

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
February 26, 2013**

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, Pete Redmond, Cal Gouine, John Wallace and Sue Allor

Absent: Commissioners Bruce Gauthier and Toney Matelski (both excused)

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

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

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS –

Don Ramsay, D.O., the County Medical Examiner, addressed the board. He related how he came to succeed Howard Otto, MD as county medical examiner. The county medical examiner must be a licensed physician. Dr. Ramsay note that according to state statute a medical examiner will be notified upon an unexpected, unattended or a suspicious death in the county. He said Stephen Cohl, a pathologist from Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids is used for autopsy services by the county when necessary. Dr. Ramsay works very closely with the County Sheriff Department. He said even though he no longer is employed at the local hospital he still uses the facility when needed to provide medical examiner services, but technically the hospital has no legal involvement with the medical examiner. He said the services of the local funeral homes are also used. Dr. Ramsay stated he recently has volunteered his services in the jail to evaluate cases prior to the sheriff department transporting an inmate to the ER in Cheboygan and with potential transport to Petoskey. Brief discussion was held regarding the possibility some point the duties of the medical examiner may be done regionally. Chairperson Socha said the board is thankful to have Dr. Ramsay in this position and was glad he came today. Sheriff Clarmont said Dr. Ramsay has done an outstanding job for the county.

53rd Circuit Court Judge Scott Pavlich presented the annual report for the Circuit Court. The report included a brief history regarding the addition of Presque Isle County to the Circuit in 2006. He said about several years ago the court reporter retired and was replaced with an electronic recording system which has worked out very well and saves the county about \$60,000 annually. A couple of years ago the law librarian was eliminated with the circuit court staff assuming those duties and part time summer help was eliminated as well. Judge Pavlich said he strives to continue to operate a financially responsible court. Case Filing Trends for 2004 through 2011 show filings declining somewhat. He said the Drug is funded primarily by grant from the State of Michigan and an allotment of from the County. The county will also experience additional savings due to a reduction in recidivism. The report shows that in 2012 five participants successfully completed the Drug Court program and four were terminated as unsuccessful. In the report, Judge Pavlich thanked the Drug Court Team consisting of Court Administrator Karen Chapman, Therapist Diane Lissfeld, Deputy Todd Ross, Defense Attorney Mike Ekdahl, Prosecutor Daryl Vizina, Program Agent Jim Feagan, and Case Manager Darlene McKinley, and also Les and Vicky Tebo for their efforts on behalf of the program. Judge Pavlich said additional procedures have been added to hopefully enhance collection rates. He pointed out that this county's collection rates are slightly higher than average. Anne Friske, a successful graduate of the Drug Court related her success through this program for the Board. General discussion was held. Chairperson Socha commented on Dr. Ramsay, the county medical examiner, being here today was a coincidence, but actually relates well to Drug Court. She said costs to county taxpayers related to drug issues is

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astounding. She said it is better to pay for a program than an autopsy. She thanked Judge Pavlich for his time.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Administrator Lawson's written report included information on the Board Planning Session, Parks and Recreation Plan, Animal Shelter project, RFP/Bids, Rodeo Event, Fairgrounds Grant, Probate Court Basic Grant Distribution, DNR Resolution of Support, Policy Revisions, Northern Star Broadcasting, and University of Michigan Biological Station. He noted Mr. Amrhein of MSUE has indicated he would be available on April 25 and 26 to facilitate the Board Planning Session. Chairperson Socha suggested Audie's in Mackinaw City. Administrator Lawson said the Community Development Staff has been working with the Planning Commission and nine townships involved to complete the Parks and Recreation Plan, which must be submitted to the DNR for approval by the end of the year. He said the Maintenance staff will be completing the floors at the Animal Shelter by February 26, 2013 and the Humane Society should be able to move in after that. Bids for replacement of the boiler at the county building will be opened on February 25, 2013. The Fairgrounds Grant Agreement for the midway restroom renovation project has been received from the State and will be on the March Finance Meeting Agenda. Information provided by Judge Butts concerning the distribution of the State Basic Grant Funds by the Probate Court for at risk youth related programs were included in the board packet. The DNR Parks and Recreation Division will be requesting a Resolution of Support at the March 12, 2013 Commissioners Meeting for the DNR's Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Application to secure funding for the acquisition of a 40 acre land locked parcel located within Cheboygan State Park. Northern Star Broadcasting has donated two radio ads for the Great Up North Web Site which is owned by the County and would like to air the ads in return for their logos being placed on the Great Up North web page. An advertising agreement has been requested from Northern Star for review. The University of Michigan Biological Station has requested to enter into an agreement for a recycling roll off container. This will be on the March 12, 2013 agenda. Commissioner Redmond asked if the transfer of property adjacent to the Animal Shelter belonging to the Cheboygan Schools has ever been finalized with the State. Administrator Lawson said this is still at the State. Discussion held on boiler project. Chairperson Socha said she got information from a constituent regarding DTE Energy grants and asked if this has been explored. Administrator Lawson said it was looked into and we may get some money. Administrator Lawson said dredging funds should be made available for the County Marina. The last time dredging funds were available was during the Engler administration. Commissioner Redmond said the last couple of Captains on the Mackinaw have looked into dredging. Administrator Lawson said he would monitor this.

Commissioner Allor said in looking at the list provided by Judge Butts, she was surprised they are paying for a chef. She said you would think a speaker on nutrition could be provided through MSUE. She also pointed out a new youth mentoring program through the family court. Finance Director Kortz explained that the money Commissioner Allor is speaking of would be used in the event a child has a special need which is not being met.

Chairperson Socha asked Ms. Kortz for an explanation of a basic grant. Ms. Kortz said we are assigned an amount, which has been \$50,000, to be used to keep children out of the system. Chairperson Socha said we pay for MSUE and then see additional charges for various programs. She said she believes MSUE provides part of the service. Commissioner Allor asked about Cheboygan PRIDE who goes to schools and puts on performances regarding peer pressure types of programs and building self-esteem. Ms. Kortz said she believes it is an after school program that is offered. Sheriff Clarmont concurred. Ms. Kortz said these items will be on the finance reports for approval.

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Commissioner Wallace said he spoke with Diane Rekowski, the Executive Director of NEMCOG, regarding attending the next Committee of the Whole Meeting. Administrator Lawson said Diane called and indicated April would be a better month for her. Finance Director Kortz said it would be interesting if she could explain how the dues for NEMCOG are established. Commissioner Wallace said NEMCOG no longer has the number of employees they once had. Chairperson Socha said Cheboygan County in many arenas has been recently tied more with the northwest side of the state. She said there would be positive aspects of belonging to both the northeast and northwest councils of government.

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Commissioner Redmond advised he would not be able to attend the District 4 Health Board meeting on March 19, 2013 at 10 a.m. in Alpena as he will be attending the MAC Conference at that time. Chairperson Socha said she would attend the Health Board meeting.

Commissioner Wallace commented on the annual NLEA luncheon being held at Odawa Casino this year. He was against holding the luncheon there as that facility is not smoke free. Commissioner Wallace said he attended a recent MDOT and distributed diagrams as to MDOT plans regarding area highways.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None

Motion by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Allor, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Linda Socha
Chairperson