After discussion and debate, Commissioner Quayle moved to direct Staff to meet with Forsyth Township, West Branch Township and Community Hand UP and report to the County Board the involvement the two Townships and Community Hand UP will have in the Sawyer Fitness/Community Center, and the involvement the two Townships and Community Hand UP are requesting of Marquette County. Second by Comm. Nordeen. A roll call vote was recorded. Ayes: Commissioner Cihak, Commissioner Quayle, Commissioner Heikkila, Commissioner Pellow, Commissioner Nordeen, and Chairperson Bergdahl. Nays: Commissioner Corkin and Commissioner Joseph. Motion adopted 6 Ayes to 2 Nays.

f. Customer Service Payment Center.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, presented the following:

ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION: *Authorize Bidding The Project*

FISCAL IMPACT: *The estimated total project cost is \$258,000. The 2011 Public Improvement Fund has \$140,000 budgeted for Courthouse Annex renovations. The budget amount was based on just the Friend of the Court moving. The additional \$118,000 is available in the Public Improvement Fund. The 2010 year-end Public Improvement Fund balance is \$331,469.*

BACKGROUND: *Space on the first floor of the Annex, next to a heavily-used entrance to the Courthouse Complex, is vacant. The recommended use is co-locating the County Treasurer, Equalization & Tax Administration, and Finance, creating a customer service and payment center. District Court would also have work space in the area.*

Friend of the Court would expand into the area vacated by Finance on the second floor of the Annex. Friend of the Court would receive needed room to meet with customers in a secure, confidential setting. Space would be available for secure storage of Friend of the Court records, and space vacated by the Friend of the Court would be used for the District Court sobriety program and for an attorney/client meeting room.

The County Treasurer, Equalization Director, Finance Manager, and Friend of the Court all recommend proceeding. Please see attached information regarding the benefits of co-locating.

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Discussion of the project was postponed at the February 22 Committee of the Whole pending information regarding the Michigan Department of Human Services adding staff to the Marquette office. DHS will be adding staff but has no funds to pay for additional space or for renovations.

Consideration of a capital expenditure when the state of Michigan is reducing funding for counties may be considered ill-advised, and certainly the Public Improvement Fund balance could be used as one-time funding to support operations. There are, however, good reasons for proceeding. Co-location eliminates walls between departments, improves how the departments are working together, and improves service to the public. The project builds a foundation for the type of cooperation and sharing that Governor Snyder is requiring of local governments. The project will provide work space that is efficient, enabling departments to continue services when revenues are reduced. The Public Improvement Fund would not be an ongoing source of funding for county operations unless the Marquette County Public Improvement/Capital Improvement Plan is terminated.

If the Committee of Whole agrees with proceeding, the project will be advertised for bid, and a bid-award recommendation would be brought to the April 12 Committee of the Whole meeting.

If commissioners disagree with proceeding with the customer service and payment center, direction is requested regarding what use, if any, should be made of the vacant space.

Floor plans are available for review in the County Administrator's Office.

Anne Giroux, County Treasurer, and Jacki Lykins, Deputy Equalization Director, were present to explain the project and answer questions.

Committee of the Whole Action: After discussion, Commissioner Cihak moved that the project not be considered at this time. Second by Commissioner Nordeen. Motion adopted.

g. Labor Market Study.

Commissioner Quayle requested discussion of a Labor Market Study. John Greenberg, Human Resources and Risk Manager, presented the following:

In 1997, Marquette County completed a Compensation and Classification Study. A summary of the Labor Market Analysis is attached. The summary lists comparable counties and describes how they were chosen. In 1997, there were 18 counties within 40% of Marquette County's population and SEV, and 14 of these were chosen as comparables for the study. In 2007, our planning department reviewed the original 18 counties, along with others, in terms of the original criteria. They also added some criteria to give us an idea of how the relationships might have changed (copy attached).

A Labor Market Study can range from a complete review of all job classifications and the application of an equitable compensation system to a brief summary of overall wage and benefit changes among a list of comparable employers. The time involved and potential costs would vary accordingly.

Steve Powers, County Administrator, suggested that Commissioners decide what policy objectives they are trying to reach. What information is needed to help the Board with the financial oversight of our organization?

Committee of the Whole Action: After discussion, Commissioner Cihak moved that Commissioners direct their labor market questions and concerns to Steve Powers, County Administrator, to help determine the Board's policy objectives. Second by Commissioner Pellow. Motion adopted.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Chairperson Bergdahl opened the meeting for public comment:

- Lowell Larson, Jr., President, Sheriff's Department Deputies, requested he be included in Labor Market Study discussions.
- Dale Throenle spoke regarding the Little Trout Lake Project and the Sawyer Fitness/Community Center. He invited all to the next Sawyer Community Alliance meeting to be held on April 4, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.
- Lisa Johnson, Community Hand UP, responded to comments in regard to acquiring the Sawyer Fitness/Community Center.

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

9. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

- Commissioner Cihak reported on the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Marquette Regional History Center.
- Commissioner Corkin reported on the federal budget.
- Steve Powers, County Administrator, announced the retirement of Joe VanOosterhout, Central Dispatch Manager. Gary Johnson will be acting Manager.
- Commissioner Corkin announced that the retirement of Joe VanOosterhout will be a big loss for the entire Upper Peninsula, especially Marquette County. Joe was instrumental in establishing the UP 911 Authority.

7. CLOSED SESSION.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Pellow moved to go into Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268(c) for Strategy and Negotiations Sessions Connected with the following Negotiations of Collective Bargaining Agreements:

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- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Airport Employees.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Sheriff's Department Deputies.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement- Courthouse Employees.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Senior Officers.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Central Dispatch.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Health Dept. AFSCME.
- Consideration of 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Health Dept. Nurses.

Second by Commissioner Cihak. A roll call vote was recorded: 8 Ayes (Commissioner Cihak, Commissioner Quayle, Commissioner Heikkila, Commissioner Corkin, Commissioner Joseph, Commissioner Pellow, Commissioner Nordeen and Chairperson Bergdahl) to 0 Nays.
Motion adopted.

Chairperson Bergdahl declared a two minute recess to clear Commission Chambers.

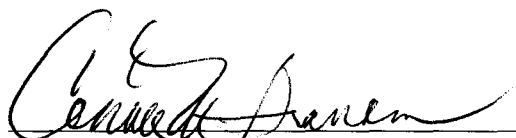
CLOSED SESSION

The County Board came back into Open Session.

Committee of the Whole Action: Commissioner Nordeen moved that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board ratify the 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Central Dispatch. Second by Commissioner Quayle. Motion adopted.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.



Connie M. Branam
Marquette County Clerk

Charles Bergdahl, Chairperson
Marquette County Board of Commissioners

Minutes Proposed for Approval on March 22, 2011.