

## CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### Committee of the Whole Meeting

January 25, 2011

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

**CITIZENS COMMENTS-** Leonard Page commented on the effort to change county government. In particular, whether the County Administrator be elected. Commissioner Socha stated that when this Board decided back in the 90's, it was with a great amount of study to go with an administrator. The Administrator only acts under the directions of this particular Board. County policies are set by this Board and it is the Administrator's job to administer them. The Administrator is responsible for the day to day operations of this county. She stated that if someone were to present this, they really do need to come before this Board and tell us what their proposal is and their rationale for it. This has not happened.

### **SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Chairperson Socha presented a certificate of appreciation and best retirement wishes to Mary Schellenberg for her 20+ years of loyal and dedicated service with the Cheboygan County Friend of the Court and the Cheboygan County Clerk Register of Deeds.

Jan Kellogg gave an explanation of a Public Notice that was received from the Inverness Commercial Redevelopment District. She stated that Fernelius Toyota/Dodge has plans to expand its building on the existing Toyota/Dodge dealership. Inverness Township was approached by Fernelius Toyota to allow a tax abatement for these improvements under the Commercial Rehabilitation Act (PA 210 of 2005). There are a couple of steps to make this happen. First, the township determines the properties that make up the dealership into a commercial rehab district. This is the process that prompted the public notice that the County received. The county's options are to do nothing or reject the townships request to establish the commercial rehabilitation district. There would be no further decisions that the county would have regarding this project or any future projects in this commercial rehab district.

The second step in the process is for the township to review the project plans and, if they approve of the plans, the township would approve the tax abatement. This can be granted for no more than 10 years and only abates the taxes that would be on the building addition. The existing building, land, and property taxes are not abated. The county would be notified at this stage for their input but the county cannot reject the plan nor have any decision on its approval or denial. That decision is made by the township.

She stated that the township has a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) which already captures the taxes for that property that would normally be received by the county. This means that there would be no financial impact on the county in the case. Fernelius is stating that they will add 10 jobs to their business and \$4 million to the property. Discussion held.

Treasurer Linda Cronan stated that back in December she requested that several unpaid invoices that they were trying to collect be written off. At the time that they were presented, Commissioner Mushlock asked that they be pulled because she had questions on them. A letter dated November 20, 2009 stating that the

following pages are copies of reimbursement forms for diverted felons that the county submitted to the County Jail Reimbursement Program. These reimbursement requests were not processed for payment due to lack of funds. They indicated comments regarding corrections and/or adjustments that were made to the county's original reimbursement requests as to eligibility, etc... If an offender was still serving time in our jail go ahead and bill for it, but they were not going to pay the past due ones. She stated that she complied with the Board of Commissioners request to continue to collect the monies and/or get a letter of understanding. It is her request from the Board to write off these outstanding invoices from Community Corrections. Discussion held.

**Motion** presented by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Redmond to authorize the treasurer to write off the outstanding invoices totaling \$6,133.50 from the State of Michigan Department of Community Corrections effective December 31, 2010 for audit purposes.

Roll call taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Community Development Director Steve Schnell gave a power point presentation on the Recreational Trails Collaborative Update. He stated that the Recreational Trails Collaborative is growing and has a lot of energy behind it. There is a very large working group of people that is partnered in this effort who are putting together some of the details, but right now there is an effort to identify trails and all the trail related assets in Northern Michigan. They also want to establish a quality controlled trails data base. Meaning that they want to have all of the trails mapped out in Northern Michigan. This would be a website created as a stand alone website, but could also be used by any individual or business. It would be something that would be quality controlled. They started contacting more and more people, but some just needed convincing. They needed to increase the promotions of the trails. There are numerous supporting organizations such as Pure Michigan that have expressed a real interest in this and they want to be a part of this effort. The type of trails to be included is hiking, biking, horse back riding, ORV, etc... They have had four initial meetings with all of these partners. The next step is to create an outline of the website features, look for their first round of funding and then after that they will be looking for long term funding. Last year with the help of NEMCOG, they have already created an ORV Trails Map and a county wide road map, which shows all of the recreational trails and helps market the area. Also they are supporting Rails to Trails.

Mr. Schnell stated that a big part of the Master Plan is that they are required to discuss complete streets. That is a term that they use to make sure that any road improvement considers all potential road users. Typically engineers are very familiar with what it takes to get a truck, a semi trailer or a car around a corner. They know the radius of the curve at that speed and all that type of thing. But they haven't incorporated as much, but they know how to engineer it properly is if a bicyclist is going to use the road. What are they going to have to do to make that as safe as possible? Do they need to extend the shoulder? Do they need to do a bike lane? Do they need to do some type of crosswalk? This is a big part that they will have to do with the Master Plan. Commissioner Socha stated that Governor Granholm recognized this potential for the trail ways and bicycle areas and mandated this be a part of the Master Plan. The new governor's commitment will hopefully go through for Pure of Michigan. She stated that the DNRE now has money in their trust fund. Discussion held regarding the trails not being groomed at Black Mountain.

**Motion** presented by Commissioner Horrocks, seconded by Commissioner Matelski to authorize the Administrator Overton in conjunction with Mr. Schnell to draft a letter to the DNRE expressing their concern about the lack of monetary contributions of the DNRE in taking care of the trails in Cheboygan County and authorize the chairperson to sign. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Schnell stated that the Cheboygan County Economic Development Corporation is requesting authorization to submit a grant entitled "Cheboygan County Sense of Place Project". The project seeks funding from the USDA under the Rural Business and Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program. The goals of the project are to create a marketing plan for the community centers in Cheboygan County. This marketing plan will help them communicate their "Sense of Place", which is a term used to describe the unique character inherent in each of our community centers. For example, community centers include places like Aloha, Cheboygan, Indian River, Mackinaw City, Topinabee, Tower, and Wolverine. He stated that the goal of this project is economic

development. Creating and communicating a sense of place for our communities is supported by the County EDC's Strategic Plan. It is also a goal of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

The County's EDC has approved the grant application since it is a primary goal of the EDC's Strategic Plan and has voted to provide \$1000 as match money and 2 board members have committed their time as in-kind match. The total project costs will be \$81,000. The grant award requested is \$40,000 with an in-kind and cash contribution from all partners in the amount of \$41,000. No money is being requested of the Cheboygan County Board.

Partners in the project who have committed time and/or money include: Aloha Township, Indian River Chamber of Commerce, Cheboygan Chamber of Commerce, Mackinaw City Chamber of Commerce, Village of Wolverine, Wolverine Cabinets, Northern Lights Advertising, Mackinaw City EDC, Tuscarora Township, Cheboygan DDS, NEMCOG, Indian River Schools, and MSU Extension. More partnerships are expected. Also, he asked which two commissioners would be interested in attending the meetings for this project. Discussion held. Commissioner Horrocks and Gouine volunteered to be the staff members in support of this effort.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Allor to adopt the following resolution and authorize the Chairperson to sign the grant application:

**Resolution #11-06  
Supporting Participation in  
the United State Department of Agriculture's Rural Business and Enterprise Grant program  
For Assistance to the Economic Development for Our County.**

*WHEREAS*, The County of Cheboygan is a committed to economic development and has established an Economic Development Corporation, which supports economic development through coordinated efforts among its communities; and

*WHEREAS*, coordinated economic development is important to the fabric of our community and provides a healthier economy by protecting our natural resources that attract people to our area; and

*WHEREAS*, county-wide collaboration among the communities may help us save money by providing more effective and efficient services which creates a healthier economy; and

*WHEREAS*, the County of Cheboygan has very unique and historic communities that have the potential to even better communicate their "sense of place", which, according to national and state-wide studies have shown to improve the economic health of a community; and

*WHEREAS*, the County of Cheboygan is eligible to submit an application for grant assistance in producing a county-wide marketing and branding effort to improve our communities' sense of place, here called the Cheboygan County Sense of Place project, to gather more and better information from the general public regarding our communities' unique character, history, and natural resources; and

*WHEREAS*, the County of Cheboygan will use the grant award to gather more and better public input and to create a marketing plan and branding effort for our county's communities,

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT*, the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners agrees to participate in the USDA's Rural Business and Enterprise Grant program, in partnership with the Cheboygan County Economic Development Corporation and supports with in-kind donation of time of its members to achieve success in the Cheboygan County Sense of Place Project.

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the County of Cheboygan agrees to commit two staff members and a Commissioner in support of this effort, will commit no less than 100 hours of staff time during that period, and will coordinate these marketing efforts and grant administration.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**- None

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

Chairperson Socha discussed scheduling a Board Goal Setting Meeting with the new members. The consensus of the new Board members was to schedule it for June 2011 and for approximately two (2) days. Lengthy discussion held.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS-** Leonard Page commented on elected officials being independent, but that the Board of Commissioners makes the policies for Cheboygan County. Lengthy discussion held.

**Motion** Commissioner Horrocks, seconded by Commissioner Matelski to request Administrator Overton to draft a letter to the Cheboygan County Drain Commissioner requiring his attendance at one of the next three Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners meetings to answer questions relative to his previous report and authorize the chairperson to sign. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Sheriff Clarmont reminded the Board of Commissioners of the methamphetamine workshop and training session to be held at the Cheboygan Knights of Columbus Hall tomorrow night. Also he requested that one of the agenda items at the Elected Officials meeting be the security of the Cheboygan County Building.

Commissioner Redmond commented that the Michigan County Workers Compensation Fund surplus premium money was approved by the State of Michigan and the dividend checks were going out in the mail yesterday.

Commissioner Wallace commented that last week at the 911 CCE meeting, he asked the director to set up meetings where each new Board of Commissioners be given a tour.

Commissioner Allor commented that at the last District #4 Health Board meeting, they handed out radon test kits. These are free at the District Health Department and available to anyone in Cheboygan County.

Commissioner Matelski commented that last week at the MTA meeting, Marcia Rocheleau gave an excellent presentation regarding the Tax Allocation Board.

Commissioner Socha reminded the Board of Commissioners about the upcoming MAC Conferences and Legislative Conferences. She encouraged attendance of these conferences because there is a lot of information and networking is beneficial.

**Motion** by Commissioner Matelski, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 11:38a.m.

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Karen L. Brewster  
Cheboygan County Chief Deputy

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Linda Socha  
Chairperson