

**CHEBOYGAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
July 22, 2008**

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, Mushlock, Page, Wallace and Bolinger

**ABSENT:** None

Chairperson Socha said Civil Counsel Bryan Graham would not be present due to a death in his family.

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

Chairperson Socha stated that typically action is not taken at a Committee of the Whole meeting; however, there are routine items for the Fair on the agenda that require action, as well as Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2009, which was tabled at the last meeting.

**Motion** by Commissioner Bolinger, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** – Chairperson Socha advised that comments are limited to 3-5 minutes, with no debate.

Judge Robert Livo addressed the Board and said he was speaking as a Navy Vet and an individual person. He said two specific individuals, Nurse Paula and Physician's Assistant Rick, originated the CBOC Committee to advance this cause to open a VA clinic in Cheboygan County; the committee adopted a mission statement and held a fundraiser. He said he advised CBOC to keep separate from local veterans' structure. He said a united effort is necessary to successfully get a CBOC in Cheboygan County. He said he would like to try to diffuse what appears almost a natural collision; Bill Wodek is a fine gentleman with a good work ethic. Judge Livo offered to resign from the CBOC committee if Bill Wodek would do the same, to help eliminate much of the conflict and get on with what's best for the veterans of Cheboygan County.

Ressie Stranly, Chair of CBOC Committee, addressed the board on behalf of committee. She said the committee was formed in February and have seen amazing community support. She reported over 4,000 signatures gathered, and 200 hardship letters received from veterans, as well as many letters of support from the community, all of which were sent out; and Cheboygan has been placed on a priority list. She said work is currently being done to put together a business plan, and have heard, but have not received written confirmation, that Cheboygan has been moved up until sometime next year. She asked the Board for a letter of support. Chairperson Socha said she spoke with Paula, and would have a resolution of support ready for the August 12, 2008 meeting.

Tracy Heath, Chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee. Mr. Heath explained that they tried to have the proposal for last business meeting, but could not, so they asked to be on this agenda, but were denied. He said he wanted to make it clear they are only asking that funds in the budget be moved, not for additional money. Mr. Heath advised the proposal was prepared by the County's Finance Director, and is time sensitive if it is to be implemented. He said action should be taken today. Administrator Overton explained that board does have rules and try hard to follow them; this meeting is not typically for action items, unless the matter is very time sensitive. He said the director has indicated he will be resigning at the end of August; the committee has selected Mr. Wodek as the new director, and would like to have him start while the current director is still here. Mr. Overton said he believes this matter could wait until the next meeting. He said he's concerned with the process the Veterans Committee used in selecting the new director, which was not advertised, he said this is not this board's call, but the Commissioners do control the financial aspects of the VA Department. Mr. Heath said the Committee fully complied

## Committee of the Whole Meeting – July 2, 2008

with the federal act, including contacting local veteran service organizations. Chairperson Socha said the administrator is responsible for personnel issues, including this one, and the committee should follow county policies. She said she received calls from some Veteran Committee members but did not call back as it would be a violation of this board's policy when they were denied by the county administrator, and secondly she said it was reported a meeting was held, after the administrator's denial to place this on the agenda, in the Veterans Office that was disruptive. She said the position should have been posted, and 5 weeks of training does not happen; policies have to be followed. Commissioner Page noted that in 2007, \$114,000 was spent on veterans, in 2001 less than \$40,000 was spent; the budget has been increased over \$70,000 in 6 years. He said it's clear this board has supported Cheboygan County veterans. Commissioner Wallace said he would support posting the job position rather than placing an inside person in the position.

### **SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

Attorney Daryl Vizina, Democrat candidate for Cheboygan County Prosecutor, presented his credentials. Mr. Vizina was born and raised in Cheboygan County, attended MSU Law School and currently works for the Kwiatkowski law firm; and has experience in all levels of the court system, including the Court of Appeals, Federal Court and the Tribal Court. He stated he believes that charges and prosecution should be done fairly and that the prosecuting attorney serves as the voice of the people in the entire community. He said the prosecutor should focus on the interest of justice and should have a presence in the entire county.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

The Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2009 was presented at the July 8, 2008 Finance/Business meeting and tabled until today's meeting.

**Motion** by Commissioner Page, seconded by Commissioner Wallace, to approve the Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2009 as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Cheboygan County Fair Manager Dan O'Henley and Finance Director Kari Kortz presented budgetary items regarding the Fair. Mr. O'Henley said the \$50,000 transfer is done annually and will be paid back after the fair.

**Motion** by Commissioner Makima, seconded by Commissioner Bolinger, to approve the advance transfer payment of two checks totaling \$50,000 to the Cheboygan County Fair. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

Finance Director Kari Kortz explained that during the 2008 budget process no money was allocated to the fair for seasonal wages. Although the maintenance department is now taking care of the grounds, the Fair Board still requires assistance for specific fair preparations and fair week duties as well as a secretary for the fair office. This budget adjustment appropriates funds in the seasonal and fringe line items necessary to hire five employees (four laborers and one secretary). The budget adjustment totals \$8,700, and does not require an additional appropriation. Ms. Kortz said this also will require an amendment to the 2008 Wage Resolution.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Mushlock, to approve the inter-department budget transfer request provided relative to the fair ground employees. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

**Motion** by Commissioner Redmond, seconded by Commissioner Mushlock, to approve Amendment 3 to the 2008 Wage Resolution and authorize the Chairperson to sign. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

## Committee of the Whole Meeting – July 2, 2008

Fair Manager O'Henley reported that the transition of the county taking over the fairgrounds has been working great. He said Tim Mason has been great to work and thanked the board for making this possible. Commissioner Mushlock said the year-around maintenance will work much better.

### BOARD MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Administrator Overton presented a written report on preliminary recommendations for the board goals established earlier this year. He said based on today's discussion he would come back to the board with suggested changes. Commissioner Wallace commented that he thought Substance Abuse was prioritized as second. Chairperson Socha said the final prioritization placed Substance Abuse third.

**Goal I – Improve Economic Development** – Administrator Overton recommended that the County Commissioners continue their partnership with NLEA and the Chambers of Commerce, continue support for the Community Development Department and the Cheboygan County EDC, as well as expanding the EDC directive to include all the variables involved in helping business people, startups and existing, make money and create jobs. Discussion held. Commissioner Redmond suggested EDC directives could be given to the EDC through Scott McNeil. Chairperson Socha said she would like to find out if the county can legally pay dues to local chambers of commerce, and if so, do that.

**Goal II – Address Facilities' Needs** – Administrator Overton recommended that a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) be developed for the purpose of hiring an architectural firm to evaluate the current County Building's space and systems needs and those anticipated over the next twenty years and develop recommendations to meet the needs. Discussion held. Chairperson Socha stated money from the tax foreclosure fund could be allocated towards facility needs. Commissioner Wallace stated that given the current economy, the public would have to be made aware, and fully understand, the facility needs. Commissioner Page noted that the availability of the vacant Black River School could be considered again. Commissioner Makima noted the future possibility of utilizing the FIA and Health Department buildings.

**Goal III – Continue Diligent Efforts to Mitigate Substance Abuse** – Administrator Overton's recommendation included expanding and formalizing the "Drug Court" Committee, renaming it the Substance Abuse Mitigation "Blue Ribbon" Committee (SAM Committee). This committee would serve as an advisory committee to the County Commissioners and also be charged with investigating what is working, or not, in other jurisdictions and make recommendations. Discussion held. Chairperson Socha said we are ahead of other counties in many areas, such as SANE, NMSAS, and MSUE programs, so basically the Blue Ribbon Committee is falling into place. Commissioner Page commented that mitigating substance abuse is almost beyond a county prospective.

**Goal IV – High Speed Internet Options** – Administrator Overton stated that in addition to participating in the eleven county cooperative, the County should pursue our own standalone high speed internet advisory committee because of the importance it plays in economic development and quality of life in the community. Discussion held. Commissioner Page advised that incorporation of the eleven county cooperative has been postponed until early August. He said doing this at a county level would be extremely difficult. Chairperson Socha said the NLEA has been working on high speed internet also.

**Goal V – Strengthen Communications** – Administrator Overton's recommendation including the following: 1) Annual Report to the Citizens; 2) Bi-annual Citizens Survey; 3) Help Desk/Operator; 4) Enhanced County Website; and 5) Citizens Academy. Discussion held included offices closing, especially at lunch time and a county brochure to promote Cheboygan County. Chairperson Socha said a citizen academy regarding local government operations would help explain different aspects of county government, including the structure of board meetings, which are opened to the public, but not with a "town hall" meeting forum.

**Goal VI – Continue to Evaluate County Policies and Programs** – Administrator Overton's recommendation would be to implement performance measures and join a performance measurement cooperative. Some discussion held.

**Committee of the Whole Meeting – July 2, 2008**

Chairperson Socha directed to administrator to take back input received during this discussion and recompile. Administrator Overton encouraged the board to call him with input if they wish to; a revised report to be presented at the first meeting in September.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS** - Don Horrocks said regarding the VA problem, the fair was in a similar situation regarding its manager and by following the county's policy and procedure the right person was found.

Bill Wodek said the VA committee, and most area veterans, are appreciative of everything the commissioners have done to serve the veterans of this county. He's said Cheboygan County is leaps and bounds above other area counties. He said the committee tried not to be adversarial, but it may have gotten that way. He believes the committee was looking at this not as an emergency, but an opportunity to try to make a smoother transition. Not looking for two months of training, but only 4-5 weeks. In regards to the quote in the paper, he has thought of this as a fulfilling career.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** - Commissioner Mushlock said she has many questions on veterans' department budget after seeing the blue sheet that was sent out separately from the commissioners' packets. Chairperson Socha said the separate blue sheet, which was not an action item on this agenda, was very misleading.

Commissioner Redmond said the Governor has signed the bill regarding ORV's. Discussion held, this matter to be addressed in the near future.

Commissioner Bolinger reported that he along with Administrator Overton recently attended the NACO conference in Kansas City. He also said the silt release into the Pigeon River is being handled.

Commissioner Page said the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks display in Cheboygan was great this year. Chairperson Socha said the turnout for the Clydesdale Horses also was very good. Commissioner Page said everything went well with the Cheboygan Jaycees Wanigan event also. Chairperson Socha said she did not receive an invitation to the Habitat for Humanity Legislative Day. The administrator and clerk said they both received invitations.

**Motion** by Commissioner Wallace, seconded by Commissioner Mushlock, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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Mary Ellen Tryban  
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

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Linda Socha  
Chairperson