

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2016**

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

Roll called and a quorum present.

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

Absent: Commissioner Bruce Gauthier

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

Item 6B *Salvation Army Business Manager Greg Bock* was removed from the agenda as Mr. Bock was not able to attend.

Motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS

Straits Regional Ride Director Mike Couture presented the Straits Regional Ride 2015 Annual Report. Commissioner Redmond asked if a passenger totals report could be made available to the Board. Mr. Couture stated he would present that information. Commissioner Brown asked how passengers are counted if they travel from Cheboygan County to Emmet County, and then from Emmet County to Cheboygan County. Mr. Couture stated that they are counted each time they are picked up. Commissioner Wallace asked how much each bus costs. Mr. Couture stated that each bus costs approximately \$135,000 including preparing it for the road. Mr. Couture stated the biggest service provided by Straits Regional Ride is transportation for elderly people who don't have other sources of transportation in the area. Commissioner Brown commented that Straits Regional Ride also creates dependable transportation for people to get to and from work. Commissioner Allor asked about how the approximate \$15,000 loss seen in 2015 compares to previous years. Mr. Couture stated that in past years the loss has been approximately \$20,000 - \$25,000, and that it is getting harder to keep the loss amount closer to zero. Commissioner Matelski stated that the loss amount is not bad in comparison for 2015. Mr. Couture stated that ridership is down approximately 1,600 riders from last year –as the price of gas goes down, ridership goes down. Commissioner Redmond commented on the age of the bus fleet and that Straits Regional Ride is going to need as many new buses as possible.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Lawson reported the C.C.E. 9-1-1 Committee of County Administrators will submit a report to the C.C.E. 9-1-1 Board regarding mid-level management staffing and will hopefully be wrapping up the issue next month. Commissioner Wallace stated that C.C.E. is thankful for the 3 County Administrators working on this.

Administrator Lawson updated the Board on electrical bids for Phase II of the animal shelter project. He stated that the bids are scheduled to be opened March 1st. Phase 3 will be removing the old kennel itself and redoing the middle portion.

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Administrator Lawson stated that mechanical contractors are at the Reid Building today to install a mechanical system within the Women’s Resource Center. Administrator Lawson stated that the Health Department (upper floor of the Reid Building) would be a \$1.8 million remodel and that the current revenue stream does not support that but that the Health Department would like their facilities upgraded sooner rather than later so there will have to be money saved in certain elements of the remodel.

Administrator Lawson stated that the Waterways Commission met on February 17th and discussed capital improvement projects needed for the marina. He said the marina is in need of phased capital improvements this may be an uphill battle due to cash flow. Mr. Lawson stated that a State of Michigan Waterways Grant Application will be submitted for \$800,000 - \$400,000 state/\$400,000 county match to replace the fuel tank system, gas dock and related infrastructure as Phase I improvements. Commissioner Brown stated that we should see increased boating and seasonal boating slip rentals this year because of lower gas prices. Discussion was held.

Administrator Lawson stated that there were a few staffing changes occurring in County Building in Friend of the Court, Community Development and Probate Court due to employees retiring or leaving and moving around in positions. Commissioner Wallace asked where county building jobs are posted. Administrator Lawson responded that they are posted internally and on the county website but that the jobs flip very quickly.

Administrator Lawson stated that staff is currently preparing a report that provides a review of existing economic development agencies that work with Cheboygan County to promote economic development. Mr. Lawson stated that the county wants to see a snapshot of where Cheboygan County is in regards to economic development, discussion points and policy directives moving forward. He stated it is staff’s objective to complete this report by the end of March.

Administrator Lawson commented that an email has been sent to Enbridge requesting attendance at a future meeting but they have not heard back yet.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Commissioner Redmond stated that the Board needs to determine a date for a Board Planning Session and suggested April 26th. There was Board consensus on that date. Sheriff Dale Clarmont commented that he would like for the Board to plan on discussing the introduction of a kitchen in the jail at the Board Planning Session.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Carl Muscott, a citizen of Tuscarora Township, commented on the discussion of the marina and that it would be a waste of taxpayer money to invest in it. Mr. Muscott stated that the county should sell the marina to the City of Cheboygan.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Wallace stated that Michigan Works in the 8 county region is having a hard time finding applicants that are equipped – educationally or technologically – to satisfy the jobs available in the job pools. Commissioner Brown commented that they should be recruiting people who have recently graduated high school and left the area.

Commissioner Gouine commented that there was a good article in the Cheboygan Tribune regarding the Cheboygan Veterans Office.

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Motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Wallace to go into closed session pursuant to MCL 15. 268(e) regarding a pending federal court case. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Enter into closed session at 10:24 AM.

Return from closed session at 11:08 AM.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Matelski to authorize civil counsel to dismiss the federal case regarding Heritage Cove and the County of Cheboygan without prejudice. Discussion was held. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Motion by Commissioner Matelski, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:12 AM.

Amber Libby
Chief Deputy County Clerk/Register

Pete Redmond
Chairperson