

**Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole Meeting
September 22, 2020**

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners was called to order in the Commissioners Room and via telephonic by Chairperson John Wallace at 9:30 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Mary Ellen Tryban, Richard Sangster, Michael Newman, Ron Williams, Roberta Matelski, John Wallace and Steve Warfield

ABSENT: None

Also in attendance: Louis Vallance, John Moore, Scott Swanson, Kortny Hahn, Sheriff Dale Clarmont, Kathy Morrow, Administrator Jeff Lawson, IT Director Dave Berg, Gil Archambo, and County Clerk Karen L. Brewster.

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

Commissioner Tryban asked to be excused at 9.31 a.m.

Public hearing opened at 9:32 a.m.

Administrator Lawson presented the Michigan CDBG CARES Funding Citizen Participation Plan. The Community Development Block Grants require a citizen participation plan. In the past, the County has had a couple different types of CDBG funds. These funds have been used primarily in the county's housing department. The components of the plan were, basically, to give people the opportunity to make comments on the proposed grants. Municipalities who receive the funding are required to have the participation plan in place to encourage residents to participate in the planning, implementation and assessment and assessment of the applications for these funds. The plan outlines the policies and procedures residents can follow to participate in this capacity and any resident is welcome to participate, especially those who have low to moderate incomes. Those who also live in areas where community development funds are being used are also encouraged to participate. The plan establishes a contact person for the program, which in this case would be in the county's finance department. The information obtained from the residents' participation will then be transferred to the different, applicable departments around the building for review.

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Warfield, to close the public hearing. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Public hearing was closed at 9:33 a.m.

Administrator Lawson presented the Michigan CDBG CARES Funding. The County had applied for \$271,000 to potentially offset any future costs for testing, personal protection equipment or contractor costs related to COVID-19. The county had been in contact with the health department to determine if there could potentially be any future expenses. There haven't been any instances identified where the county expects to have to spend a large amount of money. There may be costs where the county didn't apply for other grants and the county would be able to place these under this particular grant. Staff wants to have funding available if they were to need it, between now and the end of the year.

Commissioner Tryban returned at 9:36 a.m.

Louis Vallance Citizen of Grant Township questioned whether county residents would be able to apply for any of the COVID-19 relief funding for reimbursement for food since the county did not provide food for citizens during the first part of the pandemic and Walmart did not stock their shelves properly. There was food available that should have been distributed through the USDA and the Department of Emergency Management that was not distributed to Cheboygan County. The Cheboygan County leadership did not get the program to come to the county for its residents.

Motion by Commissioner Newman, seconded by Commissioner Matelski, to close the public hearing. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Public hearing was closed at 9:40 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to approve the agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Louis Vallance citizen of Grant Township commented on COP-ESD deleting the routes for SRR from Cheboygan to Onaway because of virtual schooling, which then leaves him high and dry for rides. This was not what the federal and state transit dollars was meant to be used for.

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Sheriff Dale Clarmont awarded Sergeant Patrick Holt and Deputy Ron Fenlon with a Medal of Commendation in recognition of their commitment to the Citizens of Cheboygan County during COVID-19 Pandemic. Sheriff Clarmont also awarded Captain Keith Ginop with an Exceptional Service Medal in recognition of his commitment, professionalism, volunteerism and unrelenting devotion to the citizens of Cheboygan County during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Applause was given.

89th District Court Judge Maria Barton presented the 2019 Annual Report. In 2019, the 89th District Court total expenditures were \$15,821.04 less than budgeted. District Court has come in under budget every year from 2009 through 2019 for a total savings of \$274,291.96 to the County. The 89th District Court continues to address the issues of trial and preliminary hearings in an effort to improve the timeliness of cases and to reduce the time, effort and costs in subpoenaing police officers and other witnesses. These efforts result in more cases being settled before the day of trial, reducing witness fees for the Prosecutor's Office, overtime costs to the police agencies and jury costs in District Court. In 2019, jury expenses were elevated due to new requirements of the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC), which was created by legislation in 2014 after an advisory commission recommended improvements to the state's legal system. The MIDC works to ensure the state's public defense system is fair, cost-effective and constitutional while simultaneously protecting public safety and accountability. This new requirement has increased the number of jury trials held, thereby, increased the jury costs to \$6,990.75. One of the ways the court is saving money is through the use of a Polycom system, which was installed in 2013. The District Court utilizes this equipment whenever possible in order to make the most efficient use of time for the court, staff, police agencies, Department of Corrections and assigned judges. In 2019, the District Court, through the use of the Polycom, helped the county save an estimated \$4,390.38 in prisoner transportation, and visiting judge costs saving approximately \$33,523.67 for the years 2013 through 2019. Also

District Court utilizes a lot of Zoom Meetings since the pandemic, which has also help in keeping the costs down. District Court runs the Sobriety Court without any additional funding from the county, state or federal grants, and all programming is done in-house, with the help of Harbor Hall. She stated that the mission of the District Court is to help substance abusers achieve sobriety by providing a structural framework, helping them to be successful and facilitate change in addictive behaviors. Sobriety Court is another area that the court strives to save money. The budget was \$9,200 and YTD Activity came in under budget only spending \$6,832.97. The Sobriety Court participants completed 1,451 hours of community service in lieu of employment hours and for sanctions. In the last year, District Court has also been very efficient with their case flow management. District Court is required to keep track of its statistics for the State of Michigan to show how efficient they are being. In 2019, the 89th District Court's clearance rate was 100% with 5,144 new or reopened cases and 5,120 disposed of cases. Also District Court is meeting all of the guidelines set in place by the Michigan Supreme Court except one, which is the preliminary examination of each case scheduled within 14 days of the offense occurring. She explained that District Court has never met this because she felt it was an unreasonable time guideline. In 2019, District Court's revenue was \$944,787.49 up \$16,270.70 from 2018. The increase is believed to be due to collection efforts. The District Court's expenses were down approximately \$20,000. It's really important to be fiscally responsible with her budget and to be accountable to the taxpayers of the County. 89th District Court has been under budget every year she has been in office. It reflects a savings of about \$274,000 from being under budget every year. Looking at the 2019 District Court case load, it showed Felony cases down slightly by 11, Misdemeanor cases down by 109, Civil Infractions were down by 72, where Traffic Misdemeanor cases filed were up by 29. The area of concern was General Civil cases, which were up considerably by 61, along with Small Claims at 14, and Landlord Tenant cases were up by 13. There is no rhyme or reason as to why the case loads are either up or down. District Court utilizes community service program as sentencing alternatives to allow certain indigent offenders to perform volunteer work as part of their sentence as credit against the payment of fines and costs. In 2019, a little over 1,000 hours of community service was completed by people assigned to the community service program, which resulted in about \$10,000 of money being credited toward fines and costs. In 2019, District Court sentenced 122 inmates to the work crew in lieu of jail time.

MSU-E District Director Adam Koivisto thanked the Board for letting him present the MSU-E 2019-2020 Annual Report. He stated that he wanted to spend most of this report talking about the second half of the year because it's been such an oddball year and it might be more interesting. During the first half of the year, MSU-E programs that were familiar happened normally right up through February. In March, MSU-E worked very hard to be able to adapt to how things were changing, when everything began operating remotely. In the past, MSU-E has always done some remote programs, offering workshops and other programs online. MSU-E ended up converting tons of their programming to online programs in March. Within weeks of going and putting staff remotely, they launched a website that had all their current offerings and they continue to add to that even to this day. The MSU-E office has gotten creative with how they are offering the online programming to users, including offering a large number of classes never offered before. These can be seen by visiting the website www.canr.msu.edu/rlr/. In some cases, the office's staff has noticed they are reaching even more people than they would have if they were doing face-to-face learning. This might be due to folks not having to travel or just looking for things to do, when in the past, they might have just been doing other things. Many programs the office has offered even before the pandemic has also really started to take off, mostly the programs related to mental health, including a program named Stress Less with Mindfulness, which has seen attendance go through the roof since the pandemic has started. People's anxiety levels are really high, a lot of people are really struggling, either isolated at home or they have job worries. These classes related to mental health, where somebody can

just log on from their computer at home and learn about mindfulness or learn about different mental health options. MSU-E has had to add more of the mental health classes because so many people are attending the programs. These types of courses have always been offered by MSU-E, but due to the pandemic they are seeing more people taking the classes. Hopefully, when the pandemic is over, anxiety levels will go back down and they will be able to scale back a little accordingly. Many of the programs typically are done in person, including those related to agriculture, which has been converted to an online format. For example, there is typically a large scale field day offered by the office, where farmers come out to a local farm and talk about planting methods and the latest science. These things are still happening and they are happening virtually. The research that they normally do in this area is also still happening. This is very valuable to the farms in the area. What they do is they test different kinds of seeds, in the climate in this area. We're the only ones who do this kind of research in this area. It is easy for the farms to be able to get on Google and see what grows well in Detroit, or Lansing, because there is a lot of research going on in that area. However, if you want to know what grows well in this area, the research is provided by the Michigan State University Extension. This is all research that can still be done while maintaining social distancing. Now that the MSU-E office has opened back up to the public, people are starting to come back in. While everything was closed, the office staff was still helping people, it was just all done remotely, by sending things through the mail, or having the people text pictures to the office to help identify certain pests and plants. He stated that he has been on some advisory council's for the college, but MSU-E does a lot of work with non-farmers. The MSU-E office is constantly trying to increase the public's knowledge about what they do, so they can help as many people as possible. Recently, they have been trying to increase their presence on social media, to get the word out, as well as working with the community partners. He stated that he appreciated their long standing partnership with Cheboygan County.

Commissioner Sangster commented what MSU-E does and the level of partnership with the office and the county through different entities such as the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, MSU-E is really invested in Cheboygan County.

Commissioner Williams commented on Thomas Tafoya's Virtual Rabbit Show. He stated that he had talked to him the other day and this keeps going on with leaps and bounds. He questioned if they were looking to expand on this down at the Lansing level. Mr. Koivisto commented that this was gaining traction on its own. This was one of the cool things about 4-H it's nationwide. When other states see something like this, kids from other states start to collaborate. Leigh Ann from this MSU-E office helps commend with those opportunities. For example, Thomas will have opportunities to present at the National 4-H. He wasn't sure where this was going to go, but the skies the limit. Commissioner Williams commended Thomas on his work.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported on an update on Broadband. Last Friday, Commissioner Wallace, the EDC Chair Sharen Lange and I attended a meeting in Tuscarora Township. At the meeting, there had been a local resident who had asked representatives from Connect Michigan to talk about broadband internet opportunities in the state. As far as the presentation, Tom Stephenson from Connect Michigan stated the company does have a survey that can be sent out to the residents of a community to identify where the broadband internet is currently located and how the residents feel about their current service. The survey questions how people feel about the amount they are paying for their service and if it is currently meeting their needs. It looks like the EDC and the county could assist in facilitating that survey across the county, using partners like MSU-E or the schools. Staff did hear that there are other companies in the area

who have applied for grant funding on the federal level to help expand current internet service in Cheboygan County and, hopefully, by October some of that information will be released.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported on the sale of two (2) county vehicles currently owned by the county, which is being auctioned off online. One of these vehicles is a 2015 Ford Explorer, from the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department with 184,483 miles on it. There is also a 2010 Ford Escape with 140,818 miles on it. Both of these vehicles are currently on the county's website, being sold through an online auction site the county has used in the past. Members of the public who are interested will be able to bid on these vehicles by logging into the website, www.cheboygancounty.net, and look at the details of the vehicles, before bidding.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported on attending a Michigan Association of Counties webinar regarding a couple of issues in Lansing, including the update of solid waste management plans by local municipalities. These are now referred to as material resource planning documents, not solid waste. The state is looking at funding options, moving forward, whether it's in 2021 or 2022, to provide appropriations to counties or regions to update the plan. He did hear some appropriation figure of around \$60,000 per county. In 2000, the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments was the regional agency who came up with the original plans for the counties and it is expected that that entity will probably look at updating the plans again as a regional approach. In 2015, the Cheboygan County's plan was slightly updated. Cheboygan County is part of a regional plan where the county can haul solid waste between counties, which was standard at the time the solid waste plans were first put together. The state has shifted its focus over to resource management, which, basically, means recycling. Moving forward, there could be some incentive for counties who focus on recycling. Cheboygan County does have a recycling program with items being transported to Emmet County to be processed, which Cheboygan County has gotten some grant funding for. It is expected that this will continue in the future and when the plans are updated, they will have more of a focus on recycling.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported on receiving information from the Department of Treasury regarding some Grant Applications the county has applied for. These applications include the one for the public safety payroll reimbursement, for which the county has received around \$268,000 in grant funding. Tied closely to that is the Coronavirus Local Government Grant program, which was just received in the amount of \$214,000. Staff submitted costs that have been incurred for law enforcement and corrections during the pandemic, due to law enforcement assisting with keeping civil order during the pandemic.

Administrator Jeff Lawson reported on the Hazardous Duty Pay Grant for the first responders, which was received and \$1,000 will be distributed per first responder tomorrow.

OLD BUSINESS

Finance Director Sue Buitenhuis presented the Williams Office Equipment Invoice. At the September 8, 2020 Finance Business Meeting, the Commissioners pulled the invoice for Williams Office Equipment in order for Commissioner Williams to disclose the contract agreement to the Board in writing. The approval of the bill was postponed until the September 22, 2020 meeting. Williams Office Equipment Service Agreement as follows:

"Service on the machines. Insurance covers all parts, labor, travel, toner and staple costs to maintain this equipment in a reasonable state of operation. Billed monthly in arrears at .0088 Tenths of a cent per black & white print and .085 cents per color print actual use. Guaranteed service response in

four hours or less on all units during regular business hours with additional 24/7/365 support of law enforcement offices. Insurance does not cover any loss of information, external computer network hardware, software, wiring, malfunctions or damage caused by connection to a computer network. Insurance does not cover telephone system hardware, software, wiring, malfunctions or damage by connection to a telephone system. Insurance does not cover any electrical damage, hardware, or service required for or due to the installation and use of the equipment. Insurance does not cover loss or damage due to operator error or negligence. Insurance does not cover damage or service due to natural disaster, service by another party, misuse, malicious destruction, and use of incorrect type of toner, poor quality paper, labels, or damage due to foreign objects (Post its, staples, clips, etc.). Insurance is subject to annual review and is renewed automatically unless either party notifies the other with thirty days written notice. Either party may discontinue, add or remove some or all units insurance for any reason at any time with thirty days written notice. Insurance is void if account becomes over thirty days overdue. Williams Office Equipment and its owner, employees and assigns are not responsible for any personal or property damage, injury or death resulting from the use of the covered equipment. These terms are posted annually to the January invoice if a revision is made. Terms of this invoice supersede all previous conversations, statements and agreements. Payment of this invoice indicates agreement to these terms and conditions."

Motion by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Matelski, to approve invoice 56863 in the amount of \$813.46 to Williams Office Equipment for copier service and supplies for the month of July, 2020. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no, 0 absent and 1 abstain (Commissioner Williams).

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Jeff Lawson presented the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) Third Party Contract. The Rural Transit Assistance Program is designed primarily for rural transit agencies to disperse funds for eligible training activities and equipment and/or technical assistance and research activities that promote or benefit rural public transportation. The purpose of this Contract is to make federal RTAP grant funds available to SRR for the costs of eligible training activities and equipment and/or technical assistance research activities that promote or benefit rural public transportation. This program is for the period from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Newman, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to approve the RTAP Third Party Contract, authorize the Administrator or Chair to sign and authorize any necessary budget adjustments. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Administrator Jeff Lawson presented the Cheboygan County CDBG Citizen Participation Plan. Municipal recipients of CDBG funding are required to have a Citizen Participation Plan to encourage citizen participation in an advisory role in the planning implementation, and assessment of CDBG applications for funding and awarded programs. The Plan sets forth policies and procedures for citizen participation, which are designed to maximize the opportunity

for citizen participation in the community development process. Special emphasis has been placed on encouraging participation by persons of low and moderate incomes, and residents of areas where community development funds are utilized.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Tryban, to approve the Cheboygan County CDBG Citizen Participation Plan. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Administrator Jeff Lawson presented the Cheboygan County Resolution #20-13 Authorizing Resolution for CDBG COVID-19 Grant Funding. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136, makes available supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant ESG-CV funding for grants to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The CDBG grant will provide flexibilities for grantees to expedite the use of grant funds to help address the challenges facing our nation during this historic health crisis. Resolution authorizes submittal of required grant documents and authorized Chairman Wallace as certifying officer.

Motion by Commissioner Newman, seconded by Commissioner Warfield, to approve the following resolution and authorize the Chair to sign. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY RESOLUTION #2020-13
AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION CDBG COVID-19 GRANT FUNDING**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136, makes available supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant ESG-CV funding for grants to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The CDBG grant will provide flexibilities for grantees to expedite the use of grant funds to help address the challenges facing our nation during this historic public health crisis.

WHEREAS, the Michigan Strategic Fund has invited Counties to accept Community Development Block Grant Program funds to support **CDBG CARES Funding**; and

WHEREAS, Cheboygan County will seek to receive up to \$271,084.14 in CDBG funds to reimburse for unexpected costs within its jurisdiction associated with COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Cheboygan County will use funding to assist for the prevention, mitigation and response to COVID-19, specifically for PPE, healthcare equipment, public services and salary reimbursement or other cost necessary to respond to COVID-19.

WHEREAS, the proposed project will benefit all residents of the project area and 45.74 percent of the residents of Cheboygan County are low and moderate income persons as determined by (census data provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Cheboygan County hereby approves authorization to submit required grant documents to receive CDBG CARES funding and designates and authorizes John Wallace, Chairman, Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners as the Certifying Officer, the person authorized to certify the Michigan CDBG pre-agreement documents, the person authorized to sign the Grant Agreement and payment requests, and the person authorized to execute any additional documents required to carry out and complete the grant.

Administrator Jeff Lawson presented the Request for Delegation of School Plan Review and Inspection Authority. Cheboygan Area Schools has requested from the State of Michigan that school plan review and/or inspection for building, plumbing, electrical and mechanical work completed by the Cheboygan Area School District be permitted and inspected by the

Cheboygan County Building Safety Department. The application must also be signed by the Chief Elected Official of the local unit of government that will conduct the inspections.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster, seconded by Commissioner Tryban, to authorize the Chair to sign the Request for Delegation for School Plan Review and Inspection Authority to a Local Unit of Government Enforcing Agency application. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Louis Vallance citizen of Grant Township commented on the Federal Court ruling that overturned the Michigan ban on transporting voters to the polling places for the November General Election, which will require Cheboygan County to have Straits Regional Ride or the Sheriff's Department available for transportation. Secondly, the county building is still not in compliance with Executive Order 2020-153 signage stating that citizens who are unable to wear masks can come into the county building. Also the upstairs men's bathroom is a liability to the county and the facade underneath the windows outside by the front door still needs to be addressed.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Newman commented on the situation with District Health #4 Department regarding the Municipal Employees' Retirement Systems funding level has dropped below the reasonable amount and this department might be coming back down to the Board to ask for more funds.

Commissioner Warfield commented that he attended a Planning Commission meeting and Committee Member Karen Johnson has tendered her resignation.

Commissioner Tryban commented that she attended a Fair Board Meeting where Administrator Lawson reported on the Fair property.

Commissioner Matelski commented that there was a nice feature story on channel 7 & 4 last night about the Veteran's Memorial Park.

Commissioner Wallace commented that he turned in the proposed 2021 CCE 911 budget to the Finance Director Buitenhuis.

Motion by Commissioner Tryban, seconded by Commissioner Warfield, to adjourn to the call of the chairperson. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Karen L. Brewster
Chief Deputy Clerk/Register

John B. Wallace
Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners