

On Thursday, November 14, 2013, at 1:00 p.m., Iron County Board Chairman Carl Lind opened a Public Hearing on the County's Proposed 2014 All Funds Budget. The hearing was held in the Commissioners Room of the Courthouse in Crystal Falls, Michigan. The Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag was recited. All Commissioners were present: Tim Aho, Jim Brennan, Patti Peretto, Ray Coates and Lind.

Carl Lind called for Public Comment three times, but none was forthcoming. Commissioner Peretto had some questions. \$ 10,000 was budgeted for Legal Fees for the Indian Lake Well project, and she wondered why that was necessary. Civil Counsel Steve Tinti explained that State permits are still coming. After they are received, then the County Building Authority will need to hold a Public Hearing about the proposed assessments, and to adopt a budget for this Special Assessment District. If there are property owners who disagree with the assessments, they can appeal these to Probate Court. After that step, then funding for bonds must be procured. The firm of Miller and Canfield will do this work. Then there must be construction contracts written. However, the County will be made "whole" for the approximate \$ 138,000 which has been expended. Once the Special Assessment District is completely established, then the operating funds will be raised by the budget which is adopted by the Building Authority, based on the assessments. The County Youth Camp and State boat launching site will also have to pay their share.

Peretto also thought the raise for John Lortie should only be half as much, not because she didn't think he was saving the County money by doing the work himself, (rather than having to hire various contractors) but because she felt the County should be cautious until they see how the finances go.

Brennan pointed out that for next year, the budget shows a shift in how the fringe benefits are listed. Fringe benefits now are listed as part of the cost of each department, rather than one collective item.

Peretto said the Budget Stabilization Fund has decreased significantly these last three years, and is now down to \$ 318,000. She said this was not a good pattern. With no other comments, Chairman Lind declared this Public Hearing closed.

Then at 1:13 p.m., the Public Hearing on the 2013-2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan was opened by Chairman Lind. Lind called for Public Comment three times, but none was voiced. Administrator Clisch stated this Plan had been explained at an earlier meeting by Sheriff Mark Valesano. This Plan has to be in place in order to apply for FEMA funds if an emergency situation occurs. With that, Chairman Lind declared this Public hearing closed.

Then a Regular meeting of the Iron County Board of Commissioners was called to order by its Chairman Carl Lind on Thursday, November 14, 2013, immediately following the above Public Hearings. 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, Ray Coates and Lind. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of October 8, 2013 and the Special Committee Meeting Minutes of October 10, 21, 24, and November 7, 2013. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. Brennan made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Agenda. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Public Comment:

Paul VanVinsel Had written about the neglect and overall appearance of the Iron County Fairgrounds. One of the commissioners said the County will contact the Road Commission to address those concerns.

Ben Smith Recognized Joan Luhtanen's (County Clerk) retirement and asked if, in the future, the minutes could be tape recorded so it would be easier to play back and the public could get a copy of the disk. (Luhtanen uses shorthand to record the meeting minutes.)

Commissioner/Department Heads and Other Officials' Reports: Both written and oral reports were given by the commissioners and others. MSU Interim Director Doug Brahee explained Rebecca Krans will be working to help consumers with local U.P. horticultural access.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Coates, 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 October 10, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 2,718,729.78; their October 24, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 350,012.04; and their November 7, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 280,547.33.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

The Airport Ad-Hoc Committee had given a presentation at the Regular Meeting of October 9, 2013, (Minute Book Page T-176). They have a potential, viable new airport site and have gone as far as they can. In discussion, Lind stated if a new airport was to be established, then he wanted to take both of the current airports off of the taxpayers' support, and that a new airport should cost the public nothing. Peretto said it should still be explored, and if the cost is prohibitive, then that would be the end of it, but we should at least move forward. Civil Counsel Tinti said we currently have an ad hoc committee, but a formal committee could be established. He could prepare the documents and resolution that would have to be adopted to make that change, and present it at the next meeting. Lind instructed Tinti to do so.

The 906 Technology contract would need to be revised. Aho made a motion, seconded by Coates, to table this matter until a revised contract is prepared. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Equalization Director Joan Mussato prepared a revised 2013 Apportionment Report to reflect the change resulting from the election results for millages. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to adopt the revised 2013 Apportionment Report.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Vacation Payout Due to Melanie Camps in the amount of \$ 3,543.12 and the Vacation Payout Due to Joetta Greig in the amount of \$ 3,546.88. This matter has been ongoing for almost a year.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

New Business:

Josh Brindle was present to again request use of a portion of the ORV Trail 16 for the Ironline Sled Dog Race for 2014. In 2013 this was a first time event, and was enjoyed by many people and was very successful. Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to give the County's permission to hold the Ironline Sled Dog Race on the County's ORV Trail 16. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Aho made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the License Agreement for a Fiber Optic Underground Line between the County and the Iron River Co-Operative TV Antenna Corporation and revise the agreement for a five year term instead of three. This is a renewal.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Aho made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to award the County Timber Sale Contract to Shameco for \$ 36,155.65, who was the highest bidder.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

The County had agreed at their August 8, 2013, meeting (See Minute Book Page T-166) to approve of the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission Agreement and Articles of Incorporation. Houghton County also agreed to participate, but in their Resolution, they specifically stated that it (Houghton) will not be obligated financially to the Commission. Coates made a motion, seconded by Lind, to reinforce their earlier actions to participate in the Northwoods Rail

Transit Commission and follow Houghton County's Resolution to not be financially obligated to the Commission. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

A request for an annual allocation had been received from the Iron County Historical and Museum Society. There were no representatives from that group present, but it was believed they had not been notified that they would be on the agenda. The County does pay for a portion of the museum's insurance. Brennan made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to table this issue until next month. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Dennis West from the Northern Economic Initiatives Corporation, which is based out of Marquette, was present to explain the loan services they would like to provide in Iron County. They have been in operation since 1994, and work with family owned businesses and are considered an alternative lender. They not only provide loans, but help with providing support and education to the lenders. Some types of support include learning how to use "quick books," developing and maintaining a website; coaching lenders about "profitability analysis," etc.

The Corporation would be using the County's CDBG funds, and the loans would only go to Iron County businesses. County Treasurer Melanie Camps said the last time the CDBG funds were used for a loan was 2004. The fees they charge come out of the "spread" between the costs and what is loaned out. The rate for loans range between 5 % and 10%, with the average being 7%. They also procure federal and foundation grants.

West explained that they differ from the EDC in that they help businesses grow, but do not bring businesses to the area. West said they can help the County's ability to help develop small businesses, and that they do extremely well.

Aho said it appeared that this would be another "tool" that the County is not currently providing. Gary Hough, the Economic Developer, recently quit, and there is no one to replace him yet. The whole status of the local Economic Development Corporation is questionable. If the local EDC knows about the program, was not known. West said he would be glad to attend their meeting.

Lind stated that many programs are going towards "regionalization." Brennan stated that he is very cautious about the three regionalized programs that the County is participating in now. Only one, he felt, was working well. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to table this issue for now and see what the local EDC's input is.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Aho, to approve the Independent Contractor Agreement between the Iron County Construction Code Office and James Shapy, Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector. Mr. Shapy is from Dickinson County, and will be able to inspect those plumbing jobs quicker than having homeowners wait for the State inspector. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

The Senior Centers Allocation had been approved at the Finance Meeting of October 10, 2012, (See Minute Book Page T-178). Informational only.

Doug Brahee, Interim Director for MSU, District 1, explained how the cost for the County for the 4 H program, as well as other available educational programming, would cost the same as 2013, or \$34,545.00 for the period January, 2014 through December, 2014. Starting in 2015, there would be a 4% increase, and in 2016, there would be a 5% increase. The commissioners were concerned over the cost of the programming, and wondered if the 4-H program could go on its own. Brahee said that the programming is connected to MSU (a land grant university) and the 4-H Council. At this time, the position of 4-H program coordinator is vacant, but is a half-time position shared with Dickinson County. The commissioners said that other U.P. county representatives that they talked with thought the program is good, but with everyone's dwindling resources, hard to financially support. Brahee said he knows these times are a challenge, and would bring the message down to his supervisors. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to table this issue. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Coates made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to approve the purchase of a spam/filter to be installed on the County's server by 906 Technologies for \$ 2,038.00.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the State of Michigan Department of Veterans Affairs and the Iron County Veterans Service Office. This is for a VETRASPEC system and will greatly help processing veterans' requests and store transaction data. The cost of \$100 will come out of the local Veterans' Council budget. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Aho made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to accept the following contracts which have been ratified: Iron County Corrections' Officer Local 1424 AFSCME Agreement, Deputies Agreement, and the Iron County Courthouse AFSCME Union Agreement for a 1.8% increase in wages, and to keep the current health care the same. These contracts will become effective January 1, 2014.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Resolutions:

The first resolution transferring the CDBG funds over to Northern Economic Initiatives Corporation was not acted upon.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Resolution adopting the Iron County 2013 - 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the IGT Authorizing Resolution. This is a renewal of a program to help provide health care services to low-income residents throughout the entire U.P. The Medical Care Access Coalition participates with various hospitals, and the State of Michigan provides \$ 103,461.33 of intergovernmental transfers to pay for those services. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Announcements: The Board of Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing on the Final Budget for 2014 at 1:00 p.m. with their next Regular meeting to follow on Thursday, December 12, 2013. The Courthouse will be closed December 24 and 25 for the Christmas holiday. The Courthouse Christmas Party will be held Tuesday, December 17 from Noon to 1:00 p.m. at which time the offices will be closed.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Aho, to adjourn. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. The time was 2:55 p.m.

Chairman Carl Lind

County Clerk Joan Luhtanen