

**Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
October 24, 2017**

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 9:30 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Karen Johnson, Richard Sangster, Michael Newman, Roberta Matelski, John Wallace and Robert Bolinger.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Cal Gouine

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

**Motion** by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent. (Commissioner Gouine)

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Mike Donovan citizen of Aloha Township questioned why the National Guard Armory was not open in Cheboygan County. He had talked to State Representative Lee Chatfield and Sue Allor who stated that the National Guard Armory wanted to move to a more populated area such as Traverse City because they didn't have the funds to keep it open. Mr. Donovan stated Traverse City never wanted a National Guard Armory and now they were building a new building when there were not enough funds available to keep the Cheboygan National Guard Open. Why were they building a new one in Traverse City and what was the National Guard going to protect? In Cheboygan County, the National Guard protected the Mackinac Bridge and now there was the Enbridge Pipe Line 5. Mr. Donovan stated that if anything were to happen, the National Guard would have to come from more than an hour away, from Alpena, Grayling or Traverse City, rather than being only 14 miles away from Mackinaw City. He was asking for the Board of Commissioners support and help in getting the National Guard Armory reopened.

Phil Oppenheiser citizen of Mullett Township commented on the closing of the National Guard Armory. If anything happened to the Mackinaw Bridge, how would the public get to the Upper Peninsula? With the terrorism in the world the way it was, the National Guard needs to be present within 15 miles from the bridge so that when called upon, it wouldn't take them three or four hours to get here. Mr. Oppenheiser asked for the support from the Board of Commissioners to help reopen the Cheboygan National Guard Armory.

Warren Meyer citizen of Mullett Township commented on the closing of the National Guard Armory. He stated he was a member of the Cheboygan American Legion post and that the American Legion was involved in the building of the armory. Because they helped with the construction of the building, they were promised that as long as there was an American Legion post in Cheboygan, they would be able to hold their monthly meetings at the facility. Mr. Meyer stated that it was ok for maybe a year or so, then all of a sudden they couldn't get in and they wouldn't give them a key. Finally they gave up. So, one of the promises to the people that put the armory here in Cheboygan reneged on their promise. Many local veterans feel the building should be open for use and veterans should be able to use it as much as needed.

Fred Hart citizen of Grant Township stated he worked at the armory for 24 years as active duty for the Armory National Guard. When looking at it at the aspect of those that had joined the Guard and had gone through the Cheboygan Armory, there were a lot of names that would cross the roster. Some of these young men that turned into soldiers, signed up for a bonus so that they could go to college. These soldiers came back, and a lot of them were still living in Cheboygan because they wanted to come back to help Cheboygan's economy. Mr. Hart stated it would be a tough, uphill battle to get the doors of the building back open, but there were many who supported the project.

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

Chairperson Wallace presented Steve Schnell Community Development Director an appreciation certificate for his 10+ years of service with Cheboygan County. Mr. Schnell thanked all of the staff and the Board of Commissioners.

Tim Mason Maintenance Director presented the recycling 2016 Annual Report with comparable data for 2015. In 2016 the total revenue was \$316,277.11, which included residential; opt out residential, commercial accounts, refund/revenue sharing on processed materials, and charges for service and miscellaneous. The total recycling expenditures for 2016 was \$244,506.90 with a net income of \$71,770.21. The expense breakdown for 2016 included 29% transportation (including driver costs); 41% processing; 18% personnel (excluding driver costs); and 12% operating expenses. The processing costs were \$119,956 and \$99,772 for 2015 and 2016. A table showed transportation costs for the past three years as well as costs for 2011. 2011 was the last year that the County paid for Republic to haul the bins. The transportation costs for 2014, 2015 and 2016 was based on truck maintenance/repair, fuel, driver costs, truck depreciation and cost to have Republic haul while the truck was in for repair. If the County had not purchased the truck in 2011 to haul the bins, the estimated costs for transportation in 2016 would have been \$148,948. By hauling their own bins, there was an approximate savings of \$77,000. In 2012 and 2013, Emmet County began taking mixed recyclables. This meant that the County was no longer having to separate glass, tin and plastic containers in the same bin and could be combined together allowing the bins to fill more evenly. This saved in trucking costs by being able to haul full bins. In 2016, the County started charging \$1.00 per pound for Hazardous Waste and took in \$6,165.60 in Hazardous Waste and tire fees. In 2016, Straits Area Services took over

accepting electronics and recycling them. Later that year, they gave it up because it was not profitable. On January 1, 2017, the County started accepting electronics again with a minimum fee.

Cheboygan County Drain Commissioner Cam Cavitt presented his 2017 Annual Report. Mr. Cavitt stated that Cheboygan County still did not have an organized drainage district as defined by the Michigan drain code and Cheboygan County still did not assess any taxes, fees or special assessments for drainage purposes on its citizens. Application and procedures for establishing drainage districts were available through his office. The Drain Commissioner was given a broad and sweeping statutory authority to be used in very narrow circumstances. The ability to levy taxes and condemn property through the eminent domain process was two powerful ones. The misuse of the Drain Commissioner's office would be a detriment to the citizens. Mr. Cavitt addressed specific state statutory responsibilities of the Drain Commissioner. These various acts and statutes were in place to help maintain and enhance the County's amazing water resources. He gave an update on the Black Lake Water Levels and Mullett Lake Water Levels. Mr. Cavitt stated that the Drain Commissioner's Office was a formal partner with the Tip of the Mitts Watershed Council on the Duncan-Grass Bay Watershed Plan. The City of Cheboygan Department of Public Works and the Cheboygan County Road Commission also partner with Tip of the Mitt to make sure drainage issues were included in the formulation of this plan. Once approved by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, it would allow their various agencies to write grants and capture state and federal dollars. These monies could be used to address problem areas such as the Elliott Creek road crossing on Alpena State Road, the improvements on the Eastern Drain off Duncan Avenue, The Sangster Ditch and the Butler Drain all located on the east side of Cheboygan. Mr. Cavitt gave an update on The Little Black River Watershed – Smith Creek stating the infrastructure to support this creek as a drain was starting to crumble and sediment, garbage and plant growth had become problem. It should be noted that this drain was maintained by the Cheboygan Department of Public Works according to state statute and terms set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. He believes that it was reasonable and prudent to partner with other governmental agencies when requested to help resolve, whatever, drainage issues which may arise to ensure protection of life, private property and the water resource.

**Motion** by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to receive and file the 2017 Drain Commissioner Annual Report. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent (Commissioner Gouine).

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT** - None

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Sheriff Dale Clarmont presented the State of Michigan FY 2017 Operation Stonegarden Grant. On June 1, 2017, Operation Stonegarden was approved on the federal level to seek out those interested in additional funds for the protection of borders. The Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department submitted an Executive Summary and Operations Order indicating interest in any fund that may be allocated. On October 6, 2017 the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department was contacted and advised that \$50,000 had been allocated, if accepted. This grant was a non-matching grant, which provided for the purchasing of equipment and additional homeland security patrols. The grant covers eligible costs from September 1, 2017 through August 21, 2020. This grant would be included in the 2018 budget and will carry over to 2019.

**Motion** by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Bolinger to approve the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department FY 2017 Stonegarden grant and acceptance of the funds awarded in the amount of \$50,000 and authorize the Chairperson to sign any forthcoming required documentation and authorize necessary budget adjustments. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent. (Commissioner Gouine)

Equalization Director Elizabeth Zabik presented the 2017 Apportionment Report. There were three steps needed to take place for the collection of taxes. The Board needed to adopt a resolution for the millage rate that would be levied for 2017, adopt the apportionment report, and adopt the tax resolution. Every year, the Board was required to direct the spread of taxes in terms of millage rates. The County apportionment report showed all the information in a columnar format. The report also contained all the tax rates by all taxing authorities within Cheboygan County.

**Motion** by Commissioner Newman, seconded by Commissioner Bolinger, to adopt the following resolution and authorize the Chairperson to sign.

**Resolution 17-10  
2017 MILLAGE RATE RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Cheboygan County has the authority to levy its own maximum allowable millage rate of 7.5293 mills distributed as follows: 5.7319 mills for General County Operations, 0.4993 mills for Senior Citizens Operations, 0.2995 for Ambulance and 0.9986 mills for Roads; and,

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that to maintain basic county services, it will be necessary to levy the rate of 7.4798 mills; and,

**WHEREAS**, notice of the public hearing was given, and a public hearing was held as the County Budget Hearing;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the County of Cheboygan shall levy the millage of 7.4798 for 2017.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent (Commissioner Gouine).

**Motion** by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to adopt the 2017 Cheboygan County Apportionment Report as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent. (Commissioner Gouine)

**Motion** by Commissioner Newman, seconded by Commissioner Matelski to adopt the following resolution and authorize the Chairperson to sign.

**Resolution 17-11  
TAX RESOLUTION**

**BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, that there be raised by taxation and that the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners are hereby authorized and directed to spread upon the several assessment rolls and tax rolls of the County: County Tax, Township Tax, School Tax and any special taxes in the amounts as adopted by the County Board of Commissioners in the 2017 Apportionment Report. An amount of the above mentioned taxes not to exceed the schedule of millage as determined by the Apportionment Report adopted by the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners at their annual meeting held on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent (Commissioner Gouine).

**BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

**2018 Proposed Budget**

Finance Director Kari Kortz stated that the Board has had a copy of the 2018 Recommended Budget to review since September. She provided a list of all changes made since the original recommended budget was provided to the Board of Commissioners on 9/26/17. A summary was given of all changes +/- \$10,000 from the 2017 Amended Budget to the 2018 Recommended Budget. These line items were reviewed, explained and questions were answered by the Finance Director and/or Administrator Lawson.

Discussion was held regarding the Probate and Family Court increase in work hours. It was the consensus of the Board to abstain from any increase in work hours based on the recommendation from administration.

Discussion was held regarding the part time staffing at the front door. Administrator Lawson stated that the security door scans people coming in with the control system going upstairs so that the staff in the Sheriff's Department could monitor the door. From a customer service point of view, he wanted to put staff at the front door, build a new entry system that would allow someone to put their items through a contained portal to be looked at and then to give the items back to that person on the other side. This

comes down to a policy decision that the county did have security safety in the building balanced out to what the costs were to operate the system. One of the strengths of the system that was purchased from the beginning was that it was not going to have a person attached to it with a cost savings.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported with the departure of Mr. Schnell this week and Mr. McNeil was scheduled to retire in February 2018, it was his recommendation to reorganize the department to cover the core areas of Planning and Zoning and Building Safety activities. Mr. Lawson stated that he met with Mr. Schnell, Mr. Cronk, Mr. McNeil as well as the staff of the department to discuss work flow and activities. After these discussions, he would recommend that the Planning and Zoning Department be under direction of a Planning Director, which would manage the department, serve the public, be the Zoning Administrator, administer and draft amendments to the zoning ordinance and master plan and work with the Planning Commission. The salary for this position was recommended at \$62,000. This would require the reclassification of the existing Clerk II in the department, which would result in a pay increase between position classifications of \$5,262.50. This position would work with the public to answer questions, process and grant general zoning permits for development that do not appear in front of the Planning Commission (these projects primarily consists of residential building projects), work with the director to create the agenda packets and documents for the department and Planning Commission. The Building Official would be reclassified to the Director of Building Safety. The recommended salary for the position was \$62,000. This would bring the position to the average comparable wage with comparable communities, which was the current objective of the County's pay philosophy under the Wage and Benefit Analysis Plan. These changes would reflect back to the way that the budget was structured. An enforcement/soil erosion officer would be hired to carry out enforcement activity under the supervision of the director and process soil erosion permits and inspect properties for compliance with permits. The person hired would need to be trained and obtain a soil erosion certification. The remaining positions of Assistant, Building Inspector, Electrical Inspector, Mechanical/Plumbing Inspector and Plan Reviewer-Enforcement Office would remain unchanged.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** - None

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** - None

**Motion** by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Newman, to adjourn to the call of the Chairperson. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:22 P.M.

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Karen L. Brewster  
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

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John B. Wallace  
Chairperson Board of Commissioners