

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
July 24, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners was called to order in the Commissioners Room by Chairperson Linda Socha at 9:30 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

Present: Commissioners Linda Socha, Don Horrocks, Pete Redmond, Cal Gouine, Tony Matelski, John Wallace, and Sue Allor

Absent: None

Commissioner Wallace gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Horrocks, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Veterans Services Coordinator Mike Wise presented a written report for 2011 on the Cheboygan County Department of Veterans Services which included the department's accomplishments and community participation in 2011 as well as conferences and training he attended. The report listed the following Projects for 2012 which either have or will be instituted Veterans Identification Cards; office visit survey; on-going consults with VA to expand Gaylord Clinic courtesy van rides to transport veterans from the Mackinaw City Outpatient Clinic for medical appointments at Saginaw, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek and Detroit VA facilities; expand Straits Regional Ride service for veterans; expand outreach efforts county-wide for services; and explore possibilities for acquiring a DAV van for providing local veterans ride to the VA Clinics in Mackinaw City and Gaylord. The report also included a recap of revenues and expenditures report for county, state and national VA funds. Fiscal year totals from 2006-2011 were provided showing the distribution of VA expenditures paid to Cheboygan County Veterans in the form of disability compensation, pension, education, insurance and indemnities from claims filed in the Cheboygan County Veterans Office, the amount for 2011 totaled \$13,546,000.

MSU Extension District 3 Coordinator Patrick Cudney highlighted the 2011-2012 MSU Extension Annual Report for Cheboygan County. During this period in Cheboygan County 3,965 participated in 4-H Children & Youth Programs, 146 participated in Agriculture & Agribusiness, 102 in Greening Michigan programs, and 4,755 in Health & Nutrition programs. He introduced the staff in the Cheboygan office, Melanie Chiodini, 4-H & Youth Educator; Leigh Ann Theunick, 4-H Program Coordinator; Patti Spinella, SNAP-Ed Program Coordinator; and Mary McTevia, Office Manager. He also introduced summer intern Amanda Douglas. Ms. Theunick said volunteers with youth are passionate for their service and noted that MSUE has been tremendous to her during her job training over the past eight months. She said the 4-H Spring Achievement Day was a tremendous success this year. She reported fifteen local youth attended the annual 4-H Exploration Days on the campus of Michigan State University. Chairperson Socha asked why Mackinaw City School youth do not participate. Ms. Theunick said she would love to add them if they are interested. Ms. Chiodini said they have been doing more work with area schools and will be doing the First Books programs again this year. She said an \$11,000 grant has been awarded to the build a greenhouse at the Wolverine Schools. Chairperson Socha said the structural changes made within MSUE has proven to be a very good thing for this county.

Director of North Country Community Mental Health Alexis Kaczynski and North Country Board member Ed Ginop addressed the board. Ms. Kaczynski said North Country is the public mental health agency serving the counties of Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Kalkaska and Otsego, created under legislation and provide a range of services to persons with serious mental illness and

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developmental disabilities. This year the budget is 38 million dollars on the provider's side and the Medicaid contract is a 75 million dollar contract. She said 80% of their funding is Medicaid, only 13% of the budget is State General Funds, 1.7% is county funding. She said because they are a mental health authority the county contributions have not increased since 1997. Last year North Country served 4,000 persons, individuals with developmental disabilities accounted for only 17% of that number, but 59% of the spending. Ms. Kaczynski said North Country provides a range of services from infant mental health to nursing home consultations and services at all points in between. She said this fiscal year close to 15 million dollars of the 38 million was spent on residential services for persons with development disabilities alone. Ms. Kaczynski said North Country CMH is a nationally accredited organization and is reviewed every three years against national standards, and also due to federal funding an external review process which is similar. They are reviewed annually by the Michigan Department of Public Health, have annual financial audits and annual compliance audits. The Cheboygan County offices are located in the Doris Reid Center where direct services are provided. Among programs funded in this county are Straits Area Services and the Beacon Center. The administration overhead and managed care overhead are each about six percent among the lowest in the State. She said the Mental Health Code provides for the establishment of local community mental health boards; it provides for the establishment of mental health authorities; it talks about the range of services that must be provided and the duties of the board; it provides that each county appoints representatives to the board. The board consists of fourteen members. The Mental Health Code also provides for local match, requiring that 10% of the matchable budget of the CMH program be local funding. She explained the difference between 1.7% county funded and 10% of matchable budget is because the net budget does not include the large amount of federal funding received thus minimizing the county contributions. The Mental Health Code was established in 1963 to remove the focus of care from large state facilities. Now most people with mental health disorders are treated in the community. She distributed the 2011 Annual Report. North Country CMH Board Member Ed Ginop said it is amazing the difference between what CMH does now compared to thirty years ago when he started on the board. He said Alexis is very dedicated to her job as director of North Country. He said this is the most complicated board he has ever been involved with; and he appreciates the opportunity of being on this board for so long. Commissioner Allor asked Ms. Kaczynski to give a brief overview of the affordable care act. Ms. Kaczynski said she believes the greatest thing coming from the affordable care act is the potential increase in Medicaid recipients when the eligibility changed to 103% of poverty. The other important change in eligibility is that poverty will be the only qualifying factor. She said currently there are a lot of poor people in Michigan who do not have Medicaid because it requires qualifying criteria other than poverty, but under the affordable care act the qualification should be the same throughout the country. It will result in a two prong system because it would not be the same as the other Medicaid recipients get. With the implementation of exchanges there will be an increase in the insurance coverage for all people in the country. Commissioner Allor said there is potential for the authority to increase the number of counties. Ms. Kaczynski said the standards for hospitalization have changed all across the board. She said hospitalization is very difficult because they lost the unit in Petoskey, but they are very thankful for War Memorial Hospital in the Sault. North Country Community Mental Health is one of the funding sources for NMSAS and NMSAS has representation on the North Country affiliation board. Ms. Kaczynski said they did participate with NMSAS on care for persons with mental health issues and substance abuse issues. Ms. Kaczynski said they work continuously to improve and maintain high quality levels of service. Mr. Ginop noted the geographical size of the area covered by North Country and the amount of driving time involved can be a deterrent.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Administrator Lawson's written report included information on Recycling, the Doris Reid Building; Phase One County Building Improvements; the Health Access Advisory Committee, and Medical Insurance Policy Amendment. He noted the results of an analysis of the first six months of 2012 compared to the same period in 2012 showed a savings of about \$23,000 for recycling operating with County equipment and staff as compared to contracting with a private waste hauler. Chairperson Socha said using J & N as a backup appeared to work well.

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Lawson reported that five bids were received for the Phase I Animal Shelter Improvements. The confirmed low bid was in the amount of \$244,978; however it was disqualified because after the bid opening that bidder requested an increase to their bid based on not reviewing the

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bid documents properly. The second lowest bid was in the amount of \$306,850 from Birchwood Construction. He said Birchwood has submitted all the required information to confirm their bid as well as the cost to obtain a performance and payment bond for the project. The total financial impact including performance and payment bond is \$314,521.25 to be paid with the donations raised by the Cheboygan County Humane Society in the amount of \$190,000 and \$124,521.25 to be paid from County funds.

Motion by Commissioner Matelski, seconded by Commissioner Horrocks, to approve AIA Owner-Contractor Agreement with Birchwood Construction in the amount of \$314,521.25 for Phase I improvements to the Animal Shelter building and authorize the Chair to sign. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – Commissioner Wallace asked when the presentation from NEMAH regarding the Housing Program was scheduled for. Administrator Lawson said the second meeting in August.

Commissioner Matelski said several township assessors have received letters on MSU College of Law letterhead from Dimity Palazzola of the Alvin L. Storrs Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic requesting information regarding poverty exemptions. In the letter she requests to waive any FOIA fees as she is working with indigent people in trouble with the IRS. Chairperson Socha said she received the same letter. Administrator Lawson said the Equalization Department did also and Joe Lavender plans to call the MSU College of Law. It is not clear if this is a research based request, and perhaps the Cheboygan MTA could inquiry about this. Treasurer Cronan said there is an issue with some of the townships who require income tax papers as many who qualify for a poverty exemption do not have to file income taxes.

Commissioner Matelski said a couple of months ago the local MTA heard from the 2-1-1 group and agreed to contribute \$1500 towards the 2-1-1 program. He said the Tribune published a picture of the check exchange for \$2500 for the 2-1-1 fund. Commissioner Allor said in order to receive the \$2500 they had to come up with a match. Commissioner Matelski said that is not how he understood this. Chairperson Socha said Charlevoix and Emmet counties received requests and did not contribute. Administrator Lawson said the group is tentatively scheduled to be at our County Commissioners meeting in September. Chairperson Socha asked him to determine if it is legal for the county to contribute. She said she thinks it is premature to come before this board.

Commissioner Allor said somewhat related to this, yesterday she was at the Area Agency on Aging meeting and there was woman from the state talking regarding people being passed around from state department to state department to have questions answered. They see this as a problem. So they are doing a study to see if they should establish entities in certain counties to be the go to agency to ensure that questions are being answered properly. Commissioner Allor said she wonders why they don't just train the people in Lansing to know the answers. The entity she talked about would be redundant to 2-1-1.

Commissioner Matelski said he requested information on the W-2's for all road and county commissioners. He has not received this on county commissioners but did get information from road commission. He also requested the in-lieu-of or amount insurance costs if they do take the insurance. He said we need to be as transparent as we can.

Commissioner Matelski asked what the deadline is to place a proposal regarding elimination of the County Road Commission on the November ballot. The deadline for any ballot proposals is August 28, 2012. Discussion held. Chairperson Socha said the Board of Commissioners supported the townships for legislation to allow up to 5 road commissioners and then voted to increase the membership. A motion by Commissioner Matelski to place a proposal on the November ballot to eliminate the Cheboygan County Road Commission Board died for lack of support.

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Chairperson Socha said any board member interested in attending the MAC conference September 23-25 at Shanty Creek should contact Kathy Morrow.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Redmond, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Linda Socha
Chairperson