

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
October 27, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners 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, Makima, Redmond, Page, Wallace and Bolinger

ABSENT: Commissioner Mushlock (excused)

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

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

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Chairperson Socha acknowledged a Certificate of Appreciation for Ty LaPrairie for serving on the County Waterways Commission. Since Mr. LaPrairie was unable to be in attendance, Commissioner will deliver the certificate to Mr. LaPrairie.

MSUE Director Ann Chastain addressed the Board regarding the severe budget challenges at the state level. She advised that MSUE, at best, is slated for a 44% decrease in state funding and possibly a line-item veto by the governor that would result in all offices and field stations being closed and cancellation of all scheduled public programs and meetings. She explained the 44% would be offset for the first year only by funding. Ms. Chastain said overall state government faces the three R's, radical realignment and restructuring at all levels. She asked for immediate adoption by the Board of a resolution to send to state officials urging any veto be stopped. Chairperson Socha said due to timelines it would be important to address the resolution today.

Motion by Commissioner Page, seconded by Commissioner Bolinger, to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 09-31

OPPOSING A VETO OF MSUE AND MAES FUNDING FROM THE STATE

Whereas, Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) and the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) have had a valued partnership with county, state and federal government for 86 years; and

Whereas, state budget decisions related to our partnership are of extreme concern, with the potential of a line-item veto resulting in zero funding for MSUE and MAES; and

Whereas, the impact of our state partner's decision has devastating consequences for MSUE and our county partners, as more than 80 percent of state funding supports the staff members of MSUE; and

Whereas, every county and every legislative district will be affected by a veto of MAES and MSUE funding, which are outreach programs that make a significant impact on people's lives; and

Whereas, if funding lines are vetoed, MSUE will be forced to cancel all county- and campus-based programs and meetings immediately, and the MAES will immediately close 17 research stations across the state; and

Whereas, MAES and MSUE are providing the research for the green economy and translating that research into the creation of new jobs for Michigan; and

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Whereas, in 2008, MAES and MSUE funds generated a total economic impact for the State of Michigan of \$1.062 billion; and, for every \$1 provided by the state, MAES and MSUE generated another \$2.33 for research and Extension work in Michigan, and, with a veto, this income would be lost, with much of it going to other states; and,

Whereas, the reputation of MSU will be damaged, and it will take years to restore the faith of federal and foundation funders and private donors.

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that on this 27th day of October in the year of Two Thousand Nine, that Cheboygan County urges the Governor to sign the Higher Education budget as passed by the Legislature.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 6 yes, 0 no and 1 absent.

Ms. Chastain said that regional based focus groups will be held to talk about the impact of extension restructuring within the county. Chairperson Socha said Commissioner Page is the council representative and could attend those meetings. Ms. Chastain said if the veto happens, the extension programming would cease and could not be continued within the counties, because it would not be possible without the state partnership. Discussion held, restructuring will be whether or not veto occurs and programming will be affected in every county.

Soil Conservation District Member Buddy Ormsbee addressed the board regarding the district soil conservation board funding. Also in attendance were USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services District Conservationist Perry Smeltzer and Soil Conservation District members Tim Paulus, and Carl Reiman. Mr. Ormsbee explained that the 2010 Budget will not include the \$9400 received previously from the Michigan Department of Ag, which has been vetoed for 2010. He said the board could not provide services to the county without the additional state funding; however the board desires to continue to work for Cheboygan County as there definitely is a need. He said this entity has been in existence for sixty-one years in Cheboygan County. Mr. Ormsbee said perhaps a joint venture with the townships; the city and the county could be formed to work towards making things happen in the County regarding soil conservation issues. A budget reflecting a joint venture with 10 of the townships and the county was presented and reviewed by Mr. Ormsbee, with \$ 29,753 requested from the county and a total of \$44,630 from townships. Perry Smeltzer District Conservationist with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services addressed the need for conservation districts. He said the difficult times in the state have affected soil conservation districts. He said the opportunity would be lost for projects in the county like the Cheboygan Airport to the Cheboygan Dam, if Cheboygan County loses Soil Conservation. Mr. Smeltzer said he works directly with conservation districts; and conservation districts are a local unit of government, not non-profit organizations. Mr. Ormsbee said the soil conservation board has discussed becoming a county department. Tim Paulus, who works as a forest technician for the state, and is a member of the soil district board, said over the years, the district has been involved in flood and water control throughout the county, tree removal and erosion control, as well as the gypsy moth project. He said the need to be able to access available grants and put someone working on the grounds is very apparent. Chairperson Socha said the Board would review the information provided to the administrator. Mr. Ormsbee said one of the projects was to cut the trees at the end of the airport runway in Beaugrand Township; another brought up was the size of trees now starting to block the Little Black. Lengthy discussion held, Chairperson Socha asked Mr. Ormsbee to provide information he gathers for the townships to this board as well. Administrator Overton said the Drain Commissioner has requested soil erosion be put under his department.

BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Community Development Director Steve Schnell presented and reviewed proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment #81 Private and Commercial Kennel Regulation Changes. He said the purpose behind these amendments is to more appropriately regulate both private and commercial kennels. The process started with the purpose of streamlining the review process for people who own between 4 and 9 dogs who are not also commercial kennels. The amendments add requirements for these dog owners but at the same time allows the zoning administrator to review and approve these applications administratively rather than requiring a special use permit to be reviewed by Planning Commission. There will be savings in time and money for the customer while protecting land use compatibility.

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These changes will also have the effect of encouraging compliance. The old definition of kennel is deleted and the new definitions for private kennel and commercial kennel are added. The primary distinction between the two definitions is simply that, in private kennels, dogs are NOT boarded, bred, groomed for compensation, trained for compensation, or sold. Anyone that has more than 9 dogs will be regulated under the commercial kennel regulations and must obtain a special use permit. A new section is added to the zoning ordinance, Section 3.17, which gives the requirements for private kennels which have the purpose of controlling the potential negative impact on neighboring parcels of having more than 4 dogs housed on one property. In addition, regulations for commercial kennels have been enhanced so that kennels in commercial zoning districts no longer have to meet a 500 foot separation from a residence. Since many commercial districts in our county are 600 feet in depth from the center of the road, this requirement would make kennels in many parts of our commercial zoning districts almost impossible. Also, the requirements for private kennels, such as screening the dog enclosures from neighboring properties, were added to the commercial kennel requirements. The Planning Commission held numerous public meetings on this topic and gave unanimous support and recommendation to approve these amendments. Action will be taken on this at the November Finance/Business meeting.

Commissioner Mushlock joined the budget discussion via a conference call.

Administrator Overton presented a draft of 2010 budget along with a synopsis of the significant changes between the 2009 amended budget and the 2010 recommended budget. He suggested reviewing the synopsis of changes. Finance Director Kari Kortz led the review. The synopsis showed the following items still requiring more attention: Department 253 – The Treasurer has a pending employee hour increase; Department 325 – C.C.E. 9-1-1 has not yet completed its budget; Department 600 – District Health Department #4 has not completed its budget; Department 784 – The Soil Conservation District is requesting an increase in appropriation; Department 900 – Administration is waiting documentation supporting the airport's request for an increase in appropriation; Department 902 – The Childcare budget is not yet complete; and The 2009 G.E.D. Program Funding (\$5,000) ran out in September, allocation would need to be \$7,100 to carry the program the entire year.

Ms. Kortz advised of the following changes since the proposed budget was printed: due to the taxable valuation change current taxes will change to \$7,650,690; District Health Department #4 has approved their budget with the same allocation as last year, \$197,966; Carried Forward Fund Equity Included in Appropriations should be \$363,032; Ambulance millage revenue would be \$337,329; Senior Millage changed to \$652,668. Ms. Kortz began a review of the following items in the synopsis: 101-400-401-02 Contribution from Restricted Fund recommended amount of \$441,706 is less than was included in amended 2009 budget; 101-400-665.00 Interest Earned decreased because the 2009 budgeted revenues included interest earned on the Revenue Sharing Fund; 101-400-676.00 Contributions From Other Funds decreased due to decline in interest earnings in the 516 Fund; 101-400-699.00 Fund Equity used to balance the budget in the event of insufficient revenues or to correct errors throughout the year actually adjustments to make things work, actually revenues are only down approximately \$40,000; 101-400-699.99 Transfer In \$650,000 of this increase is due to the sale of one property in the Delinquent Tax Fund; 101-148-718.00 Full Time (Probate Court) moved 3.5 employees into the Childcare budget; 101-228-977.68 Computer Hard/Soft/Maint down due to 2009 budgeted items and first time software purchases in 2009.

County Treasurer Cronan addressed the Board to request an increase in hours for employees from 35 hours to 37.5 hours due to not having seasonal help, with funds coming from the foreclosure fund for one employee and other three additional employees from the homestead audit fund. She said this would actually be a savings to the general fund. Discussion held, consensus was okay.

Commissioner Wallace said no increase for wages for Dept 325 CCE 9-1-1 in budget at this time may come back at a later date.

Ms. Kortz continued reviewing the synopsis 101-285-971.00 Capital Outlay decrease because 2009 budget included the purchase of the LaHaie property; 101-700-955.01 Carried Forward Fund Equity is used throughout the year for unexpected/unbudgeted items in 2010.

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Chairperson Socha advised that the Airport Authority is now meeting quarterly instead of monthly. Ms. Kortz said the airport has requested a \$70,000 appropriation which is higher than last year. Administrator Overton said he has received information to explain the requested increase. He said three items have led to the request which included soil testing required for tank removal, clearing of the 14 acres on the N-S runway, and cleaning the drainage ditch. For Commissioner Page's benefit, Chairperson Socha related the history of the airport funding and structuring. The administrator and board would like to see regular reports from the Airport Authority. Ms. Kortz said the recommended budget is \$60,000.

Discussion held on Animal Control, Department 430. Ms. Kortz explained the requested budget amount for animal control was \$160,606, however, after review and corrections it was closer to approximately \$136,000, however the recommended budget is \$123,000. Administrator Overton said they are adding large animal care, but also included 5% pay increases, and appears would have about \$25,000 extra if the \$160,606 were approved. He would recommend funding the large animal care, but not the rest.

101-902-961.03 Building Dept Fund 249 budgeted \$78,850 subsidy for 2010 (20% funding of Building Safety Dept). Administrator Overton said that roughly 5% of the department's activity could be for economic development. He said he would recommend funding the 20% at this. But he would not recommend the fee increase at this time that the Building Safety Department would like. This matter should be discussed with local contractors again. Mr. Overton said he has requested regular reports on the number of building permits closed each week, as there current about nine thousand open building permits. Lengthy discussion held, Mr. Overton said there will be more information coming on the Building Safety Department; also discussed was consolidation of services and partnerships.

Ms. Kortz said the Childcare budget has not been started, but she will be working with Probate on that budget.

101-902-999.00 Transfer Out was used in 2009 transfer for corrections of errors, did not include in 2010.

Ms. Kortz said the GED program in the jail would require \$7,100, but have only built in \$5,000. Sheriff Clarmont said he could not find a tester so should look into that a little further. Consensus was to get more information, but favor continuation of GED at \$7,100.

Administrator Overton addressed a letter received from a District Court employee. Discussion held. Mr. Overton said the county really needs salary ranges for positions; however it would not help in this situation. Administrator Overton will speak to Judge Barton regarding this matter

Administrator Overton said he would recommend no salary and wage increases for 2010 at this time. He said many counties are not giving pay raises this year, or if they are, they are in the 2% to 3% range. Emmet County intends to give pay raises, but they also are laying some people off. Detailed information on wages and salaries provided by the Human Resource Director Tim Gengle, was reviewed. Lengthy discussion held. Ms. Kortz said revenues are pretty sure, expenditures depend on what the board approves to fund. Commissioner Page said he would prefer to defer the wage issues until firmer information on the direction the state takes is received. Treasurer Cronan said the other two unions in building (Sheriff's Dept.) are getting a 3% or 5% increases.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairperson Socha said the meeting would be reconvened on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. with items on the agenda to be a rezoning of the Heck/Dedenbach property in Inverness Township and continuation of discussion on the 2010 County Budget. She said that all commissioners would receive a packet for that meeting today.

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Motion by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Page, to adjourn to the call of the Chair. Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Mary Ellen Tryban
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

Linda Socha
Chairperson