

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
April 23, 2013**

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, Bruce Gauthier, 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 Gauthier, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Sheriff Dale Clarmont presented the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department Life Saving Awards to Deputy Jeffrey Bur, Deputy Ronald Fenlon, Deputy Joshua Ginop, and Search and Rescue Deputy Daniel Socha for executing a successful search and rescue operation for a reported missing person. The four Deputies and Fire Chief Socha tracked the victim through 5 miles of deep woods and snow over a 24-hour period during the harsh winter weather. The 38-year-old victim was found by these men disoriented and severely hypothermic. The successful lifesaving search and rescue mission brought great credit to the deputies and chief themselves, the Inverness Fire Department, and the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department. For Deputies Jeffrey Bur and Ronald Fenlon, this was their second Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department Life Saving Award to be received during their careers. Emmet County Sheriff Pete Wallin, representing the Michigan Sheriffs' Association, presented an additional award to each of the four on behalf of the statewide sheriffs' association.

Sheriff Dale Clarmont then presented the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department Life Saving Award to Joe Lavender and Matthew Drake, special deputies for Search and Rescue missions. The Sheriff's department recognized these two gentlemen for their life saving actions which took place on February 1st, 2013. These two gentlemen executed a successful search and rescue operation utilizing the department hovercraft after there was a reported snowmobiler that went through the ice on Mullet Lake. Deputy Drake operated the hovercraft to locate the victim, and Deputy Lavender swam to retrieve the victim. Their professional actions were lifesaving to the 63-year-old man who had become disoriented during blizzard conditions on Mullett Lake. The victim was extremely hypothermic and near death when he was recovered by the deputies. Their actions have brought great credit to the deputies themselves, the Inverness Fire Department, the City of Cheboygan Fire Department and the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Socha extended thanks and gratitude to the six gentlemen on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and the citizens of Cheboygan County. She commented that the Cheboygan County Search and Rescue team has a 100% find rate thus far. She noted that the Search and Rescue/Dive team members volunteer their time and services, stating their community service and courage displayed does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

Commissioner Socha read a Certificate of Appreciation for Beatrice Whitman for 13 years of service as a member of the Cheboygan County Jury Board. Ms. Whitman was unable to attend the meeting.

Prosecutor Daryl Vizina presented the 2012 Annual Report for the Prosecutor's office. The Prosecuting Attorney's caseload for 2012 was at 1,175 cases, which included felonies, misdemeanors, juvenile, abuse/neglect petitions through the Department of Human Services, mental health hearings, and some civil and traffic matters. This caseload figure does not include the cases handled by the Child Support division of the Prosecutor's office received from the State of Michigan. The Child Support cases generally either establish paternity or establish child support. In those cases, there are state benefits being paid out to individuals and the state seeks the assistance of the Prosecuting Attorney's office to be reimbursed from the individuals receiving benefits. There were approximately 95 of those cases processed in 2012. There was a total of 1,265 cases processed through the Prosecuting Attorney's office in 2012. That caseload figure is comparable to previous year caseloads. He highlighted three significant cases processed in 2012, *People vs. Jerry Hickerson (Criminal Sexual Conduct)*, *People vs. Darren Lee Vincent (Methamphetamine Lab)* and *People vs. Destiny Olesnavage (Criminal Sexual Conduct)*. The felony breakdown of the overall caseload processed by the Prosecutor's office in 2012 included 36.8% of the cases which were directly drug or alcohol cases (i.e. delivering a controlled substance, use of a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance). The second highest case type in the overall caseload was property crimes at 31.4% (i.e. breaking and entering, larceny in a building, home invasion). This type of illegal activity increased 3.5% from 2011. The third highest case type in the overall caseload was sexual crimes at 14.5%, which increased 7% from 2011. The fourth highest case type in the overall caseload was crimes against person (i.e. assault, domestic violence) at 10.1%, which had decreased 5.3% from 2011. The Prosecutor made a finding that the case types including *crimes against person* and *property crimes* could be directly related to the number/occurrence of *drug or alcohol crimes*, in that the crimes being committed against a person are generally being committed while the individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Methamphetamine use has the most noticeable increase in occurrence. In 2008, there were zero reported cases involving methamphetamines; 2009, there were eight reported cases; 2010, there were thirty four reported cases; 2011, there were fifty one reported cases; and in 2012, there were seventy seven reported cases involving methamphetamines. There has been a steady climb in the number of these cases, and multiple felony charges can stem from a single incident. Also notable is the increase in the number of prescription drug abuse cases. There were 43 cases of prescription drug abuse in 2011, and 44 cases in 2012. Prosecutor Vizina also reported some statistics regarding felon characteristics. Of the individuals convicted of felonies in 2012, 61% of them were high school drop outs, 72% had a history of rehabilitation or abuses regarding drugs and/or alcohol, 77% have had a very limited to nonexistent work history, and the individuals convicted of felonies in 2012 have a combined total of 91 minor children. Prosecutor Vizina reported his office developed Domestic Violence Policy. The *Violence Against Women* Grant money was utilized in the development of this policy. The purpose of the policy was to give his office more tools in assessing these difficult cases, as well as quicker response to access counseling and rehabilitation services. Prosecutor Vizina stated a concerning statistic was that as of the end of the year in 2012, there were 2,491 minor children in Cheboygan County receiving state assistance in some form. In 2012, the Cheboygan County Prosecutor's office established paternity in 12 cases and they established 35 orders of child support cases with state-assistance dependent children. Prosecutor Vizina and his office is actively involved in the 53rd Circuit Court Drug Court, the 89th District Court Sobriety Court, and the Juvenile Mental Health Court.

Commissioner Gauthier questioned Prosecuting Attorney Vizina on what his role is in the Mental Health hearings. Prosecutor Vizina stated that he is there to represent the State of Michigan. He said he does a substantial amount of traveling to Alpena, Sault Ste. Marie, Kalamazoo and other locations in order to be in attendance at the hearings. The hearings are conducted for individuals that have been residentially placed in hospitals or care facilities for their mental illnesses/breakdowns. In 2012, there were 11 mental health hearings that took place. C

Commissioner Gauthier also mentioned his support and agreement with the prosecutor regarding the amount spent dealing with criminal issues. Prosecutor Vizina commented that this affects so many levels of operation and funding within Cheboygan County that it reaches far outside of just his office but out to members of the community being aware of the issues at large as well (i.e. local business owners, health care professionals). Commissioner Matelski asked about the number of convicted felons that have committed drug/alcohol crimes who also committed crimes against persons and/or property. Prosecutor Vizina did not have an exact figure, but explained that a lot of crimes are intertwined with various types of different charges, including drug/alcohol offenses occurring with property damage/crimes or against persons charges. Commissioner Matelski asked the average age of the felons in Cheboygan County. Prosecutor Vizina stated the approximate average is 29 years of age. Commissioner Gauthier wanted to know how many felons convicted in Cheboygan County courts were raised in Cheboygan County and were brought up through the public school system. Prosecutor Vizina was unsure of that statistic. He did report that every time an individual is charged with a felony in Cheboygan County, it is a requirement of the Court to conduct an interview called a Presentence Investigation which is conducted by the Department of Corrections for the State of Michigan. The Department of Corrections collects the necessary data from the individual, and then they contact the schools they attended, their families, their substance abuse histories (if existent) and conduct a complete background check of that individual.

Prosecutor Vizina stated the Prosecutor's office is currently operating with a Chief Assistant Prosecutor, an Assistant Prosecutor and a S.A.N.E. Prosecutor (who operates in multiple counties). The Domestic Violence Prosecutor, Kerry Zahner, has not been operational in the Cheboygan County Prosecutor's office for the past 8 months. The office currently has the lowest number of attorneys it has operated with since 2003. Additionally, there are five staff members – a Victim Rights Coordinator, a Child Support Specialist, an Office Manager and two support staff. One staff member left in early 2012 and it was decided that that position would not be filled. Currently, the office is at the lowest staff it's had since 1995. Historically, the Prosecutor's office has hired a summer intern, but that option has not been exercised in the last five years. Prosecutor Vizina said his office has focused on fiscal responsibility and the financial health of his office, as well as the responsible use of Cheboygan County resources. The physical office of the Prosecuting Attorney and staff has taken on changes by reducing the paper files in the office, done by scanning and saving the documents digitally. Office space is no longer a concern because of that action, and the office is actively trying to make all of its correspondence paperless. Prosecutor Vizina has eliminated the \$4,000 on-call weekend compensation to Assistant Prosecutors as well as the use of a Cheboygan County funded vehicle for the Prosecutor. Prosecutor Vizina added that his office has streamlined their resources; his staff has been reduced down more than it has been in 18 years and yet the office has increased operations. Sheriff Clarmont stated that the accessibility of the Prosecuting Attorney and his staff has increased dramatically since Prosecutor Vizina's election. The Sheriff commended Prosecutor Vizina for being cognizant in his position, and also for being firm and fair with the resources allocated. Sheriff Clarmont acclaimed the Prosecutor for being a strong catalyst in going paperless, and that this action poses significant cost savings for not only his department but all departments who interact with the Prosecutor's office. Commissioner Socha, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and the citizens of Cheboygan County commended Prosecutor Vizina and his staff for their continued positive efforts, including their notable fiscal responsibility.

Commissioner Gauthier questioned Prosecutor Vizina regarding the duties of the Victim's Rights Coordinator in his office and the Victim's Coordinator in the Sheriff's Department, and if their duties overlap. Prosecutor Vizina responded by stating that Peggy Mills, the Victim Rights Coordinator in his office is responsible for contacting any victims identified in a criminal charge and staying in contact with that person from the charge all the way through prison, parole or release to identify any concerns and coordinate proper restitution reimbursement, if ordered. The Victim's Rights Group through the Sheriff's department is volunteers that assist the deputies in going out to the scene of a crime, fire, etc.

Commissioner Socha thanked Prosecutor Vizina for his report, for his work in Cheboygan County, and for being cogitative of his fiscal responsibility.

Community Development Director Steve Schnell presented the 2012 Community Development Annual Report. Director Schnell highlighted what the Community Development Department has done to meet the Board of Commissioner's goals and the needs of the citizenry. The Community Development Department includes Planning and Zoning, Soil Erosion, Code Enforcement, Ordinance Enforcement, Geographic Information System Services, Address Enforcement, Building/Electrical/Plumbing/Mechanical Inspection, Building Safety and staff support for the Economic Development Corporation. Community Development Director Steve Schnell outlined his department's contributions to the five goals set forth by the County Board of Commissioners. The first goal, *public safety*, has been focused on by the Community Development department through addressing general building safety. Currently, there has been an increase of building inspectors actually operating in the field; approximately one hour more per day. The Department has also addressed closing out historically open building permits. Additionally, Building Official Allan Hoard has also joined the local Builders Association and participates on the Board of the Building Association to allow for more communication between the Department and the local builders. The second goal, *quality county service*, has been recognized through the Community Development department by increasing communication with the citizenry and doing so more frequently. More specifically, that is sought by utilizing staff time more efficiently, like increasing the amount of time Building Inspectors are out in the field inspecting rather than focusing on paperwork. Director Schnell has encouraged cross-training amongst his staff so that the inspectors, for instance, can also assist a citizen with an address change or a zoning enforcement matter. The use of various staff skills and cross-training for various cross-departmental needs has increased the efficiency of staff time. The Department has also streamlined the Building Permit review process, cutting it down by approximately two weeks, which has increased citizen satisfaction in getting site plans for approval before the Planning Commission more quickly. The Department of Community Development has been working with various townships within the county to increase communications regarding the flood plain permits. Additionally, assistance and reviews for the flood plain permit process have become more efficient for the public at large because of changes in the Department of Community Development. Web based mapping has contributed to a thorough public input process and minimizes staff time. Regarding the extensive Master Plan public input processes, there have been at least 24 public meetings; 14 of those meetings were at locations other than the Cheboygan County Building to retrieve diverse public input. Ongoing addressing issues are also being reviewed. The third goal, *economic development*, has been recognized through the Community Development department through staff providing support and coordination for the County's efforts to develop the US 23 Heritage Route website. The website won a national award for travel websites and is being used for a model for various other trail websites. The department is emphasizing pre-application meetings for developers within the community to provide long-term advice and to hedge any future issues that may arise, and addressing all of it before they submit any applications. Additionally, there is much better communication between planning/zoning and building safety which provides the opportunity to do as much pre-application communications that are taking place. The fourth goal, *collaboration – service*, has been addressed through the Community Development department staff working closely with the NLEA staff to help promote their entrepreneurial support services throughout the county. The staff also provides support for the Northern Cheboygan Intermunicipal Planning Commission (NCCIPC) and they facilitated the commission's input on the County-wide Master Plan and future land use map. The fifth goal, *addressing multiple facility needs*, has been addressed through the Community Development department staff as they continue to produce the annual Planning Commission 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as is required by state law. The department has been in compliance within the last four years. The CIP process is utilized to coordinate efforts of multiple County entities and their facilities. This CIP is also used to support the annual Strategic Planning & Budgeting process for the County. Additionally, GIS has been working with Straits Regional Ride and various townships within the County to designate specific routes (i.e. bus routes, township road brine priority routes, recreational assets planning).

Community Development Director Steve Schnell reported on various ordinance amendments that have taken place throughout 2012 to accomplish the goals of the County Master Plan. In regards to zoning permits, the department is still receiving fewer zoning permits compared with years prior to 2006, but the decrease is less severe each year. In 2012 there was a 1.8% increase in the total number of zoning permits issued (resulting in an additional 6 permits). The department is hopeful that the amount of permits will remain stable and increase in the current year and beyond.

Building Official Al Hoard thanked the Board of Commissioners for bringing him into his current position nearly two years ago. He also expressed that he thoroughly enjoys working with County Administrator Jeff Lawson and Community Development Director Steve Schnell. In regards to building safety, he reported that the building industry has seen decline for the past ten years. For Cheboygan County, the building industry is one of the top employers of Cheboygan citizens, and he supports that the entire economic health of the community at large depends on the activity of the workforce, especially those employed by the building industry because there are so many variables involved with building/construction. One of the first tasks Al Hoard received was the development of the Historical Open Permit Remediation Program (HOPR Program). He was also tasked with streamlining the processes in the Building Safety Department and eliminating process waste. He has seen the successes in doing so. The HOPR Program was designed to accommodate for a steady, but gradual elimination of all expired permits in the system. Considering staff capacity, it is estimated that the HOPR program will take 5 years to complete, averaging 2,000 permits to close each year. From May to December of 2012 the department closed out 1,229 permits. New software in the department has helped develop a way to prevent the same mistakes from happening again – the new software alerts you to when the permits are expiring, when to address them, notifications for contractors, etc. The staff is more than adept and capable at taking on the aforementioned tasks. Mr. Hoard also has addressed the generally bad reputation the department had held in years past. To make changes, the department has partnered with various sources and has received great responses for improvements through those community partnerships. He said 2012 was at the lowest in reported construction values for the last ten years, but the first three months in 2013 has brought those values \$8500 ahead of the same range of dates in 2012. The turnover for building permits – from the time it is received by the department, to the first set of comments or final approval – has become more efficient, with turnover being approximately 4-5 days.

Commissioner Redmond commented and thanked Al Hoard, Steve Schnell and the entire Community Development and Building Safety Departments. He stated that he has seen a complete turnaround in that administration as compared to years past. Chairperson Socha also thanked Al Hoard for the departmental emphasis on community service, as it is what the Board of Commissioners and the public expect. She stated that the actions taking place in both departments are positive reinforcement for the progression of community development; other counties are not doing what Cheboygan County is doing regarding the various improvements taking place.

Commissioner Allor asked what conditional rezoning means. Director Schnell stated that the State of Michigan added a provision in the state enabling laws that allows for planning commissions and boards of commissioners to do a standard rezoning. Standard rezoning changes a zoning district and you can either go from commercial to agriculture, and you would then be responsible for dealing with every use/approval in that new zoning district. Commissioner Allor asked whether or not this policy change had been utilized yet. Director Schnell said that it has not been utilized yet in Cheboygan County. Additionally, the implementation of a standard rezoning condition remains with the parcel forever, unless stipulated otherwise by the property owners. Commissioner Matelski asked if the 2012 Community Development Department Annual Report is on the Cheboygan County website. Director Schnell reported that it would be posted that day. Commissioner Matelski would like it available to individuals who may be wondering about what Cheboygan County departments have been doing and spending to regarding economic development, and he feels this department is serving as a great example over those

processes. Commissioner Socha commented regarding one of her original tasks which was to improve planning and zoning. One thing that was promised was that the better tools to assist staff in accomplishing tasks. This in turn led to the development of BS&A upgrade and the utilization of Bryan Graham and his law firm for civil counsel. Director Schnell thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support in making the necessary changes that the department has seen over the last few years and he is very pleased with the open-mindedness and communications of his staff, as well. Mr. Schnell reported that for 2013 there are hopes that a new digital signatures policy will come before the Board of Commissioners. This would allow for individuals who are away from Cheboygan County to submit required signatures digitally. The department would be the first in the state under a new public act that would allow for the admittance of digital signatures on various departmental forms and online submissions. Also, the department will be taking on Home Improvement Loan Services through the Cheboygan County Housing Commission. The Cheboygan County Housing Commission is on board with making streamlining changes in that processes as well.

MSU Extension Educator Melanie Chiodini made an announcement regarding 4H Youth Development and their *Cooking Matters* program press release. Additionally, there is a Remote Operated Vehicles two day workshop for 4H Program instructors, volunteers and teachers on May 18 and 19. Leigh Ann Theunick, 4-H Program Coordinator, presented information regarding the Cheboygan County 4-H Achievement Day taking place on April 27th at the Cheboygan Armory from 9:00-12:00. 4-H youth will be giving a presentation on the Great Lakes Natural Resource camp that they attended, and it will be an opportunity to be informed about the happenings in the 4-H Club.

Michigan State University Extension District 3 Coordinator, Patrick Cudney, presented the MSU-E Michigan Spartan Impact Website/Programs. This newly launched website was developed for expressing the regional impact of a land grant university across the entire State of Michigan <http://www.mispartanimpact.msu.edu>. The economic impact of Michigan State University on District 3 (containing Cheboygan County) is a live feed of information that can be found on the aforementioned website. Specific Cheboygan County impact data was presented in hardcopy. Commissioner Socha commented regarding Cheboygan County's inclusion in District 3, which encompasses Cheboygan, Emmet, Charlevoix and Antrim Counties. District Coordinator Patrick Cudney stated that when districting was taking place for analyzing their economic impact, a key variable was the historic relationship between MSU and Cheboygan County. Commissioner Socha thanked Patrick Cudney for his presentation and for his time.

Cheboygan County Sheriff Dale Clarmont presented the 2012 Sheriff Department Annual Report. Sheriff Clarmont expressed his desire to outline data regarding the financial obligations filtered through the Sheriff's Department, as his department requires the most funding. The Cheboygan County Sheriff Department 2012 Budget had approved expenditures of \$3,099,360, with actual expenditures coming in at \$3,027,582, a slight decrease from 2011. Revenues in 2012 totaled \$499,596. Sheriff Clarmont reported jail statistics for 2012. The out-county inmate days was only 118 total for 2012, a strong decrease from previous years. The in-county inmate days were at 23,568 for 2012, a slight decrease from 2011. The in-county inmates averaged approximately 65 inmates per day, which is forecasted to be slightly increased this year. The Community Corrections Service Program had an approximate annual savings in 2012 of \$135,462 – the savings is from individuals who would normally be in jail, but had qualified for Community Corrections and are serving their community through local non-profit civil organizations, and based on the amount of time they serve the community is the amount of days which come off of their sentence. In regards to the road patrol statistics from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012, it was reported that the amount of logged calls increased from 2011 (10,314 up from 10,205) but the amount of arrests decreased from 2011 (672 down to 483). Sheriff Clarmont stated that this is a significant statistic and he attributes it to the extra patrol on the roads and the increased presence of law enforcement in the community. In regards to the Search and Rescue Team with volunteer firefighters, for 2012 there were 10 emergency response calls with 100% success rate in finding the missing individuals. The school liaison officer program, under Deputy

Ronald Fenlon, has continued for all Cheboygan County Schools, this includes the D.A.R.E. program. Sheriff Clarmont commended the Board of Commissioners for funding the School Liaison Program, as it has been an asset in violence prevention in the schools since 2004. In regards to the K-9 unit in 2012, there were 30 calls total, 22 for narcotics, 5 for tracking and 3 others. Certified Prescription Drug Diversion Officer program, which is operated through Officer Todd Ross, educates medical staff, does drug awareness presentations, and maintains open communication with area pharmacies. Other programs include the Senior Safe/Community Awake Program which alerts local senior groups about the latest scams threatening the senior community. Project Lifesaver helps to locate “wandering” individuals within a mile of their place of residence; the department received an original grant of \$5000 for the program. The National Child Identification Program offers free fingerprinting to all Cheboygan County school children grades K-1st grade. A Child is Missing Program allows a deputy to leave a message at a national center in Florida which in turn sends out nearly 1,000 phone calls to surround businesses, cellphones, homes etc. with the deputy’s message describing the missing individual. In regards to the fiscal year 2012 county jail medical expenses, Cheboygan County has much lower expenses then surrounding counties because of the narcotics-free jail designation and the collaboration between the jail and the District No. 4 Health Department for nurse visits. The inmates are charged for those visits if they have money in their account. In 2012, \$39,765 was expended on inmate medical expenses, versus \$36,278 in 2011. There also has been continued success with minimum staff on holidays. Additionally, the jail offers Alcoholics Anonymous, Community Mental Health, HIV/AIDS Prevention, Substance Abuse Counseling and Prevention, GED, Bible Study and Mental Health Counseling to qualifying inmates. Sheriff Clarmont attributes the improvements to the mandatory meetings he holds for staff to come and present him with their ideas; those ideas for improvement are what ultimately bring the necessary changes to the jail. Commissioner Socha thanked Sheriff Clarmont for his dedicated professional service, for his staff, and for Jodi Beauchamp authoring all of the grants. Commissioner Socha stated that she is proud of the Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Department.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT Administrator Jeff Lawson commended all of the elected officials, department heads and employees of Cheboygan County for all of their hard work. He stated that Cheboygan County employees make a good team and that everyone works at keeping costs under control and to be innovative. He reported on the following items: The boiler project, the asbestos contractor has completed the removal of asbestos from the boiler room. The boiler room received an air quality test on Saturday April 13, 2013 by a State Inspector and was subsequently approved for use. The fairground restroom, the architect is currently preparing preliminary plans for the Midway Restroom renovations. Once completed, the preliminary plans will be provided to the Fair Board for review and comment. It is forecasted that the project will be after the week of the 2013 Fair. The housing program, Finance and Community Development staff have been working with NEMAH and MSHDA staff to close out the County’s existing grant with the State. This must be completed by the end of April. Once closed, staff will apply for a new grant and proceed with the implementation of the program. MSHDA has identified that the State’s housing grant program will now focus on concentrated areas within Counties based on their Sense of Place Campaign. The State will conduct a review of the County to determine the areas that the loan program can be implemented, mostly in pocketed areas in the County. This will occur by the spring of 2014. Residents outside the designated areas will have access to other State loan programs administered by local banks in the region. Website redevelopment, the request for proposals for the redevelopment of the County’s website is currently being reviewed by staff. Thirteen proposals were received. Two proposals were received from within Cheboygan County, one from within the Northern Michigan region and the remaining proposals are from across the state and the United States at large. The preferable company to award the proposal will have capabilities with their content management system, which how the operators will enter information onto the website. The County has also received the deed for the property around the Humane Society building. Cheboygan County now officially owns the 10 acres of property in partnership with the Humane Society. The open house for the Humane Society is scheduled for May 4th, 2013.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Equalization Director Janice Eaton, presented the 2013 Equalization Report. The Equalization report is required to be adopted annually by the Board of Commissioners. The Equalization Department conducts independent appraisal and sales studies each year and projects assessed values for each township and city. Each township or city is required by law to assess at an acceptable ratio between 49% and 50% of true cash value (market value). The County Board of Commissioners have the authority through the General Property Tax Act to factor assessments up or down to make sure the assessments fall within the accepted ratios. As you can see, all townships and the city have complied with the ratios for all classes of property, so I am recommending the assessed values be adopted as presented. The report consists of columnar figures and charts showing the assessed values from the individual townships and city, the county equalized values, and the ratio for each class of property by unit.

The recommended County equalized value of real property for 2013 was \$1,520,407,299; the recommended County equalized value of personal property for 2013 was \$54,381,430; with the total recommended County equalized value of \$1,574,788,729. This represents a 2.63% decrease in equalized overall compared to 2012 values. All County Equalized Values are subject to review and change by the State of Michigan through State Equalization in May of 2013.

Commissioner Socha stated that it was nice to see the taxable value of the County increase.

Motion by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Gauthier, to adopt the 2013 Cheboygan County Equalization Report as submitted reflecting a County Equalized Value for Real Property of \$1,520,407,299 and Personal Property of \$54,381,430 for a total 2013 County Equalized Value of \$1,574,788,729. A copy of the 2013 County Equalization Report is on file in the office of the Cheboygan County Clerk/Register of Deeds. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Administrator Lawson presented the Waterways Grant Agreement and Resolution #13-08 Harbors and Docks Emergency Dredging. The Governor and the legislature have appropriated emergency dredging funds to distribute to communities to combat the low water levels in harbors across the state and to mitigate the economic impact to recreational boating in Michigan. The Grant would cover the cost of 100% of the engineering and contract cost to dredge the County's Marina based on a State approved engineering report. Granger and Associates are doing depth surveys for removal.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Redmond to adopt the Cheboygan County Resolution #13-08 approving the Waterways Grant Agreement, Harbors and Docks Emergency Dredging Grant Agreement between the State of Michigan and Cheboygan County and authorizing the Chair to sign the agreement, any future grant documents and authorize any and all necessary Budget adjustments. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Commissioner Redmond stated that he was present for the last Waterways meeting, there was discussion regarding the projected intensity of it. Due to the volume of boaters in the summer, it is attested that the project would start in the fall. Commissioner Matelski commented that the water levels shouldn't be an issue as they are expected to rise up nearly 8 – 12 more inches. Administrator Lawson stated that there is a top cap on the project at \$600,000, and the amount of the project will be estimated with the information gleaned from the engineering report. Commissioner Socha reaffirmed that everything regarding the Waterways Project has been reviewed by legal counsel.

Community Development Director Steve Schnell presented Housing Loan Subordinations for Project #H-05-234 and #H-05-245. Home improvement loans were issued through the housing program for both projects. The home owners are now refinancing their home mortgages in order to reduce their monthly payment amount. When refinancing occurs, other loans associated with the property move up in priority payout if default occurs. In order for the home owner to complete their refinancing, the County must approve a subordination of the home improvement loan to place the loan in a second lien position to the mortgage. Review by the Housing Commission includes review of the loan amount and rate. Their past practice has been to recommend the loan subordination if the total loan amount is less than the original loan amount and that the rate is also lower than the original rate. In this case, both the loan amount and rate are lower for the new loan. The Housing Commission has recommended approval of this subordination. The mortgage subordination form has been reviewed by legal counsel. There is no financial impact on the County.

Motion by Commissioner Gouine, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to accept the recommendation from the Cheboygan County Housing Commission and to approve loan subordination for Project #H-05-234 and authorize the Chair to sign the Mortgage Subordination Agreement. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no, and 0 absent.

Motion by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Allor, to accept the recommendation from the Cheboygan County Housing Commission and to approve loan subordination for Project #H-05-245 and authorize the Chair to sign the Mortgage Subordination Agreement. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no, and 0 absent.

Administrator Lawson presented Presque Isle Electric & Gas Grant for computer equipment for SAYPA. Probate Court applied for the grant and received \$2,753. The Court is requesting that the Board of Commissioners accept the grant award from PIE&G and approve necessary budget adjustments to increase revenue and expenditures to permit the Court to purchase computer equipment.

Motion by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Gauthier to accept the grant award from the Presque Isle Electric & Gas Grant Communities First Fund in the amount of \$2,753 and authorize necessary budget adjustments. Motion carries with 7 yes, 0 no, and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS Commissioner Socha reminded everyone that the Board Planning Session is scheduled for the upcoming Thursday and Friday (April 25-26) at Audi's in Mackinaw City.

Motion by Commissioner Allor, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 12:50 a.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Linda Socha
Chairperson