

Menominee County Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
April 19, 2011

*****APPROVED 7.7.11*****

The Finance committee of the Menominee County Board met on April 19, 2011 at 5:20 p.m. at the Menominee County Courthouse – Courtroom B. Present at the meeting were Com. Lang, Com. Furlong, Com. Meintz, Com. Jasper, Com. Pearson, Brian R. Bousley, Sherry Smith & Marc Kleiman.

Also present: Pat & Tom Cheski, Dan Menacher, John Nelson & other members of the public.

Agenda was approved by Furlong and supported by Pearson. 5-0

Previous Meeting minutes: July 15, 2010 & Nov. 19, 2010 – moved to approve by Meintz and supported by Furlong. 5-0

Public Comment: None

Business:

- a. **John Nelson – Discussion of Budget ideas:** Chairman Lang called Mr. Nelson to hear what he has to say. I spent a lot of time looking at the Co. Budget and expenses. The trouble with the county is that you don't really control many of these revenues. You will be taking a cut in revenue sharing. You have limitations with CFR and State owned properties you have less of a tax base to try to operate a county. County has a shortfall in the retirement system already. The county has a fixed retirement program that must be 80% funded to make any changes. Many places have gone to a 401 plan. Was opposed to moving forward with the 24 hour road patrol millage at this time. You still have the obligation to fund the retirement for the road patrol even if it doesn't pass. Insurance benefits. State is going to 20% copay. There's a \$10,000 "spend off" for hospitalization. There is a big difference in a single vs. family ins. Many are going to a cafeteria style insurance, where the employees can choose what part they want to participate in, but they have to pay for that themselves. The only way you can increase your revenues now is through property taxes. Approving your infrastructure in the county opens up areas for people to build. Compliment the board on voting no for Defusers for HVAC \$11,000 cost savings. There's not a lot of latitude in the fixed costs, (appropriations). Submitted a proposal to Casperson and McBroom since county loses revenue through state land and CFR. Instead of CFR paying "in lieu" of taxes, paying the full amount. You have very few areas in your budget with leadway. Every time you hire someone, you're looking at another 20 years of payoff for retirement. 1. additional employees add to MERS costs. 2. Insurance Costs 3. Nickel and dime by department.

- b. **2011/2012 Budget Timeline** ~ Lang: That was one of my goals. My concern is that I don't want the board to ever be in that situation again. Where everyone on the board is forced to approve the budget with no information. There is a six day period that the public hearing has to be posted prior to the public hearing. Pearson: This timeline cuts it too close, but it's tentative. Would like for this timeline to be changed, by a month earlier. Meintz: Last year's budget process, there were other influences; Brian's first budget to write, a Commissioner was recalled, struggling with things in the budget. It ended that way through a series of events. Bousley: my main goal is to have this done prior to the fourth of July. Late spring early summer the preliminary should be done.
- c. **Michigan State University (MSU) – Memorandum of Agreement** ~ Bousley: I just got this MOU this morning. I recommend we move this forward to the County Board meeting on May 10th when Mike Erdman can be here to explain the proposed MOU. It's a five year agreement which will lock the county in for five years. The 4-H person we pay 60%, MSU pays 40%. Heavy programs in Agricultural. Furlong: We house Erdman and he's helping other counties, shouldn't the other counties pay too?

Correspondence- None

Any Other items Members may wish to present: Meintz: I was quite interested in Mr. Nelson's discussion.

Public Comment: Tom Cheski – Last year we had six days to look over the budget. It was a sham. We had no way to identify things that were added. One Commissioner comment, "I've heard enough", when the people started complaining.

We're giving MSU a building up there in Stephenson and with the exception of Building Code, the coordinating center for the whole Upper Peninsula? Why aren't we collecting rent? Why are we the ones to supply his office? I'd like to hear from Mr. Erdman on where all the money will be spent.

Moved by Com. Furlong seconded by Pearson to adjourn at 6:10 P.M. Motion approved 5/0