

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
CITY COUNCIL
DELTA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF ESCANABA, MICHIGAN
Special Joint Meeting
Monday, February 13, 2012

Pursuit to a special meeting posted February 9, 2012, the meeting was called to order by the Mayor Leo J. Evans at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 410 Ludington Street.

Present: The Delta County Board of Commissioners Thomas Elegeert, David Rivard, Ryan Holm, and David Moyle. Escanaba City Council Members Mayor Leo Evans, Brady Nelson, Walter A. "Pete" Baker, Ronald Beauchamp, Patrica Baribeau (arrived at 4:33) p.m.

Also Present: Delta County Administrator Nora Viau, Escanaba City Manager James V. O'Toole, County Clerk Nancy Kolich, City Clerk Robert S. Richards, Gladstone School Librarian Lori Wells, Escanaba Library Director Carolyn Stacey, Susan Dees Director of the Superiorland Library Cooperative, and members of the press and media.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion – Public Library Millage Proposal

A discussion took place between representatives of the City of Escanaba, Gladstone Public Library and Delta County on the various library funding mechanisms under consideration for funding the City of Escanaba and Gladstone Public Library operations. The Meeting was a continuation of previous meetings the City Administration and County held in December.

County Administrator Nora Viau stated, based on a recommendation from their Attorney, the County requested to change the ballot language from ".3 mill" to state "an amount not to exceed .3 mill". Additionally, the County also recommended removing wording specific to Escanaba and Gladstone libraries, and replace verbiage stating "the purposes authorized by law in order to provide library service to people of the County."

Escanaba City Manager O'Toole stated the City would be opposed to up to language of .3 mill. Manager O'Toole stated that language was not specific enough. He further advised the City or Gladstone School Libraries currently can not continue to provide the necessary services with anything less than .3 mill.

Superiorland Library Cooperative Director Susan Dees briefly reviewed the County Library Act of Michigan. Ms. Dees stated Michigan Law explicitly permits a County to place a County-wide millage proposal on the ballot for library service, and can then contract with established libraries to provide those library services to all residents of the County.

In further discussions, the following was reviewed:

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- Susan Dees reviewed how penal fines were distributive based on the Motor Vehicle Code;
- Use of a Book Mobile was not practical at a funding level of only .3 of a mill;
- Discussed service areas of the Libraries. The City and Gladstone Libraries came up with an agreement to continue with the legal service areas as well as providing library services to all County residents;
- Township Governing bodies were opposed to the Millage Proposal;
- It was emphasized, that the County Board and Township Governing bodies did not decide the ballot questions for its constituents, but was decided by their voters, this was how democracy worked;
- City will need to cut its library services if another funding source was not obtained;
- All boards share in the responsibility of providing services for the public;
- The Ultimate Question was equity, and sustaining services. The reality was the City and Gladstone Libraries can not sustain it services without a change;
- Discussed the contracts City had with the Townships;
- After a year of discussions with the County Board Members, it was frustrating that both sides have not been able to come to an agreement on letting the people decide this issue;
- City needs ballot language to state at least .3 of a mill to move forward to continue its services;
- Question if the communities can afford an additional millage;
- Ballot Decision needed to be made by May 15, 2012 in order to have the ballot question placed on the August 2012 Primary Election Ballot.

As the meeting concluded, all sides agreed to have a decision made within 30 days.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT - None

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further public comment, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Richards, CMC
City Clerk

Approved: _____

Leo J. Evans, Mayor