

**ALGER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**August 19, 2019**

**Approved September 16, 2019**

Pursuant to recess, the Alger County Board of Commissioners convened in the conference room of the county building at 4:00 p.m. on the above date.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doucette with the following Commissioners present: Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

The board of commissioners said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comment session was open. Barry Hoover expressed his concern over excessive speeds on Lehnen Road. Prosecuting Attorney, Robert Steinhoff is working with the Alger County Road Commission regarding this issue. There was no further public comment; thus, the public comment was closed.

It was moved by Commissioner VanLandschoot and seconded by Commissioner Mattson to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

It was moved by Commissioner Mattson and seconded by Commissioner Rondeau to approve the consent agenda which includes the following items:

Affirm approving Facility Use Agreement between the Michigan Department of State Police and Alger County;

Approve FY 2020 Child Care budget;

Affirm approving hiring Jana Mathieu as Indigent Defense Attorney;

Affirm approving the Veteran Affairs Grant Agreement;

Affirm approving Burt Township Ambulance Corps to become part of Alger County's ambulance service and medical control;

Approve Resolution Requesting Reallocation of Assets from overfunded MERS Divisions to Division 11;

Authorize payment to LMAS District Health Department for their quarterly appropriation in the amount of \$20,049 (101-601-969.000);

Authorize payment to Northcare for their substance abuse payment in the amount of \$9,884.00 (101-631-969.000);

Approve payment of all Board Bills;

Approve Financial Reports for all funds (Trial Balance Report available);

Authorize the treasurer to amend the revenues in reimbursements in the amount of \$22,000.00 (101-000-676.000);

Authorize the clerk to amend the expenditures in Employee Fringe Benefits in the amount of \$22,000.00 (101-862);

Authorize the treasurer to amend the revenues in Fund 293 Veteran's Relief in the amount of \$10,000.00;

Authorize the clerk to amend the expenditures in Fund 293 Veteran's Relief in the amount of \$10,000.00;

Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

It was moved by Commissioner Mattson and seconded by Commissioner VanLandschoot to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes of July 8, 2019. Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

It was moved by Commissioner Rondeau and seconded by Commissioner VanLandschoot to approve the Board of Commissioners meeting minutes of July 15, 2019. Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

Veteran's Affairs Service Officer, Becky Johns updated the board and presented her departmental report. Ms. Johns would like to setup a Facebook page for Veteran's Affairs.

It was moved by Commissioner Mattson and seconded by Commissioner VanLandschoot to appoint Mickey Rondeau, Douglas Miron & James Rodgers to the Veteran's Affairs Board. Motion carried by the

following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

It was moved by Commissioner Rondeau and seconded by Commissioner Mattson to approve Letter of Support for Alger Conservation District grant applications. Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

There was no unfinished business

There were no miscellaneous financial matters.

It was moved by Commissioner Rondeau and seconded by Commissioner Mattson to approve the following resolutions

**RESOLUTION #2019-18 SUPPORTING THE CARO CENTER IN TUSCOLA COUNTY  
MICHIGAN**

**WHEREAS**, during the 1990's, two thirds of the state-operated psychiatric hospitals serving Michigan citizens closed, and from 2005 to 2010 the number of state psychiatric beds in Michigan decreased by nearly 50%; and

**WHEREAS**, in the absence of needed in-patient treatment and care, individuals in acute or chronic disabling psychiatric crisis increasingly are found in hospital emergency rooms and jails/prisons. These systems experience significant negative impacts as a result. Hospital emergency rooms are so overcrowded that some acutely ill patients wait days or even weeks for a psychiatric bed to open so they can be admitted; some eventually are released to the streets without treatment; and

**WHEREAS**, law enforcement agencies find service calls, transportation and hospital security for people in acute psychiatric crisis creating significant, growing demands on their officers, thus straining public safety resources. More pressure is put on police officers with some jails/prisons containing a third or more of inmates with untreated mental illness; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of persons with mental illness who are homeless has increased. In some communities, officials have reported as many as two-thirds of their homeless population is mentally ill; and

**WHEREAS**, multiple studies and the facts identified above conclude there is a pressing need for long-term, in-patient psychiatric care in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature responded to this crisis by providing \$115 million in state building authority financed construction for a new state psychiatric hospital and decided that the facility would be built on the grounds of the current Caro Center in the FY 2016-17 and 2017-18 budgets. Then-Governor Snyder concurred, by signing Public Act 107 of 2017, in July of that year; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 19, 2017, the State Administrative Board approved a \$54 million contract with Integrated Design Solutions, to design anew 200 bed, regional state psychiatric hospital (an increase from the current 150 beds at the Caro Center), on the site of the existing Caro Center, with an announcement by then State DHHS Director Nick Lyon "The State of Michigan made a commitment to the Caro community that the new psychiatric hospital would remain in the community, and we are keeping that promise;" and

**WHEREAS**, on October 19, 2018, then-Governor Snyder participated in a ground-breaking for the new 225,000 square foot state psychiatric hospital at the site of the current Caro Center. The new hospital was scheduled to be completed in 2021 and would replace the aging Caro facility. Over \$3 million in taxpayer funds have already been spent in preparation for construction at the Caro site; and

**WHEREAS**, the facility is a vital economic engine for this entire region of Michigan. A recent economic impact study determined that the operation infuses \$54 million annually into the regional economy while directly employing 350 people and indirectly employing another 400 people, making it the second largest employer in Tuscola County; and

**WHEREAS**, relocation of the facility would have dramatic, devastating negative repercussions to businesses, schools, and families living in communities throughout this region of the state. The area economy is already struggling from the previous closure of State Prisons; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to its critical regional economic importance, by objective measures as previously documented in choosing this location, building the new facility on the site of the current Caro Center is best for the individuals needing in-patient psychiatric care and for the taxpayers of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, at the current location there is a 100-year community tradition of caring. Seventy percent of employees travel less than 30 miles to work. The site is centrally located for family visits and patient transportation with 80% of patients coming from Genesee, Oakland, and Macomb Counties, just to the south of Tuscola County. The 600-acre site is already state-owned, and infrastructure is already in place. County engineers determined the on-

site water system can be economically upgraded to serve the new hospital. It is accessible to state highways and near area medical providers; and

**WHEREAS**, the difficulty in recruiting psychiatrists is not unique to Tuscola County and will be an issue that has to be dealt with no matter where a new facility is located.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Alger County Board of Commissioners does hereby urge Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Department of Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon, and members of the State Legislature, in response to a critical shortage of in-patient state psychiatric beds, continue with the construction of a new 200-bed, state psychiatric hospital on the grounds of the current Caro Center, in Tuscola County, as the best option for quality, accessible services to patients and their families, and as the best value to the taxpayers of Michigan and prevent devastating negative repercussions to businesses, schools, and families living in communities throughout this region of the state; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Department of Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon, State Senator Ed McBroom, State Representative Sara Cambensy, Michigan Association of Counties, and all Michigan counties.

#### **RESOLUTION #2019-19 IN SUPPORT OF THE BACK FORTY PROJECT**

Whereas, The Alger County Board of Commissioners supports industry and workforce development efforts that significantly impact local employers and the economic growth of our region, and therefore supports the mining industry and

Acknowledging that, primary regulatory responsibility for mining is with the State of Michigan. The Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy is responsible for evaluating information to determine if permits should be issued that would allow mining operations; and,

Acknowledging that, the State of Michigan rulemaking process has produced rules that have been cited as among the strictest in the country for protecting the environment while allowing mining; and,

Whereas, through a nonpartisan cooperative effort in 1998, the federal government passed legislation which grants local governments, in partnership with Workforce Investment Boards, the power and responsibility to administer and guide local workforce investment strategic activities; and,

Whereas, through a nonpartisan cooperative effort in 2006, the Government of Michigan passed legislation which established the Michigan Works! System as the state's Workforce Investment System;

Therefore, be it resolved, providing Aquila Resources Inc. Back Forty Project meets federal and state requirements to properly protect the environment, natural resources, and public health. The Alger County Board of Commissioners is in support of the project, and encourages complete support by community, U.P., state and federal leaders for this mining industry project which will enhance the continued economic growth of our region.

Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Rondeau, VanLandschoot and Doucette. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Pullen.

There were no committee reports.

Correspondence was briefly read from the Federal Regulatory Commission.

Commissioner Rondeau questioned when Highway 58 will be completed. Commissioner Mattson explained work is on schedule with black topping in October. Commissioner VanLandschoot explained that black top will run to High Street, but onward to Connors Road is still not completed. Commissioner Rondeau noted a New York Times article about child suicide doubling from 2011 to 2015. Commissioner Doucette spoke about State Forest planning and Michigan State Police presence within the courthouse.

There were no staff comments.

Public comment session was open. There was no public comment; thus, the public comment was closed.

It was moved by Commissioner Rondeau and seconded by Commissioner Mattson to adjourn this meeting at 5:30 p.m. Motion carried by the following vote: Ayes – Commissioners Mattson, Pullen, Rondeau and VanLandschoot. Nays – none. Absent – Commissioner Doucette.

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Jerry Doucette, Chairman  
Alger County Board of Commissioners

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Mary Ann Froberg  
Alger County Clerk