

Minutes are Subject to Correction and Approval

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, December 13, 2005, at 6:30 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. Bergdahl, Comm. Cihak, Comm. Heikkila, Comm. Joseph, Comm. Struck, Comm. Wallace and Chairperson Corkin. Absent and excused: Comm. Arsenault and Comm. Pellow.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on November 22, 2005 be approved.

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

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

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Joseph, and unanimously carried by voice vote that Claims and Accounts for the period December 1, 2005 through December 9, 2005 in the amount of \$502,096.89, and bi-weekly payroll for the period ending December 3, 2005 in the amount of \$335,773.14 be approved.

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The Committee considered Sheriff's Department Vehicle Awards. David Lemire, Captain, Marquette County Sheriff's Department, explained that on Monday, December 5, 2005 bids were opened from four potential vendors for one 4-door, V-6 Police Administrative Detective Vehicle. Fifteen total bid request letters were sent out for the vehicles and the specifications posted on the Marquette County Website. Bids were received from Riverside Chevrolet, Escanaba, Crown Chevrolet, Negaunee, and Town & Country Sales, Quinnesec, Michigan. All vendors met or exceeded the bid specifications with the exception of the Town & Country bid. The low bidder was Frei Chevrolet of Marquette for the Chevrolet Impala 9C3 Undercover Police Package. Capt. Lemire recommends that Frei Chevrolet be awarded the bid for the vehicle.

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Heikkila, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board award the Police Administrative Detective Vehicle to Frei Chevrolet of Marquette for a total price of \$16,582.

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The Committee considered Sheriff's Department Vehicle Awards. David Lemire, Captain, Marquette County Sheriff's Department, explained that on December 5, 2005 bid openings were conducted at the Marquette County Sheriff's Department from three potential vendors for two General Police Patrol Vehicles. Fifteen total bid request letters were sent out for the vehicles and the specifications posted on

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the Marquette County Website. Bids were received from Riverside Chevrolet, Escanaba and Crown Chevrolet, Negaunee. All vendors met or exceeded the bid specifications. The low bidder was Frei Chevrolet of Marquette for the Chevrolet Impala 9C1 General Police Patrol Vehicles. Capt. Lemire recommends that Frei Chevrolet be awarded the bid.

It was moved by Comm. Wallace, seconded by Comm. Struck, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board award the two General Police Patrol Vehicles to Frei Chevrolet of Marquette in the amount of \$32,060.

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The Committee considered Sheriff's Department Vehicle Awards. David Lemire, Captain, Marquette County Sheriff's Department, explained that on Monday, December 5, 2005 bids were opened from three potential vendors for one Police Utility Vehicle. Fifteen total bid request letters were sent out for the vehicles and the specifications posted on the Marquette County Website. Bids were received from Riverside Chevrolet, Escanaba, Frei Chevrolet, Marquette, and Crown Chevrolet, Negaunee. All vendors met or exceeded the bid specifications. The low bidder was Town & Country Sales (Ford), Quinnesec, Michigan for the Ford Expedition. Capt. Lemire recommends the bid be awarded to Town & Country Sales.

It was moved by Comm. Struck, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board award the General Utility Vehicle to Town & Country Sales, Quinnesec, Michigan, in the amount of \$28,167.

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The Committee met on Tuesday, December 13, 2005, Steve Powers, County Administrator, presented an update regarding Federal Child Support Cuts. In October of 2006 Commissioners sent a letter to our Legislators regarding the reduction in rate of reimbursement of child support administrative expenses. Mr. Powers explained that Congress is considering cutting federal funding for Child Support Administration. The change would reduce the reimbursement rate from 66% to 50% by fiscal year 2010. For the Marquette County Friend of the Court, the reduction is \$160,000. This change will seriously harm County operations of the Friend of the Court.

The Marquette County Friend of the Court is a one-million-dollar operation. A cut of over 10 percent would require reductions in service. Marquette County has become more efficient, including the Friend of the Court. Efforts to reduce costs and improve services will continue; however, a \$160,000 cut to the Friend of the Court budget cannot be absorbed through office efficiencies. Marquette County's financial condition prevents us from absorbing the federal cut with local tax dollars. Marquette County has been forced to fund more State responsibilities as the State of Michigan's financial condition has deteriorated.

Carolyn Hanson, Friend of the Court, was present and explained that this reduction of Child Support Services amounts to \$250 million state-wide. She stated that one in three children would be

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affected. The responsibilities of the Child Support Agency are daunting, working with non-custodial parents that run the gamut of those truly unable to support their children to those who have the ability to pay who purposely avoid their obligation. Add to this the hurt, anger, and frustration of custodial parents left with the entire burden (financial and emotional) of providing for the children, and you have an agency that is overwhelmed. To reduce funding for the Child Support Agency will only lead to more hardship for these families and is very shortsighted. Ms. Hanson further explained that these cuts in Child Support will force families to use the welfare system.

Commissioners stated that this is government at its worst. Chairperson Corkin explained that MAC is lobbying hard. Child support is an essential service for many Marquette County residents. The Marquette County Friend of the Court has set performance goals to better serve the public. A reduction to 50% would cause delays in service and set back our efforts on interstate cases.

It was moved by Comm. Cihak, seconded by Comm. Heikkila, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send a follow-up letter to our Legislators regarding the reduction in the rate of reimbursement of child support administrative expenses.

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The Committee considered a Draft Resolution Supporting Mining Oversight and Reclamation Board. Steve Powers, County Administrator, explained that the Oversight Board would provide a forum for discussion of ideas, issues and concerns from the Operators, Local Governments, Townships, the DEQ, and the General Public, would monitor the enforcement of compliance with the statutes, rules and regulations, applicable to mining extraction activities, and advising the Operators, the MDEQ, and the General Public of its findings and concerns, continuing and encouraging the open and constructive exchange of information between the Operators, the MDEQ, and the General Public regarding mineral extraction activities and impacts. Number 4 in the Resolution states "reviewing and commenting on plans for mine expansions, mitigation, and reclamation." Mr. Powers recommends that Number 4 be expanded to include, "reviewing and commenting on rules, laws, plans, and future modifications for mine expansions, mitigation and reclamation, and other activities as may serve to enhance cooperation and information exchange between all the parties and stakeholders". He explained that the intent would be to have a local setting for the issues and concerns that have been brought up, and believes will continue to be brought up, as mining takes place in Marquette County.

Staff has reviewed the Draft Rules. They do not believe the rules would allow for the establishment of an Oversight Board, however, they do believe and recommend the County Board provide this Resolution to the DEQ, as well as our Legislators and the Governor, to inform them of Marquette County's intent but not to ask that it be included in the Rules. He explained that in addition to the statutory legal problems that it might create, he believes it is important that this be reviewed and discussed with the Operators and the Townships that would be involved, and not have this become a State initiative or State effort but keep it local and have it developed locally.

Harley Andrews, Chief Civil Counsel, re-emphasized Mr. Powers' comments. He stated the DEQ could not set up this kind of body even if it wanted to within the current Rules development phase. It would require some kind of statutory authorization which would require a statutory amendment from the

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Legislature. He explained that another option for establishing this kind of body, if not by legislation, would be by a contractual agreement with the Operator. Mr. Andrews stated that the main objective with this document is to put the State on notice that this kind of body is not only being considered, but is strongly being recommended and sought by the Marquette County Board and the communities it represents.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion with staff regarding this type of organization. They believe this concept would be a place for individuals to express their interests and concerns.

It was moved by Comm. Joseph, seconded by Comm. Bergdahl, and unanimously carried by voice vote that the Committee of the Whole recommend the County Board send the Resolution to the MDEQ and proceed with implementation discussions with the MDEQ, Operators, and affected Townships.

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Chairperson Corkin opened the meeting for public comment.

Cynthia Pryor, Big Bay, was present and applauded the County Board for making the decision to recognize that an Oversight Board is needed. It allows local governments and the public the ability to monitor the operation. She stated at this point she has more questions than she does comments. She hopes that an open public forum will be held to take comment and a question and answer portion so that citizens can understand exactly what is being talked about.

Jim Sodergren, Former Marquette County Treasurer, Ishpeming Township, was present and stated that an Oversight Board is an important key for the opening of that mine. He also feels that government officials should know exactly what the revenue is going to be. He feels the mining company should know the cost to them. He stated that the County should also know the amount of taxes to be paid. Mr. Sodergren is happy with the progress that is being made so far but feels legislation would help tremendously.

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

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Heikkila announced the Commission on Aging Board met today and discussed finding options for the different programs and services. He stated priorities are being set. Also discussed was contract language with the Commission on Aging and Senior Centers. He stated it was an excellent discussion and is moving forward. The next meeting is scheduled for December 27, 2005.

Chairperson Corkin announced that a third-party was interviewed to oversee the aging issues.

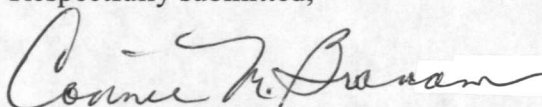
Comm. Struck commented on the terrible tragedy at the Mather Nursing Home. He stated it was a sad event for the whole community and the families that were affected. He hopes other Nursing Homes have proper fire prevention equipment and emergency plans in place.

Comm. Joseph announced that the Marquette County Medical Board will be meeting on December 14th, 4:00 P.M. and will discuss the Mather Nursing Home tragedy, prevention, and their emergency plans.

Comm. Wallace announced the Board of Health will meet December 14, 2005 at 6:30 P.M. in Room 231 of the Courthouse Annex to consider supporting two Collective Bargaining Agreements.

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Connie M. Branam
Marquette County Clerk

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2005, 6:30 P.M.
Room 231, Henry A. Skewis Annex, Marquette, MI 49855
www.co.marquette.mi.us

~~1.~~ ROLL CALL.

~~2.~~ APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of the COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD ON NOVEMBER 22, 2005.

~~3.~~ PUBLIC COMMENT.

~~4.~~ APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

~~5.~~ Review of Claims and Accounts.

~~6.~~ Sheriff's Department Vehicle Awards:

~~a.~~ Administrative Detective Vehicle.

~~b.~~ Road Patrol Vehicle.

~~c.~~ ~~Rescue Safety~~ SUV Utility Vehicle.

~~7.~~ Update regarding Federal Child Support Cuts.

~~8.~~ Resolution on Mining Oversight Board.

9.

10.

11.

~~12.~~ PUBLIC COMMENT.

~~13.~~ COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

~~14.~~ ADJOURNMENT.