

**Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole Meeting
February 26, 2019**

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners was called to order in the Commissioners Room by Chairperson John Wallace at 9:31 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Mary Ellen Tryban, Richard Sangster, Michael Newman, Cal Gouine, Roberta Matelski, John Wallace and Steve Warfield.

ABSENT: None

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 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Louise Vallance citizen of Grant Township questioned again the reason for no Straits Regional Ride service yesterday because there wasn't any school. He was asking again what the purpose of Straits Regional Ride was. According to the website you can make it to work, school, shopping and appointments every weekday. He stated some citizens have no ability to get into town and he would like an answer. Administrator Lawson commented as he had talked to Mr. Vallance before, yesterday there were two routes that didn't run and so he encouraged citizens who were looking for a ride on days when schools were closed, to call dispatch to see which routes were running. All other routes were operational, so it is weather dependent.

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chuck Leady, a retired electrical engineer gave a presentation on 5G Smart Meter Technology. It included magazine and newspaper articles, information from a forum held in December 2018 in Lansing and reports and surveys that raised questions about the safety of 5G wireless systems, which was the latest form of wireless communication. There seems to be a big issue on collecting all of this money and less concern about what the public want, the local control, safety and health issues. The 5G systems requires additional small towers, which would mean more transmissions taking place closer to people. He compared human susceptibility from exposure to microwave or radio-frequency (RF) radiation to peanut allergies, stating that some people may not have any a problem with it while other people may have serious problems. Currently in Cheboygan, there were five new 5G towers installed. These towers could decrease your property value. Meter readings have been done that were far higher readings than what you would find in a non-tower area or in a building with WI-FI service. He commented on the SB 637, which was recently passed by state law and takes away local control in determining where 5G towers could be placed in public right-of-ways. There are a number of entities in the State of Michigan adopting resolutions to oppose SB 637 – Small Wireless Facilities and he encouraged the Board to do the same. He also suggested that in the permit process, companies were required to provide information about the towers purposes, frequencies, modulation type, output power, types of RF antennas and an inspection be done.

John Kurczewski citizen of Tuscarora Township commented on a handout from PROTEC, which was a membership open to municipality, organizations or individuals wishing to support local control of public rights-of-way. There have been over 100 municipalities that have come up against 5G Technology. He read the highlights of a handout from The New FCC Shot Clocks and Other Rules Preempting Local Authority Over Wireless Take Effect Today stating that, “We are not recommending that you incorporate the FCC standards into local law per se. If you do so, then you will be bound by your own requirements, even if the FCC order is vacated. If you are faced with a situation where you feel compelled to grant an application because the FCC rules, you may wish to make the permit conditional, so that it terminates if the FCC rule is overturned.” He stated that this was in litigation and what was decided to do right now could get yourself into something that you cannot get out of. He read an excerpt from the Electronic Frontier Foundation newsletter of February 11, 2019 stating, “The wireless carriers were only trying to focus our attention on 5G to try to distract us from their willful failure to invest in a proven ultrafast option for many Americans.” All of us who are fighting in Lansing just want safe technology. The safest technology is fiber optic because it produces zero radiation and approximately one thousand times faster than any of the wireless technology. He asked the Board to take a good hard look at this. They have been studying this for three (3) years. This was something that we do not want to mess with because the radiation is dangerous.

Jaime Chimner citizen of the City of Cheboygan commented on adopting a resolution so that if the FCC rules change, there would be a resolution in place. She stated that smart meters were never supposed to be mandatory. In the past week, there have been a couple articles on fires that were allegedly caused by electric meters. Without a comprehensive plan for fiber infrastructure, 5G will not revolutionize internet access or speeds for rural customers. She stressed how important these resolutions were and to get people educated.

John Kurczewski stated that while a 100 Mbps (essentially 4G LTE speed) is nice, it is nothing compared to be 10-gigabit fiber networks that exist today. There are fiber networks in existence in Charlevoix and Emmet County. Electronic devices including appliances will have a transmitter inside of it that would be communicating with your smart meter putting off radiation.

John Simmons citizen of the City of Cheboygan commented that his understanding was that a resolution is wanted so that if the FCC bill passes, the County would be protected by putting a clause in the resolution stating that if the FCC bill doesn't pass, the County resolution would dissolve and the County would still fall under the FCC's prevue. He stated that he had a unique perspective on this when they talk about weaponizing the frequency because he was a veteran and had witnessed these exact frequencies being used. The only scientific information being seen was on mice. These frequencies have been used since 2005 for a period of up to 48 hours at a time continuously on soldiers, but there is no information being seen on the adverse effects. Is there any of that information out there and how would that effect the decision here? He suggested getting information from the Detroit or Saginaw Veterans Administration and also the University of Michigan.

Vivian Sova citizen of Mullett Township commented that she has been listening to a radio program where there was a caller who called in about the effects of the EMFs that the military were using in their research and development of warfare. The military can use microwave/electromagnetic pulses to not bring an enemy plane down, but to fry the pilot in his seat – literally destroying his body. This was something for all of us to be thinking about.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported that at the next Finance Business meeting a Road Loan Application for Aloha Township who was requesting \$222,000 would be on the agenda.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported that a revision on the Housing Guidelines would also would be put on the agenda at the next Board meeting. A brief history was given.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Jeff Lawson presented the Engineering Services-Marina Fuel Tank/Dock Replacement. The County received a grant from the State of Michigan to remove and replace the fuel tanks and fuel dock at the Marina. The grant project estimate was \$800,000 with \$400,000 from the State and \$400,000 from the County. In July of 2017, the County requested bids from engineering companies to submit design proposal costs. The proposals were placed in the newspaper, online, in the state plan rooms and sent to various engineering firms. No proposals were received. The County was contacted by Gourdie-Fraser, Inc. of Traverse City, Michigan stating that they were interested in the project and would provide the County with a proposal when their schedule permitted. The State of Michigan, Waterways Division was notified and indicated that this process would meet the state grant requirements. Gourdie-Fraser, Inc. has provided the County with a proposal, which has been reviewed and approved by the State Waterway staff in the amount of \$131,000. The County was planning on seeking additional grant funding totaling approximately \$250,000, which would be needed to cover the estimated \$1.1 million project. The engineer’s design would relocate the fuel dock from its current location to the northeast area of the Marina. At this point, if the County does not get grant approval for the extension by April, this project would be done in two different phases. Phase one (1) would be the fuel tank removal and replacement and Phase two (2) would be the dock removal and replacement. Discussion was held on the amount of money being spent, the approximate timeline of the project and the date of the last dredging.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster seconded by Commissioner Matelski, to award the Marina Engineering Services to Gourdie-Fraser, Inc., authorize the Chair to sign the agreement for services in the amount of \$131,000 contingent on final legal counsel review and authorize any necessary budget adjustments. A roll call vote was taken. Motion approved 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

BOARD MEMBER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Commissioner Sangster commented on the Top O Michigan Outboard Race scheduled for August 10 & 11, 2019. The Coast Guard may or may not sign off from this event for safety reasons. This would be the 70th Anniversary of the race and he was wondering if this Board would be interested in adopting a resolution for the Coast Guard to reconsider their position. He would bring more information back to the Board for discussion.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

John Simmons citizen of the City of Cheboygan commented that he has recently moved to Cheboygan County. He was going through a few sites on the internet to try to get a feel for the county when he came across a site called AreaVibes, which showed an overall view of the

county. The big issues that stuck out for him were unemployment and housing, which were both rated F. The problems that he saw were the income per capita was rated at \$17,000 where the national average was rated \$29,000; the median household was rated \$27,000 where the national average was rated \$55,000; the county has an unemployment rate of 8.9% with the national average at 4.7% and the poverty level was at 30.5% where the national average was 15.1%. He questioned what the county could do to help alleviate these issues. Cheboygan was in a unique position because the Mackinaw Bridge was located only 15 minutes away and during the winter, the bridge gets closed. Big businesses such as Meijer or Walmart have to still get products across the bridge. A good example of what could be done would be to have a distribution facility stationed here in Cheboygan. This would bring in a lot of jobs. The old Kmart could be turned into a 24-hour road side truck stop with showers, etc... This was something to help generate thought. Commissioner Wallace commented that the Board was looking at economic development as well as other counties.

Jim McKindles citizen of Presque Isle County commented that he had also been reading about the 5G technology. He stated that one thing that hasn't been mentioned here today was the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which does not cover liability for any telephone company regarding the wireless part of their operations. So other words, if there was a health issue, they don't care because the act says that they don't have to be liable for it. The Lloyd's of London insurance in England does not have any coverage for wireless, cell towers or smart meters. He stated doesn't this tell us that it all boils down to money.

John Kurczewski commented to never put a tablet or a laptop on your lap. There has been scientific evidence proving that it reduces sperm motility by 50% and if a woman is pregnant, it is damaging the fetus. He stated that a laptop should always be placed on a table when is use.

Cynthia Curtis citizen of the City of Cheboygan commented that children's skulls are much thinner, their brains are smaller and much more water filled then adults. Water is a big conductor of electromagnetic radiation. A baby monitor should never be placed next to a baby in bed. Young children until teenage or more should not be using cell phones.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Wallace commented on the Michigan Works Northeast Consortium Manager's Report for February 2019 that he handed out.

Commissioner Gouine commented that the District #4 Health Department was fully staffed with three (3) nurses.

Motion by Commissioner Gouine seconded by Commissioner Newman to adjourn to the call of the chairperson. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent. Meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Karen L. Brewster
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

John B. Wallace
Chairperson