

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
May 24, 2011**

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, and Sue Allor

**Absent:** Commissioner John Wallace

Following a moment of silence, Commissioner Matelski led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Horrocks, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** – None

**SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

Chairperson Socha presented certificates of appreciation to the following employees who will be retiring soon: Char Kosanke for 25 years of service in the 89<sup>th</sup> District Court, Jan Hawver for 16 years of service in the Office of the Fried of Court and Phil Lavender for 21 years of service as the Electrical Inspector in the Building Safety Department. George Gierschke was unable to attend but will receive a certificate of appreciation for 10 years of service as Code Enforcement Officer.

Prosecutor Daryl Vizina presented the 2010 Annual Report for the Prosecutor's Office. He reviewed six significant cases that were tried in 2010 and reported rapid growth of the use and manufacturing of methamphetamine in the County. Mr. Vizina recapped the status of his 2010 goals which included youth education programs and a paperless office/electronic communications. A bullying program was presented in the Cheboygan, Inland Lakes and Wolverine schools targeted for both high school and middle school. Statistical information was included in the report on caseload, drug history, bad checks, juvenile delinquency matters, child abuse and neglect cases, mental health hearings, crime victim rights, paternity and child support establishment and drug court. Mr. Vizina said both the Sheriff Department and the GIS Department have been very helpful to his office.

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Court Judge Scott Pavlich presented an update on the County Drug Court. He briefly outlined the history of the drug court commencing with the first steps of its creation taken in early 2009. He said the State increased its grant funding from \$16,000 for the October 2009 to October 2010 fiscal year to \$60,000 for October 2010 to October 2011 fiscal year. As of May 1, 2011, the Drug Court had fourteen participants with two individuals being considered for admission. With the increase in state funding it is anticipated that the participant population could rise to 22-25. Judge Pavlich introduced Rachel Smith a participant in the Drug Court. Ms. Smith, who will be the first graduate of the County's Drug Court, has spoken with area high school students to encourage them not to make the same mistakes she did. Ms. Smith addressed the Board relating her experience. She said she will be attending schools this fall and currently holds two full time jobs. She enjoys having her family back in her life and especially spending time with her son. Judge Pavlich introduced drug court team members present Mike Ekdahl, Karen Osier, Dar McKinley and Prosecutor Daryl Vizina.

Maintenance Director Tim Mason presented the 2010 Recycling Report. The report showed total revenue of \$269,265.72 with expenditures of \$259,249.00. Included in expenditures was \$10,605.93 for the cement pad at the county building; \$31,041.46 for the new Bobcat Forklift and Loader; and \$90,257 for transportation to Emmet County. Mr. Mason said the transportation cost in 2010 was 37% higher than in 2009 and by purchasing a new truck and hauling the bins as approved, the county will

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save approximately \$37,000 of this cost. In 2010, 704 tons of regular recyclables were processed at a cost of \$46,943; and 42,597 pound of household hazardous waste at a cost of \$23,302. This year Dan O’Henley has been working with the Wolverine Schools on possibly having their own recycling bin. Mr. Mason said there is a possibility of moving the recycling bins in Indian River to the old ambulance building property. Administrator Overton pointed out the graphs show a continual increase in every quarter of every year. Discussion held on commercial participation in the program and on location of the recycling bins near the County Building rather than at the fairgrounds. Commissioner Socha said one of the reasons the bins are located near this building was due to the proximity to Glen’s and Walmart. Commissioner Horrocks said he believes the program has outgrown its location near this building. Mr. Overton said the contractual agreements with the townships expire in March of 2012. He said he plans to contact all of the townships including those who do not currently participate in the recycling program.

Humane Society Director Mary Talaske presented an update on the animal shelter and the fundraising efforts of the Humane Society. Administrator Overton said the Humane Society does an outstanding job and if not for that group’s and Mary’s efforts, the county’s costs for animal control would skyrocket. Ms. Talaske said various options have been explored to address the many problems with the existing animal shelter. She distributed copies of a drawing of proposed changes to the building as well as an estimate of the cost which totaled \$185,644. She said various options have been explored and the information distributed would be to remodel the existing shelter in phases and the cost for Phase 1 was what she presented. She reported to date fundraising efforts have generated approximately \$130,000. Discussion held. Administrator Overton requested Maintenance Director Tim Mason to look into the status regarding the State’s involvement in the adjacent property owned by the Cheboygan Schools. Ms. Talaske said there has been talk with regional animal control with Presque Isle County. Chairperson Socha said this matter would be discussed at the Board’s planning session; and the fundraising efforts of the Humane Society have been tremendous, but the property acquisition is important.

Community Development Director Steve Schnell presented proposed changes to the structure of existing Cheboygan Trailways Advisory Council, which has not met in several years. Lengthy discussion held on the existing County Recreation Plan. Chairperson Socha cautioned not to take on everything. Mr. Schnell said the need comes from the EDC and some of the regional trail efforts going on. He said the committee should be expanded to include all of the trails, and would be important if grant opportunities should arise. Chairperson Socha said that committee was put in place as an advisory committee by NEMCOG and was not a county committee as such. Mr. Schnell said if a grant opportunity arose and the project wasn’t in the county’s recreation plan it would be important to add the project as quickly as possible and a trails and recreation committee would be beneficial. Administrator Overton said a trails group would be a sub-committee of a recreation committee. Chairperson Socha said the first step would be to get all new commissioners a copy of the recreation plan; and then move forward on the proposed plan. Mr. Schnell said so we should reviewing the recreation plan and seeing what procedures we have to have in place. Chairperson Socha said that, and the revitalization of the trailways committee.

Mr. Schnell reported on the progress of the Cheboygan County EDC. He said the County EDC conducted a review of the Strategic Plan at their April meeting to review progress and decide if amendments were necessary. The plan was adopted in September of 2009. The EDC concluded that, overall, good progress was being made on the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and there were some areas that need more attention. The areas that the EDC would like to increase our focus on are:

- Identify the important industry clusters in our county and work to grow those businesses.
- Facilitate development of “final mile” broadband availability.
- Continue to explore local financing options and educate local decision makers on various financing options (Brownfields, Revolving Loan Funds, Bonding capacity of County EDC, etc.)

In addition, the EDC Board feels that we should serve as the facilitator and supporter of the marketing efforts that will create a stronger Sense of Place for our communities. Although marketing is done by Chambers of Commerce for their member businesses, there are many other entities including the *communities* which need to be marketed. The EDC believes that facilitating the creation of a Sense of Place for these communities is an important community and economic development role. We have

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applied for grant funds to assist with this Sense of Place project. Whether or not the grant is awarded, the EDC believes that with the overwhelming support from our communities to this project, that we should proceed with some sort of Placemaking/marketing strategy that includes strong support for the marketing of our recreational assets.

Chairperson Socha said she had asked for an overview and explanation on the EDC. Administrator Overton said that perhaps there should be a joint meeting with this Board and EDC. Chairperson Socha requested that all commissioners receive the boards and commissions descriptive booklet. She said everyone should have a clear understanding as to the role the Board of Commissioners has in the EDC. Mr. Overton suggested setting aside time at each Committee of the Whole meeting starting in July for explanation of the EDC.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT** - None

### **BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Gouine spoke regarding the Construction Code Board of Appeals appeal fee which is \$200 for a contractor or property owner to appeal a decision made by the Building Safety Department. He said according to Jim Muschell the Construction Code Board of Appeals has only met twice in the last two years. The members of the board are not paid so apparently the only expense for any meeting would be sending out notices. Commissioner Gouine said appeals mostly generally would pertain to the interpretation of the building code and stated there should not be a fee. Discussion held, it was pointed out that with the hiring of a new Building Official there may be less disagreement. The fee schedule for 2012 will be presented in late 2011 and if there seems to still be a problem with this fee, consideration will be taken at that time. Chairperson Socha requested the administrator provide copies of an opinion on fees for planning, zoning and construction code that was provide to this Board by civil counsel around 2003.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** – Mullett Township Supervisor Bill Morgan said it's a good idea to use the former ambulance building in Indian River, but not to move the bins there.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** – Commissioner Matelski read letters from Koehler and Munro townships supporting the Board's efforts to remove the Drain Commissioner from office.

Commissioner Allor said she noticed the Prosecutor's Office and Circuit Court have different county logos. It was explained that the logo with the trees is the older logo, the newer logo was adopted after a students' competition was held to design a new logo. Commission Allor stated she prefers the logo with the trees. This will be an item for future discussion.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Matelski, to go into closed session pursuant to Section 8(e) of the Open Meetings Act, being MCLA 15.268(e), to consult with its attorney regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with the pending case of the Estate of Clinton Todd, deceased, Claimant Audrey Bidwell, Claim #140603 since discussion of trial or settlement strategy in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the county's position. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Went into closed session at 12:15 p.m. Returned to open session at 12:55 p.m.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Horrocks to accept counsel's recommendations regarding the Estate of Clinton Todd, deceased, Claimant Audrey Bidwell matter. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Matelski, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

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Mary Ellen Tryban  
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

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Linda Socha  
Chairperson