

**October 2, 2019 Special Meeting**

**T-450**

On Wednesday, October 2, 2019, at 8:30 a.m., Chairperson Patti Peretto called the meeting to order. The meeting was held in the Board of Commissioners Room of the Courthouse. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken with the following members present: Chairperson Patti Peretto, Commissioners Tim Aho, Ray Coates, Sharon Leonoff and Mike Stafford.

Also present: Sheriff Mark Valesano, Undersheriff Ryan Boehmke, Prosecutor Melissa Powell, Treasurer Melanie Camps, Administrative Assistants Mary Dalpra and Lynette Lorenz, Chamber Alliance Executive Director Paul Schuytema, Emergency Manager/911 Director Vernon Jones, MSU Extension Program Coordinator Deb Divoky, Court Administrator Lori Willman, Civil Counsel Steve Tinti and Clerk/Register Julie Kezerle.

Moved by Coates, supported by Aho, to approve the agenda. Voice vote, motion carried.

Chairperson Peretto wanted to announce that the Regular Board Meeting scheduled for October 8, 2019, will be at 3:00 p.m.

Chairperson Peretto called for Public Comment.

Lisa Bloomberg, an Iron County business owner and member of the Forest Park School Board, spoke regarding the county's budget numbers and wanted answers.

Maureen Elson was next to speak and was there to support the county 4-H.

Barbara Luck, a business owner, spoke in support of 4-H and the Chamber and said the county needs to find a different way to make cuts.

Carol Callovi, a 4-H Leader for 50 years, spoke in support of 4-H.

Doug Weesner, a retired State Trooper and who currently works in the school, spoke in support of 4-H and how important it is to our community.

Brian Brzoznowski, owner of Cottages to Castles, said he supports the Chamber. He grew up here and people are coming here because of events they came to here for years and now are building vacation and/or retirement homes.

John Nieminen, former owner of Cook's Run Cedar, and a resident of Iron County since 1958, credits the Chamber for the growing success in Iron County.

Donna Ahlberg, an Iron County resident, read a letter from Kaye and Lawrence Anderson, who are residents of Sunset Lake, in support of the Chamber.

Seth Waters, a Pastor in Iron River, expressed his support of ICECA.

Ketti Bayles, a resident of Crystal Falls, was born and raised here, left for a while, and recently moved back. She supports the ICECA with all of the wonderful events they put on in the area.

Josh Nodurft, a business owner, stated that he could live anywhere and chose Iron County. He sat down with Paul from ICECA and asked "why should we move here?" We're here because someone believed in us. We are excited about the growth in Iron County.

Paul Putnam, District Director of MSU Extension, spoke about the 100 year history of the MSU Extension and 4-H program. He offered a \$4,000 voluntary reduction in the funds the county gives to the MSU Extension (a 10% decrease) to help the budget process.

Peretto called for public comment two more times. No more public comments voiced.

**New Business:**

Aho wanted to explain the budget and comments made in the community.

Tinti stated we need to be very careful. We are overspending when our expenses exceed our revenue by several hundred thousand dollars.

Aho compared what other counties give to their Chamber. He also stated that we received bad news from the Governor regarding cuts.

Leonoff stated that the Chamber has always been around and was always solely paid for by the business owners. She thinks that the voters should decide.

Peretto said that the ICECA has improved immensely. It is much better and said we will try as hard as we can to give the ICECA some money.

Stafford also wanted to address some comments made in the community as untrue. He said he's not trying to eliminate anything and was looking for recommendations.

Coates stated 4-H has been around a long time and he believes in 4-H. It all comes down to one thing "money".

Tinti recited the Budget General Provisions.

1. When a financial activity authorized in this budget is funded in whole and/or part by funds other than from the COUNTY OF IRON (by way of example from a grant) and such funds are reduced and/or eliminated, then the authorization to spend such reduced and/or eliminated budgeted funds automatically becomes null and void. It is the policy of the COUNTY OF IRON to not replace such funds with funds from the COUNTY OF IRON General Fund.
2. The wage level and benefits provided for each employment position, in this budget, other than an elected county official, shall only be increased, decreased or modified by express action of the County Board of the COUNTY OF IRON.
3. When a person employed and/or funded by this budget, other than an elected county official, leaves employment of the COUNTY OF IRON, then the authorization to spend such budgeted funds for the employment position automatically becomes null and void.

Tinti said the county will need to look at this when the State cuts things. It will be a shock to see how this could hit us.

Stafford said we cannot make any decisions now until we see what the State cuts.

Erica Gursky wanted to speak in support of 4-H and wanted the board to consider MSU's offer of the voluntary reduction.

Peretto stated that everyone in this room is here because we love Iron County.

Aho wanted to speak as a resident of Iron County and not as a board member and read the following proposal, attached hereto and made a part hereof, as Exhibit "A".

Margee Brennan spoke in support of the ICECA.

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Tom Lessandrini was next to speak and stated he just came to the meeting to listen. He said as a former county commissioner the board has a lot of work to do and that it's a hard job. We all need to work together.

Stafford said we have a couple of options but we can't go forward with anything concrete until we hear what the State is going to do with their budget.

Moved by Stafford, supported by Aho, to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Chairperson Patti Peretto

Clerk/Register Julie Kezerle

ICECA has requested funding in the amount of \$70000 from the taxpayer of Iron County. Iron County in years 2017, 2018, 2019 contractually provided \$35,451 of taxpayer money to fund ICECA.

I was supportive of ICECA conceptually, and after its organization. I was clear at the time of organization of ICECA that the taxpayer could not be responsible for ICECA funding in the future. It seems this fell on deaf ears, as very little has been done by ICECA to supplement their revenue stream. And are now asking the taxpayer for an additional \$35,000.


I believe ICECA has somewhat lost its way, and their intent is to be a taxpayer funded organization and be part of local government indefinitely.


This being said, I am going to challenge the Chamber members, along with all of the community members that are advocates of ICECA, to step up and fund ICECA. I will lead the way with a check for \$175 paid to the ICECA Revenue Support Fund. Only 199 ICECA supporters now need to match my check and the \$35,000 of taxpayer support will be replaced by the private/business sector as it is done in other counties.

My deposit will be held in escrow until matching funds by the private/business sector attain a total of \$35,000. No taxpayer funded agency funds will be recognized as part of the \$35,000 funding total, and anonymous donations will not be counted toward the total.

An account will be established at CoVantage Credit Union to deposit the donations into. Anyone will be able to deposit funds, but funds can only be removed with two signatures, of which one will be mine, and the other will be Katie Clark treasurer of the ICECA. If the funds reach the level described in this document, the entire amount will be then transfer to ICECA by my and Katie Clarks signatures only.

Should the ICECA not be able to raise the additional \$34,825 by December 15, 2019 the money raised will be donated by 100 Woman who Care to needy organization/organizations through their normal process of selection. All parties donating must be informed of this clause in writing prior to their donation.

Timothy P Aho:  Date: 10-2-19

Witness By:  Date: 10-2-19

**EXHIBIT "A"**