

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING/BOARD PLANNING SESSION
April 26, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairperson Pete Redmond at the Tuscarora Township Hall in Indian River.

Roll called and a quorum present.

Present: Commissioners Chris Brown, Bruce Gauthier, Pete Redmond, Cal Gouine, Tony Matelski, John Wallace, and Sue Allor

Absent: None

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

Chairman Redmond said that Item 10F County Building/Jail would be moved to Item 10B, and Item 10B Marina to Item 10F as the Sheriff has to leave early.

Motion by Commissioner Allor, seconded by Commissioner Brown to approve the agenda with the above changes. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Carl Muscott, a resident of Tuscarora Township, announced that he is running for the Tuscarora Township Supervisor. Mr. Muscott said he likes how the Board of Commissioners handles their meetings. He noted that it doesn't appear that community development is working in this county. He noted that this county has too many townships. He stated he would favor combining some townships or sharing of resources between townships in the county. Regarding the Board Goals, Mr. Muscott stated he agrees that Public Safety as number one; however, he believes that number four Recognizing Social Issues should be second, ahead of Economic Development and Quality County Service.

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS – None

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – None

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Equalization Director Janice Eaton presented the 2016 County Equalization Report for approval.

Motion by Commissioner Matelski, seconded by Commissioner Allor, to adopt the 2016 Cheboygan County Equalization Report as submitted reflecting a County Equalized Value of Real Property Value of \$1,633,698,447 and Personal Property of \$59,722,200 for a total 2016 County Equalized Value of \$1,693,420,647 (Copy of the 2016 County Equalization Report on file in the office of the Cheboygan County Clerk/Register). Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION – BOARD PLANNING SESSION

Administrator Lawson reviewed the county vision and mission statements and the current goals for the county. No changes were made.

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County Building/Jail – Sheriff Clarmont talked about the jail food program in the jail. He said several years ago a decision was made to contract meals rather than prepare them onsite. He stated he believes it is time to reassess this. He said security is the first reason to quit bringing meals into the jail that were cooked off-site. Secondly, logistically the distant could at some point present problems. If for some reason the meals could not be delivered, those inmates with dietary restrictions could sue the County if they did not receive the necessary dietary requirements. Sheriff Clarmont said in transporting the meals into the jail there is the possibility illegal items could be brought in or sent out. He said the cost would be approximately cut in half if meals were prepared in-house. The Sheriff said a feasibility study should be done by an outside entity prior to making this change. If this is implemented, the contract could be renegotiated based on preparing the meals here in the jail. He also stated the county may be able to apply for some government food subsidies as some of the inmates would qualify for that. Administrator Lawson said a feasibility study most likely would take about 3 to 4 months to complete. Sheriff Clarmont said currently the county is paying \$3.60 per meal. Emmet County currently pays \$1.60 per meal through a contract to provide in-house meals. Administrator Lawson said at budget time this project was discussed and at that time planned to send out a RFP in June. Chairman Redmond said the consensus of the board favors this project and he gave instructions to move forward.

Administrator Lawson said last year the roof was completed, boiler was replaced and work was done on the parking lots. This summer we plan to focus on the windows and panels on the north side of the building, He said updates to the elevator has been talked about, which hopefully will be completed too this year.

Fairgrounds – Administrator Lawson updated on the fairgrounds property. He said the County did obtain the ownership of the property. He said now plan to talk with the fair board on types of capital improvements and what kind of facilities may be necessary sometime in future. The administrator asked for board feedback on this before moving forward. Chairperson Redmond said at the least the fair board officers need to be included all the way in any type of discussion regarding that property.

MOTION by Commissioner Gouine, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to move forward to review fair board policies and general upkeep of the grounds. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Finance Director Kortz said reconciling fair board's book with the county's books has been an ongoing problem. She believes the County Treasurer would like to discontinue the separate booking. Ms. Kortz said it is amazing the amount of time to reconcile comes out of the Treasurer's office and the Finance Office. Administrator Lawson said this would have to be explained and discussed with the fair board,

Recycling – Administrator Lawson said at some point the cost assessed for recycling will not be sufficient to run this program. He said there are other possible funding sources out there. Commissioner Brown said should reevaluate this as it could be profitable. Discussion was held.

AIRPORT-Administrator Larson said the City is not totally out of the airport but would only come in play if the entity was disbanded. The City has contributed cars to be used as shuttle service in the past. Commissioner Brown said the airport services the surrounding areas as well as islands and is similar to a highway, a part of the infrastructure. Assistant Manager Ken Fuss from the airport said the county's appropriation helps keep the airport going. He said the hangars are filled right now. The airport gets a lot of medivacs and business traffic. He said he and Gary Painter are both Assistant Managers for the Airport. Mr. Fuss said they are

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in the process of working on correcting a problem regarding a building the local firefighters utilize for training. MDOT wants the building moved to a different location on the property. He said the airport will have to do a land release.

COUNTY MARINA - Administrator Lawson reported that the County has received \$1,523,218 in DNR Waterways grant funds since 1989. At the beginning of the project the City of Cheboygan contributed \$200,000 but has since backed out. The grant agreements state that the County must operate the marina as a recreational boating facility in perpetuity. If the County would break the grant agreements the County could be liable to repay up to the total of grant awards, the State would have the option to purchase the Marina from the County. Historically the Marina made enough revenue to pay its yearly operational cost, but not enough to provide funds for capital improvement costs. In 2008 a Marina Facility Study was completed identifying the need to start replacing capital assets at the facility which at that time totaled 3.5 million dollars. The first recommended project would be the replacement of the old fuel tanks and piping and replacement of the floating fuel dock and fuel building. Also included would be a new ADA compliant ramp to the pier and sidewalk replacement and landscape restoration which is estimated to cost \$800,000. Administrator Lawson said a DNR Waterways grant in the amount of \$400,000 which would require a \$400,000 local match has been applied for. Marina staffing has been restructured for 2016 to help reverse the decreasing revenues. Chairperson Redmond said the Marina has been there since the late 80's and now requires some replacements and refurbishing. Commissioner Brown asked if the City would have any interest in taking the Marina over. Discussion held. It is a policy decision as whether to keep the marina or not as the county does have the money. Administrator Lawson said the current plan right now is to keep operating and try to improve revenue. Chairman Redmond said there have been critical areas worked on such as the roof repair, electrical replacement and dock repairs. He said the replacement of fuel tanks and lines most likely may be the next project needed. John Moore, Nunda Township Supervisor said the Duncan Bay Boat Club is also going thru similar situation.

2016 EDC REPORT Administrator Lawson stated the Cheboygan County EDC was incorporated in 1977 and was an available tool through 2004 as needed. It was inactive for many years as no projects required its use, which is not unusual. In 2004 the County took action to reappoint and reactivate the EDC to facilitate the expansion of medical facilities at Community Memorial Hospital. A bond was issued in 2007 to expand the medical office area. In 2008 there was interest in creating an economic development strategic plan to use as guide or economic development efforts by the EDC. In 2009 the completed plan was adopted by the County EDC. Administrator Lawson said economic development efforts involve a variety of partners working in close coordination. Chairperson Redmond said the EDC had no direction several years ago and developed its own direction. He said last year this Board put the EDC on hold and asked the administrator to work with the Community Development Director to develop a purpose and direction for the EDC. This is what is happening right now.

NLEA - Administrator Lawson said the NLEA is a partner with the county for economic development. The NLEA is a cooperative/collaborative organization to provide economic and community development expertise for this region. Its mission is to provide resources and assistance for communities and entrepreneurs to create and retain jobs in the four county service area. Commissioner .Allor asked for the formula used to determine the counties' cost for participation in NLEA. Finance Director Kortz said Cheboygan pays just over \$42,000. Commissioner Allor also asked for the total cost to NLEA for their six full-time employees. She said she also is curious as to what NLEA projects have happened in Cheboygan County. Lengthy discussion was held.

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NEMCOG - Administrator Lawson said the County pays \$11,000 to NEMCOG, a regional planning agency. NEMCOG exists mainly on local government appropriations and grants. Chairperson Redmond said NEMCOG is a big player in regards to economic development. Administrator Lawson said NEMCOG facilitated the County Master Plan. NEMCOG is also involved in the Drug Court.

Administrator Lawson briefly reviewed other entities involved in economic development in the area. These include NEMCSA, Michigan Works, Business Connect, Michigan Small Business Development Center, MEDC, Northern Initiatives, Cheboygan Economic Development Group and others.

Administrator Lawson included in the board packet “Discussion Points for Possible Future Initiatives of the County EDC”. The objective of future initiatives of the Cheboygan County EDC in order to maintain alignment between the EDC and the Board of Commissioner’s goals and objectives related to economic development.

Motion by Commissioner Gauthier, seconded by Commissioner Brown to move forward to reconstitute and reactivate the County Economic Development Corporation and to direct county staff to work on the established goals and objectives with the corporation. Discussion held included Commissioner Allor stated if it was to be eliminated it would have to be reconstituted as the EDC to eliminate the corporation. Administrator Lawson said he would not recommend eliminating the EDC because it might be needed in a few years. Motion carried with 6 yes 1 no (Allor) and 0 absent.

RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE COSTS - Administrator Lawson said from a legal perspective, county funds cannot be used to purchase cake and refreshments. The cost for these type of receptions should be paid for in some other manner.

CITIZENS COMMENTS -Carl Muscott said talking about economic development, pie in the sky projects. He said Meijer is waiting on water and this should be a priority. Inverness Township and the City of Cheboygan have not solved the water at the expense of the community. He said the Meijer in Alpena was proposed at the same time as the one in Cheboygan and the Alpena Meijer is getting ready to open. Administrator Lawson said as far as the County role the land use was approved some time ago and the sign issue was resolved. All of other the delays and responsibilities rest with those involved Inverness Township and the City of Cheboygan. The county does not run utilities and have not been asked to facilitate this project.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gauthier said he passed out information on Blight written by Jim Conboy.

Commissioner Brown said the U.S. Coast Guard has appropriated money for a polar cutter, but have not suggested a home port for it. He said as he noted earlier Cheboygan County should support bringing it to Cheboygan County.

Motion by Commissioner Matelski, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
County Clerk/Register

Pete Redmond
Chairperson