

GOGEBIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2018

County Courthouse

Bessemer, MI 49911

5:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Peterson. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call was taken.

ROLL CALL:

**Present: (7) Bonovetz, Laabs, Oliver,
Orlich, Peterson, Siirila, Wasley**

Absent: (0) None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (August 8, 2018 regular meeting minutes)

A motion was made by Siirila, supported by Laabs and carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes as presented.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Oliver, supported by Wasley and carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the agenda as presented.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNTY BOARD ON AGENDA ITEMS

(5-minute limit)

There were none.

COMMITTEE SUMMARY REPORTS:

1. Personnel & Negotiations Committee/Committee Whole 07/25/18
2. Finance, Budgeting & Auditing Committee 08/08/18

A motion was made by Bonovetz, supported by Orlich and carried by unanimous voice vote to receive and place on file reports one and two.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Pat Gallinagh, Range Suicide Prevention Week Proclamation

A motion was made by Orlich, supported by Laabs and carried by unanimous voice to adopt the proclamation and declare the week of September 9 through the 16th as Suicide Prevention Week. The Daily Globe will be notified of this declaration.

OTHER MATTERS

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT (5-minute limit)

Approximately 100 citizens attended the meeting to voice their concerns to keep the Ojibway Corrections Facility open. It was announced on August 14, 2018 the facility is scheduled to be closed on December 1, 2018.

Chairman Peterson stated the County Board is committed to fighting to the keep the facility open. He then opened the floor for public comment on the matter.

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Crystal Suzik of Ramsay requested the County take immediate action and file an injunction against the closure of the facility. The economic impact on the County will be devastating. She discussed how hasty a decision it was made to close the facility, which she believes was done without economic issues considered.

Former State Representative Ed McBroom was in attendance and informed the County Board and those in attendance he has filed a Freedom of Information Act request for all documents related to the decision to close OCF. He mentioned there are guidelines that are to be followed when a prison is being considered for closure. He spoke of Section 944, which states an economic impact study shall be completed.

Prosecuting Attorney/Corporate Counsel Nick Jacobs addressed the issue of an injunction by the County to halt the closure. He mentioned this type of injunction is beyond his scope of work, that the County would have to seek advice from law firms outside of U.P. The filing would need to be fact based and would have to show proof that the State was in error when the decision was made. Some of this information could possibly come through the FOIA request of Mr. McBroom. Jacobs answered a few questions from the Board.

McBroom also answered a few questions from the people in attendance and agreed to share the FOIA information once it is received.

County Administrator Juliane Giackino mentioned she has been in contact with the Michigan Association of Counties regarding the issue and will provide Jacobs with a list of attorneys he can contact to discuss legal action to halt the closure of OCF.

Chairman Peterson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and again said the County will do whatever it can to help to keep OCF open.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Siirila, supported by Bonovetz and carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn to the call of the Chair. The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

George R. Peterson III, Chairman

Gerry R. Pelissero, Clerk