

A Regular meeting of the Iron County Board of Commissioners was called to order by its Vice-Chairman Ray Coates on Tuesday, February 12, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Commissioners Room of the Courthouse. The Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag was recited. County Clerk Joan Luhtanen called the Roll of Officers. Present were: Patti Peretto, Tim Aho, Jim Brennan and Coates. Absent was Carl Lind. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to approve the Regular meeting Minutes of December 27, 2012 and January 8, 2013, and the special committee meeting minutes of December 14, 20, 27, 2012 and January 2, 10, 17, 21, 24, and 31, 2013. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Aho, to approve the Agenda as presented with the following additions: 1) A resolution saluting the WIC school district; 2) A resolution about the Medical Care Facility's selection of a prescription drug vendor, and 3) Discussion about travel to attend seminars. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Public Comment: County Clerk Luhtanen stated that she will need to stand at times during the meeting because of her back problem.

Commissioners' and Elected and Appointed Officials' Reports: Some officials submitted written reports, and others gave verbal updates of their recent meetings and attendance at conferences. Peretto asked if the commissioners could start receiving monthly budget status reports. This was helpful in the past. Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to accept all reports. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Unfinished Business: Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to approve the Finance Committee's January 10, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 344,698.62; their January 17, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$162,605.12; their January 24, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 168,057.12; and their January 31, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 45,247.54.

Roll Call Vote: AYES: Peretto, Aho, Brennan, Coates

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Lind

Motion carried.

Vice-Chairman Coates then brought up the matter of the release of accumulated benefits (unused sick and vacation hours) to County Treasurer Melanie Camps and Register of Deeds Joetta Greig. (See Minute Book Page T-120, December 27, 2012) Coates said he felt there were two options: 1) Follow past practice and issue a check immediately, or 2) Follow the contract and advice of the labor attorney.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to deny the request of Camps and Greig for non-contractual compensation. There was much discussion, and Civil Attorney Steve Tinti said that prior individuals were able to receive this compensation when they went from a union position to an elected one. There is past practice. However, the union contract language does not provide for such a "pay-out" when an employee becomes an elected person. Between the two extremes, an alternative option is to put the amount of money due to the individuals into their current retirement accounts. A grievance was filed prior to the individuals leaving their union employment positions. A Roll Call vote was attempted, but the commissioners were confused over the way the motion was worded. Therefore, Peretto rescinded her second, and Brennan rescinded his motion.

Coates asked if the grievances were dropped, and the pay-out done as in the past, could the contract then be modified to address such a situation in the future. Tinti said that would be one way, but it may be brought out in negotiations, the way the past practice was implemented, was also not in the contract. More discussion followed.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Aho, that the County authorize to release the following amounts to Melanie Camps (\$ 4,476.78 for benefits and \$ 145.81 of Longevity) and to Joetta Greig (\$ 4,881.17 for benefits and \$ 262.50 of Longevity) into their retirement funds, due from their employment with the County through December 31, 2012. This pay-out is contingent upon the grievances being dropped.

Roll Call Vote: AYES: Aho, Brennan, Peretto, Coates

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Lind

Motion carried.

In a related matter, Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to authorize Melanie Camps and Joetta Greig to remain under their current retirement contracts which they enjoyed as county employees through December 31, 2012.

Roll Call Vote: AYES: Peretto, Aho, Brennan, Coates

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Lind

Motion carried.

To address the matter the Medical Care Facility's decision to contract with an out-of-county provider for a prescription plan, (See Minute Book Page T-118, December 14, 2012) Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas, the Iron County Medical Facility is owned by the County taxpayers, and it is in the best interest of the taxpayers to maximize local income and employment throughout all of the county owned facilities,

It is therefore resolved, that this Board encourage the Medical Facility Board to make a second best effort to find a source (for a prescription drug supplier) within the County, with a quote within 5% being considered equal.

Brennan said the Medical Care Facility could opt out of the drug contract within 60 days, with no penalty. He felt it was important to keep the jobs local. In discussion, Peretto said it was her understanding that the hospital was going to submit another proposal to the Medical Care Facility by the second week in February. She felt that the County Board should give the MCF Board the latitude to make the decision. Aho was not in favor of stipulating to a specific percentage amount, and this Board should allow them (MCF Board) enough time. After more discussion, Peretto amended her second to drop the 5% amount, and for Brennan to amend his motion to drop the 5% language, and to read at the end:

“as it is in the best interest of the citizens of Iron County.”

Roll Call Vote: AYES: Brennan, Aho, Coates

NAYS: Peretto

ABSENT: Lind

Motion carried, 3 to 1.

New Business:

Iron Conservation District County Enforcing Agent Robert Gussert, presented the Board with the “Iron County Erosion Control Annual Report, Dated January 15, 2013.” For 2012, there was a total of 31 permits issued. Twenty-two permits were Residential and nine were Non-Residential. The total fees collected were \$ 10,559.50. The amounts and averages for years going back to 2004 were reported as well. The Balance of \$ 4,447.09 from 2012 will be applied in 2013 for active 2012 projects. Gussert was thanked for the report and presentation.

Tyler Wood, Forester with the Iron Conservation District, explained that he was available to offer a free, forestry assistance program to landowners in Iron and Baraga counties. This program is funded by the DNR. The purpose of the program is to assist landowners to manage and protect their resources, and to provide a “road map.” Wood will be offering tree planting/pruning workshops, tours of mills and logging sites, free onsite visits to landowners, and a whole host of other aspects of timber management. Wood was thanked for his presentation.

The ballot language for the renewal of the Senior Center Millage had not yet been developed. The current millage has expired as of 2012. Clerk Luhtanen suggested that the commissioners talk with the administrators of the centers to see if the .25 mill for operations was still sufficient, or if there will be any changes in their programming. She said that May 28th is the State deadline for ballot wording of proposals to appear on the August 6 ballot. They would need to adopt the ballot language at a meeting prior to May 28. Informational only.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to appoint Ben Smith to a three year term on the Authority on Aging Board, which will expire on December 31, 2015. On Voice Vote, the motion carried, 3 to 1.

Aho made a motion, seconded by Peretto, appointing Dorothea Olson and Jerry Bugby to the Economic Development Corporation Board. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

At a Finance Meeting held on January 24, 2013, (See Minute Book Page T-130), the need to manage the county's forest land had been brought up. Brennan said that a master plan has to be developed to harvest the trees, protect them, and to be fair to all the people involved in various aspects of logging within the county. It had been suggested that a harvest be done on the county property on the US 2 corridor, where the Oss Road comes in. The funds from that sale could generate funds to develop a master plan which would develop goals for the county properties. Tyler Wood would be glad to assist, and offered to email all the local foresters. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to place an ad for a Request for a Proposal for a forester to help develop a timber sale of only the county property on the US 2 corridor, where Oss Road comes in. All proposals are to be received by February 28.

Roll Call Vote: AYES: Coates, Brennan, Peretto, Aho

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Lind

Motion carried.

Brennan brought up how the administration fee from the millage for the senior citizen centers will be distributed. The County will retain \$ 2,000 as a fiduciary fee for the county general fund; and a temporary reserve fund with the balance will be established. At a meeting to be held on September 11, 2013, between the four Iron County Site Presidents and chaired by the County Commissioner assigned to the Committee on Aging, a decision will be made as to how to distribute the balance. Brennan felt that the ballot language for the millage should be amended to avoid this complicated issue in the future. Informational only.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to approve the schedule for the Board of Commissioners' meetings for 2013. For the most part, they will be conducted on the second Thursday of the month, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The two exceptions are April 9 (Tuesday) and October 8 (also a Tuesday), but they will be held at 6:00 p.m. as well. It is unknown if the November 14 meeting will be rescheduled at this time. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Steve Rennell from BS & A software gave a presentation on the financial//budgeting aspects of his product. They provide very good support, and are used by the majority of counties in the State. The total cost is \$ 172,000, but could be paid over a number of years. Renell answered various questions, and was thanked for coming.

Resolution: Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to adopt a Resolution recognizing the West Iron County Public Schools Earning Academic State Championship. (They ranked 42nd among 560 public and charter schools in Michigan.) On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brennan stated that the county has a balanced budget, but that until the audit is completed, it will be a few months before how we did in 2012. He stated that we need to be careful about spending for travel and lodging that is more than one day, until we are sure of our financial affairs. It was the consensus of those present to agree.

Public Comment: Don Diller, President of the Veterans Council, presented that office's report for 2012. There were 280 claims/inquiries which were addressed, and the office activity was up 32% from the prior year. They have the same officers as before, and did come in under budget. Joy DeNicola is very helpful and available to help on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Diller and his veterans were thanked for their contributions.

Announcements: The Courthouse will be closed on Monday, February 18, in observance of President's Day, and the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, at 6:00 p.m.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to adjourn. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. The time was 8:30 p.m.

Vice-Chairman Ray Coates

County Clerk Joan Luhtanen

