

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
January 23, 2007**

The meeting was called to order in the Commissioners Room by Chairperson Linda Socha at 9:30 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Socha, Redmond, Mushlock, Page, Wallace and Bolinger

ABSENT: Commissioner Makima (excused)

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

Administrator Overton noted the scheduled Closed Session regarding union negotiations would not be held today.

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

Chairperson Socha explained that Committee of the Whole meetings typically do not have action items on the agenda, but are intended for forum and discussion items and as an appeal to the Board at budget time if there is disagreement with the administrator's or finance's decision or recommendation,; however, today's agenda does include two items which require action.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Sheriff Clarmont announced the canine unit is now complete, with Deputy Matt LaCross and Taser fully functional and on the road. The unit will be available for viewing at the end of the meeting. Sheriff Clarmont presented a certificate of appreciation to Tony and Roberta Matelski for their financial backing for the canine unit. Mr. Matelski said without the sheriff wanting this canine unit, and without Matt this would not have happened. Chairperson Socha echoed the Sheriff's words on behalf of the board and the citizens of this county. The sheriff said Susie McClanaghan, of Central Lake, donated the vest for Taser and planned to be here today, but due to the weather has not arrived yet.

Lieutenant Ken Mills of S.A.N.E. addressed the board in recognition of Sheriff Deputy Darren LaChapelle. Chairperson Socha said the prosecutor was unable to be here, but sent her appreciation to Darren as well. Lt. Mills related several investigations that LaChapelle was involved with. Lieutenant Mills said the dedication LaChapelle demonstrated goes a long way in the success of S.A.N.E. Chairperson Socha said the board too extends appreciation to LaChapelle for his dedication. Sheriff Clarmont also thanked Deputy LaChapelle, as well as Lieutenant Mills.

Lisa Brisson of the Cheboygan Public Library addressed the Board. Ms. Brisson said the newly renovated library has twenty public access terminals and wireless internet service as well as an increase in space available for use by the public. A schedule of events to be held at the library in the coming months was distributed. Ms. Brisson said the Cheboygan Public Library has been selected to host the exhibit Key Ingredients: America by Food created by the Smithsonian Institution, which focuses on food and what is special about it in America. The exhibit will be here in the fall of 2007 for six weeks, from Labor Day weekend through mid October. Ms. Brisson invited participation from the individual commissioners or the entire board. Commissioner Page complimented the library and stated it now is a jewel of the community. Chairperson Socha said the library has been a positive impact for the entire county.

Susie McClanaghan arrived and was introduced by Sheriff Clarmont and recognized for donating the vest for the canine unit. Ms. McClanaghan has donated many vests throughout the state. Chairperson Socha thanked Mrs. McClanaghan for the donation.

Committee of the Whole Meeting – January 23, 2007

Ben Bartlett addressed the board as president of the Cheboygan Conservation District. District Administrator Peggy Bannatyne thanked the board for financial support and gave a brief history of the conservation district which was established in 1948. The board of director is comprised of five members, responsible for development and implementation of district programs and financial and employee management. Conservation Districts are responsible for educating the public to the benefits of conservation practices. Several handouts were distributed, including the 2006 Annual Report, the Natural Resources Assessment and a list of goals of the Cheboygan Conservation District. Mr. Bartlett said currently, mostly due to funding, the district does not have a district forester. He said the goals of the Cheboygan Conservation District are somewhat related to some of the Cheboygan County goals. The conservation district goals are Forestry Management/Reforestation; Wildlife Habitat; Invasive Species and Diseases; Groundwater Protection; and Recycling. Mr. Bartlett said MDA funds are short, the district use to get up to \$80,000 annually, and now receives less than \$20,000. Mr. Bartlett said priority is focused on protecting the natural resources of Cheboygan County.

Chairperson Socha presented a certificate of appreciation to John Hatfield for his service on the Cheboygan County Waterways Commission; and a certificate of appreciation to Scott Wendt for his service on the Cheboygan County Planning Commission. Mr. Hatfield said he enjoyed the time spent on this committee and commended the Harbor Master Curtis Chambers.

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Overton said the NLEA is seeking a letter in support of their efforts to obtain grant funding for a feasibility study to look at the creation of a network of small business incubators, one of which would be located in Cheboygan County. NLEA intends to apply for Rural Development funds and CDBG funds for this project. An incubator can be instrumental in helping local business startups get off the ground. Mr. Overton said in regards to the recent layoffs at Great Lakes Tissue, the NLEA has already been meeting with representatives from Great Lakes Tissue.

Motion by Commissioner Bolinger, seconded by Commissioner Redmond, to authorize the Chairperson to sign the letter supporting the seeking of grant funds to study the feasibility of creating a small business incubator network. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Curtis Chambers, Tribal Chair for the Burt Lake Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, addressed the board requesting a letter of support of recognition to having its name added to the list of federally recognized tribes. The letter was read by Clerk Tryban.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Bolinger, to authorize the Chairperson to sign the letter regarding the Burt Lake Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians addressed to Members of Congress. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION - None

CITIZENS COMMENTS – Sheriff Clarmont invited everyone to tour the canine unit which is parked outside the door.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Wallace said he served with John Hatfield on the Inland Lakes School Board and noted that Mr. Hatfield has done a great job on the Waterways Commission.

Chairperson Socha requested that the Administrator contact Mark Wycoff to schedule him for the Board's Planning Session this year. She also said she would like to see the format for the meeting with county elected officials as an informal brunch meeting twice yearly in March and September, with the entire board rather than just the chair and vice chair as discussed earlier. Chairperson Socha also said the Board should work on developing a formal recognition process.

Committee of the Whole Meeting – January 23, 2007

Commissioner Page said the Planning Commission is currently considering four zoning amendments; and one of those, wind generation, may generate some public attention. He said also discussed at the Planning Commission meeting was how to get public input into the Master Plan. He said there are numerous lake associations in the county, but nothing that ties those associations together. He said he, as a member of the Twin Lakes Association, may try to get those associations together.

Commissioner Wallace received an email invitation to the NLEA luncheon in March and would like to attend. Chairperson Socha encouraged any one who is interested in economic development to attend this luncheon.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Redmond, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Linda Socha
Chairperson