

**Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 28, 2017**

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

Roll called and a quorum present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Chris Brown, Richard Sangster, Cal Gouine, John Wallace and Robert Bolinger.

ABSENT: Commissioner Newman & Matelski (Excused)

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

Motion by Commissioner Sangster seconded by Commissioner Gouine to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 5 yes, 0 no and 2 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS - None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Executive Director Tom Bailey presented the Data Sharing Agreement for Little Traverse Conservancy. He stated he was there to clear up the misunderstanding as to what the conservancy does and why they were requesting the proposed data sharing agreement. Little Traverse Conservancy does a service for land owners and also local government. One of the misunderstandings that occurred was it had been proposed originally that conservation easement information would not be shared publicly. These are restrictive conservation covenants on private land and they typically don't publicize conservation easement property because it's private property. This was why the conservancy tries to minimize the easements publicized. As public information, they would not restrict the availability of that information. The conservancy just tries to be sensitive to the property owners' rights. Most of the conservancy's lands in the county were open for hunting, which consisted of 1,800 acres of the 2,479 acres that the conservancy owns. Some of the land it owns was not open because of being located in the city limits where hunting was not allowed and others with neighboring buildings that have safety zones. They also groom ski trails in the winter on four preserves along with its parking areas for the public. A cabin at the Andreae Preserve was open to scout groups and others with approximately 100 users per year. There was a new purchase of 664 acres being used as a working forestry reserve in the Pigeon River. All of the conservancy's properties were opened for unlimited hiking snowshoeing, cross country skiing, hunting, fishing and trapping. Every single acre was always open to the public. The Little Traverse Conservancy has helped several governmental units in the county acquire 6,800 acres for public recreation and resource management, some open for hunting. One of the best known for hunting was the Le Grande Ranch on M-33. They

were currently working to purchase a piece of land from the City of Cheboygan and keep it open to the public. The money that they would pay towards the purchase of the land would help them support their parks program, which would be a net gain for the city. They were also working to establish a Sunrise Coast Burning Trail. There was a proposed land exchange with the state, which would result in a net increase in land that would make tax payments to the county. Right now the parcels they were trying to acquire were in the state land bank. The land that they want to trade would take the land out of the state land bank and add additional land to the DNR that would be added to the pell payments. In terms of education, last year they had 13 school groups from Cheboygan County with 314 participants and five community field trips with 133 participants at no charge and they offered travel reimbursements to the schools. Each year the conservancy participates in the Cheboygan Earth Day Exhibition. The conservancy uses this data for land owners when they call about conservation options. The information was posted on the conservancy website, as well as its GIS app to allow people to find its preserves to use for hunting, hiking or other recreational activities. The conservancy does share data with other counties. The information they wanted to gather was information from the county regarding parcel shapes and in some cases the ownership information. Commissioner Wallace stated that one of the Board's concerns was about the properties being taken off of the tax rolls. Mr. Bailey stated on their commercial forestry properties, they pay the same as anybody else. The nature preserve properties by legislative law since 1911 they were exempt. The 644 acres that they would be enrolling in the commercial forestry program would be taxed. The rest of the property was exempt. The conservancy was very aware it didn't pay taxes, so it tries to give back to the community as much as possible through educational programs.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Jeff Lawson gave an update on Cheboygan County switching to 800 MHZ radios for the Cheboygan, Charlevoix, and Emmet County 911 Central Dispatch Authority Center. The subcommittee doing the feasibility study for the radios still has some work to do, as well as some supplemental information they need to give to the CCE 911 Board for their April meeting. The plan would be to get the preliminary plan out to the Boards in April. It would be a draft report without all of the financial information, but would give everybody a chance to see the basis of the plan and how it was evolving. If the report was given to the counties for review in April, the CCE 911 Board may be able to consider approval of the plan in May. Administrator Lawson explained that a feasibility study to bring the 800 MHZ system to the CCE 911 center began last year to help alleviate issues with dead spots in the region when dispatchers try talking to the different emergency personnel. The State of Michigan was the first to use the new radio system with the Michigan State Police. These radios offer a clearer signal and allow the units to be reached even if they were inside a building. Most communities have gone to the 800 MHZ and they were the only three counties left.

Commissioner Wallace stated that there was a push to go statewide. Administrator Lawson stated that there were several changes to the radios that have been used by the CCE 911 center and all emergency personnel over the last several years. The

government went through a process called narrow banding, which was equipment used by different departments and did not need to be changed, but simply need to be reprogrammed. This process may be taking place in the near future and would make things even more complex for the reception of transmissions back and forth to CCE 911. A few radio tower locations were added around the tri-county area, which would allow for a better coverage once the 800 MHZ radios were implemented. With the 800 MHZ system, all agencies around the state would be able to talk to each other.

Commissioner Sangster asked if the townships would have these radios available and would there be a budget plan? Commissioner Wallace stated that the cost would probably approach \$6 to \$7 million. Administrator Lawson stated the report would also review the pros and cons of switching the system, a cost estimate of updating the old system versus switching to the new system and any available funding mechanisms. Commissioner Gouine asked about any grants being available. Administrator Lawson stated that the only grants currently available to help pay for the new system would be the firefighters assistance grants, but those were not certain to be awarded. It was a timing issue because, occasionally, there might be some grants available at state or federal level, which the county would be applying for if these grants were available at the time of the switch. Part of this was looking at capital improvements. He stated that there were several funding mechanisms, which were surcharge or millage. At this point, he thought that they were looking at a phone surcharge to keep the costs down. These changes would happen in phases.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

A Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment was discussed with the Board. The Community Development Director Steve Schnell gave a quick introduction and history of the SWMP amendment that was approved back in 2000 with a projector presentation. He stated the State of Michigan requires all counties to have a SWMP in place. It answers questions such as does the county offer recycling or composting program for its residents, what kind of criteria does these disposal areas need to meet and also where all of the disposal areas were located in the county. The disposal area was everything from a transfer station, land fill or a processing facility. The plan also detailed how a county resident could dispose of their trash. This should all be answered in good detail with the county. Under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act Part 115, all counties were required to have a SWMP, but some counties have opted not to do it. In that case, the DEQ would do one for them. It defined various roles of the county government and the state government and local government and some other local agencies, including soil conservation district and what their role was in their implementation and enforcement. The plan also referenced imports and exports of waste, as well as referencing other counties due to Cheboygan County not having a landfill. Each county must explain where its trash was going and if it was being treated

properly. There were also some controls for citing both new and expanding disposal areas and it outlined goals for the county and how it planned to best manage its solid waste both now and in the future. There were some changes being required to the SWMP at the state level. A SWMP committee has been established and it has been estimated that it takes between three to four years for some of these changes to take effect. In some of their draft proposals, they talked about these changes that the SWMP Committee has mentioned suggesting a turn away from solid waste management to materials waste management planning as a concept where the goal was to emphasize a broader materials management scheme more to support recycling and materials management.

Administrator Lawson stated the first SWMP came out in the State of Michigan around 1980. Around 1990, there was a lot of discussion on capacity within the state and there was a lot of shipping of waste between counties. Between 1990 and 2000, recycling started to pick up and waste flows decreased and landfill capacities increased. In the 2000 plan with the county, much of the discussion was about recycling and what it planned to do. When looking back over the SWMP, there was time spent on the discussion of transfer stations, but there wasn't a lot of definition within the plan of how they would treat these types of facilities. Over the last several years, the county has had many operations start up, which were type B facilities. Traditionally, they have had several throughout the county. Primarily, there had been one type A transfer station in the county for many decades, where the waste was taken to the station then transported to a landfill. This would not be a complete plan replacement, but they just need to make the changes to the topics that were relevant today. The proposed amendment topics, which were to be decided on were how to treat transfer stations specifically type B transfer stations, make corrections to list of criterion that disposal areas must comply with, possibly make different review processes for transfer stations, existing criteria appears to be more appropriate for landfills, clarify the two-part siting process, review new usage of processing facilities, updating the verifying locations of existing transfer stations approved in the 2000 plan, the possible siting review fee update and verifying the list of responsible parties, and enforcement.

Community Director Schell explained the amendment approval process. Review the list of amendment topics by the Board of Commissioners, decide what was to be amended, file a notice of intent to amend to the SWMP and draft a summary document on what the Board of Commissioners would like to amend, which was sent to the DEQ for review. Administrator Lawson stated that this was a complex process. The conclusion would be to get the information they receive, come up with some consistency and informalities on how to handle this and then review the process. He stated in the end to have the approval of the Board of Commissioners along with 67% approval of the local governments. The Board of Commissioners expressed their concerns and wanted to continue discussion at the planning session to be held next month.

CITIZENS COMMENTS - None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Wallace commented he attended an industry-wide pipeline seminar in Gaylord, which was put on by approximately fifteen (15) pipeline companies throughout the State of Michigan. He talked with a representative from TransCanada Corporation Pipeline regarding the pipeline fire in Waters, Michigan in the late 70's, which Cheboygan County was involved with and it was now being used as a storage facility. So it was pumping product down into the ground because it was not profitable to pull the product out of the ground.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster seconded by Commissioner Gouine to adjourn to the call of the chairperson. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Karen L. Brewster
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Chris Brown
Vice Chairperson