

Emmet County
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Board of Commissioners' Room, Emmet County Building
Tuesday, September 25, 2007

Present: Les Atchison, Tom Foltz, Lyn Johnson, Kelley Atkins,

Recording Secretary: Vickie Carpentier

Absent: Tom Shier, Chairperson

Guest: Jamie Winters, Women's Resource Center; Dale Scott, Friendship Township Supervisor; William Dohm, Little Traverse Township Supervisor; Damien Henning, Littlefield Township Supervisor; Robert Wheaton, Resort Township Supervisor; Robert Sandford, West Traverse Township Supervisor; Dennis Keiser, Bear Creek Township Supervisor.

Informational meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Women's Resource Center representative, Jamie Winters, advised they serve a five (5) county area, Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet and Otsego. The W.R.C. Safe House serves approximately 150 clients per year and provide non residential counseling to approximately 600 people. Women at the Safe House stay for approximately one month.

The four main issues for people to become independent are housing, transportation, child care and employment. Available transportation is very limited. Local taxi services are very expensive, the time they are available is limited, and not reliable. W.R.C. does not use volunteer drivers. During regular working hours W.R.C. staff will help with transportation, within a limited distance, those staying at the Safe House. Evenings and weekend transportation issues are difficult, so occasionally W.R.C. will pay for a cab ride. She sees the need for some form of countywide, reliable transportation service.

Call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Commissioners Atchison and Foltz.

Minutes:

Review of the minutes for the September 11, 2007 meeting were postponed.

Round table discussion:

Kelley Atkins, Director of Transportation and Development, thanked the Township Supervisor for attending the meeting. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to allow the Townships and County an opportunity to discuss their concerns regarding transportation in Emmet County.

Public Transportation: Are the Townships seeing a need for public transportation in their township?

Friendship Center and Straits Regional Ride buses had been observed in some townships, but not all. Areas of concern were the cost of service, the service not be exclusive to a particular age group, sparsely populated areas, availability, money (to pay for the service) and if the service is needed. Several Supervisors indicated they had not been approached with any requests for public transportation services. They also indicated the area is so rural and questions whether people would be willing to pay for it without some sort of subsidy or millage.

Other issues are the population is spread out, the employment situation and that there is not any large central employment area, and not everyone works 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, they work different hours.

Roads:

One issue was to try to find a means to support local roads. In 2004, an allocation process was used for this and the Supervisor's expressed a desire to continue this allocation and requested the support of the Committee and Board of Commissioners.

Trails:

There is a strong interest in the Bike trail and that it is an asset. Expressed concerns over the condition of portions of the trail. There was a consensus on the need for a funding mechanism to maintain and update the trail, perhaps through the Local Revenue Sharing Board. Discussed trails and trail access for snowmobiles and ATVs.

County Controller Lyn Johnson responded to questions about what maintenance the County was doing on the bike trail. He advised the County's commitment was to general maintenance and sweeping of the trail from near the Michigan State Police Post to Pleasantview Road on M-119. He went on to state the County has expanded on that roll, and has done some major repairs. The County has purchased a sweeper to help maintain and sweep the trail three to four times a year. The County has directed making some changes and improvements on that trail. Estimates received for this are running between \$25,000 and \$50,000 to do some minor repairs and alterations. Between there and Harbor Springs the County has agreed to assume more of the responsibility, if the trail is ever built from Pleasantview Road into Harbor Springs. An agreement has been made where the City [of Petoskey] will assume the responsibility for the new trail in Resort Township where the County purchased the property. The County currently spends approximately \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00 per year on trail maintenance. He suggested establishment of a joint recreational authority, between the

townships, cities and the County, for a maintenance program. Mr. Johnson volunteered civil counsel Kathleen Abbott's services to draft a proposal.

It was suggested Ms. Abbott contact Harbor Inc. (joint venture with Harbor Springs Schools, City and Township for a trail to the school) for input and information.

Airports:

The two local airports are strong and are adequate.

Water Transportation:

It was noted that people come to the area not for just the trails, but also for the waterways and other type of trails. Discussed the idea of a summer ferry service to operate between Harbor Springs and Petoskey.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes approved: 06-10-2008