

A Regular meeting of the Iron County Board of Commissioners was called to order by its Chairman Carl Lind on Thursday, October 9, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag was recited. Former County Commissioner Leo Remondini had just recently died, so Chairman Carl Lind asked those present to observe a Moment of Silence in Remondini's honor. County Clerk Joan Luhtanen then called the Roll of Officers. Present were: Patti Peretto, Tim Aho, Jim Brennan, Ray Coates and Lind.

Before continuing on the normal agenda items, an interactive, video conference presentation by Kim Stoker from WUPPDR was viewed and heard. Stoker explained that the Governor has formed a Regional Prosperity Initiative which is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private business. There are ten regions throughout the State with the entire Upper Peninsula as one region. Because funding for all agencies is decreasing, and many services are being cut, this effort will try to collaborate services. There must be measurable outcomes in the plan that is submitted. Some goals for the U.P. include: Expand the broad band capacity, transportation (specifically rail lines), energy costs, and increased cell phone coverage. Stoker stated that there is a November 1st deadline for applying, but they will not find out until January 1st if the application is approved. Then, the plan must be put together in nine months. The projects will be accomplished by grants to qualified regional planning organizations, with the estimated completion date of September, 2018. At this time, Stoker was asking for the County Board to pass a resolution of support. The Board then went on with the meeting.

Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to approve the Minutes of the Regular meeting of September 12, 2013. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. Coates made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to approve the Special Committee Meeting Minutes of September 12 and 26, 2013. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Agenda as presented. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Public Comment: Rosalie King stated she had attended a Substance Abuse meeting. She also had submitted a list of interested persons who would wish to serve on the Parks and Recreation Board.

Commissioners, Elected and Appointed Officials' Reports: Written and oral reports were given. County Clerk Joan Luhtanen stated that October 6 through 12 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. Locally, Northpointe, our Community Mental Health provider, will be participating at Community Connect on November 8th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Windsor Center. They will answer questions, distribute brochures and explain where help is available.

Treasurer Camps explained the procedure the County has for purchasing the Delinquent Taxes, and then distributing those monies to the local units of government and school districts. Because this is not a mandatory service, there is no deadline for the County to send out the checks. The County also has to wait for the local units of government to submit their settlements to the county, and this didn't happen in a timely manner from three of those units. The County will be purchasing \$ 1,401,628.37 of delinquent taxes. There is also \$ 70,463.73 of Delinquent Utilities, but because of the increased volume of that category and the increased number of foreclosures, the County may not be able to recoup those monies, and so has not "bought" the Delinquent Utilities for the last few years. However, the County will reimburse the unit of government once the back utility fees are paid. Camps said the County is still self-funded.

Jail Administrator Vernon Jones reported on the County's Emergency Management Program. Jones explained that UP is Region 8, and has received \$ 341,000+ in revenues. The Emergency Operations Center is located in Magistrate Dennis Yackel's office. The County has received \$ 236,973 over the last three years to purchase equipment; such as, ham radio equipment, laptops, radios, etc. Jones stated that the County has a inactive Red Cross, and if anyone is interested, please contact him. Jones stressed the importance of adopting the Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to procure FEMA funds if a disaster occurs here.

Doug Brahee of Cooperative Extension introduced himself as the Interim District Coordinator. Nick Baumgart will be leaving November 1st and a temporary replacement for the 4-H youth

activities will be underway. The Board will be receiving an annual report before the end of the year. Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to accept all reports. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Coates, to approve the Finance Committee's September 12, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 224,736.31; and their September 26, 2013, Review of Bills in the amount of \$ 242,031.75.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Commissioner Tim Aho said there still were issues with Merit Technology Contract. We now have 5 megs and there is no reason to upgrade to 30 megs. Aho wanted to talk more with Jim Lundberg from Merit to get clarification of other issues; such as, the A T & T line that should be in the contract. The existing contract does not expire until June 30, 2015. Aho made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to table this issue for now. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

New Business:

Coates made a motion, seconded by Peretto, to approve the "Resolution in Support of Western U.P. Planning and Development Region Commissioner (WUPPDR)." On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Dorothea Olson, Crystal Falls City Manager, was present to ask support to apply for a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality grant to help pay for removal of scrap tires from the County. Olson declared that the scrap tires are a health hazard. The DEQ will pay \$ 1.25 towards each passenger tire equivalent. The city can charge a small fee for each tire dropped off. Olson sent email to all the local municipalities to ask for their support and to apply as well. The deadline is October 25th.

Joan Mussato, Equalization Director, presented the Board with the County's 2013 Apportionment Report. Mussato explained that the certificates, statements and records submitted by the various townships, cities and village were examined and the enclosed rates represent a compilation of those documents. The report is a summary of millage rates by the various taxing authorities. There is also a summary showing the total tax rates and estimated total levy by each taxing jurisdiction. The acceptance of the report and resolution will allow the assessing officers to spread the rate against the 2013 taxable valuation. For the County, the Total Taxable Value is \$ 493,608,638, and the Total Tax is \$ 20,424,232. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to accept the 2013 Apportionment Report.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Peter Saving of the Airport Advisory Ad-Hoc Committee gave a presentation along with Tim Novak. Other members of the committee were also present. The committee was charged to find a suitable site for an airport. Saving explained that the runway has to be at least 5,000 feet and have instrument approach in order to accommodate business and pleasure aircraft. There were also limitations. An airport cannot be within 20 miles of another airport and still receive federal funds. And, the airport cannot be located within the NOTAM, Minnesota National Guard airspace. Topography also has to be taken into consideration; it cannot be too hilly, etc. These limitations narrowed the search to a small, southern part of the county, south of US 2. The proposed site is located between the Iron and Brule Rivers and is known as the "Proksch Farm." Saving explained that no one would be dislocated, but land would have to be acquired. The committee does believe that the county needs an airport. The next step would be for the County Board to tell the committee to proceed and to approach the State Aeronautics Board with the request to help in physically laying out the runway. The cost of building and operating an airport, even with federal/state funding assistance, would be a large factor. Lind said the work the committee did was commendable, and stated that this issue would be on next month's agenda.

Gary Burk, U.P. Fair Authority Representative, gave a presentation on his activities of that board. Burk explained that this board become active four years ago when the State stopped funding fairs.

The meetings are held in Escanaba where the fair is held, and all the U.P. counties are represented. The U.P. State Fair is the only State fair in Michigan. Burk stated that it is a viable organization, and has grown every year. This year's attendance was 80,000, which is an increase from last year. Burk hoped that in the future, the County could perhaps help with funding travel for a contestant to participate in a proposed U.P. State Fair Queen contest. Next year's fair dates are from August 11 through the 17.

Appointments to the Iron County Human Services Board were considered. There were three applications. Peretto nominated John Archocosky. Brennan nominated Don Powell.

Roll Call Vote: Coates: Don Powell

Aho: John Archocosky

Peretto: Joan Archocosky

Brennan: Don Powell

Lind: Don Powell

Don Powell will be the new representative whose term will begin November 1, 2013.

The terms of two members (One Republican and one Democrat) of the Iron County Board of County Canvassers will be expiring on November 1, 2013. The two current canvassers, Rose Rankinen and Patricia Jewell, have served for many years but do not want to re-apply. Clerk Joan Luhtanen thanked them for their loyal service to the County. The Democratic party had nominated Margee Brennan, and the Republican party had nominated Patricia Ashcraft. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Aho, to appoint Margee Brennan and Patricia Ashcraft as the new county canvassers. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brennan made a motion, seconded by Aho, to approve the Journal Entries: 6147, 6152, 6154, 6158, 5169 and 6160, 6163-6169, 6171, 6173, 6175, 6176, 6179, 6180 - 6182, 6184, 6185, 6187, 6190-6193, 6201-6203, 6214 and 6238 for the Month of July, 2013.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Prosecuting Attorney Melissa Powell explained proposed staffing changes in both her and the Friend of the Court's office. Kathy Pitts, who retired, left a full-time opening in the Friend of the Court's office. Powell, Friend of the Court Sandy Demboski, and Judge Schwedler developed a plan to take Tina Sundelius, who currently works full-time at the Prosecutor's office, to only work half time there and half time at the FOC office. Then the part-time clerk, Sara Starr, in the Prosecutor's office, would become a full-time position. This is necessary to keep her office open. But, this would still result in an overall reduction of personnel of .6. Powell explained because these positions are supported by state contracts, those contracts would need to be amended, as well as approval of the two unions involved, so it is a complicated process. Powell hoped this could be accomplished as soon as possible. Peretto made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to have the proposed plan go ahead, and approved Powell to contact the labor attorney to assist with negotiating the necessary changes.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Coates made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to table the proposed Resolution transferring the CDBG Fund over to the Northern Economic Initiatives Corporation. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Announcements: A Public hearing on the Proposed budget for 2014 - Truth in Taxation will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 14th, with the Regular County Board meeting immediately following. The Courthouse will be closed for Columbus Day and Veterans' Day and November 28 & 29th for Thanksgiving.

Brennan then made a motion, seconded by Aho, to approve applying for the Scrap Tire Recycling Grant. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. Aho then made a motion, seconded by Brennan, to adjourn. On Voice Vote, the motion carried. The time was 8:00 p.m.

