CRYSTAL FALLS—The Iron County Board of Commissioners agreed to look into purchasing a new software program for its finances and taxation, switching from the long-running and imminently outdated Manatron system.

"Ninety-seven percent of state government units are using BS&A," said County Administrator Sue Clisch at the board's Aug. 28 bi-monthly meeting. "It must be a pretty good program."

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Joe Menze, IT director for 906 Technologies, which manages the Courthouse computer system, told the board that using the BS&A software will put the county in a better position with state and federal accounting practices.

Harris/Manatron, the system currently in use, is going to be replaced, he explained. The county pays approximately $18,000 annually for support and upgrade.

He estimated the purchase cost of the new system, spread over five years, would be about $47,000 per year; however, the annual support fee is $17,720 of that cost.

The system offers multiple areas of support. However, implementation of the new software would affect the county's municipalities that use the Manatron system for assessing.

"The units will need to be informed," said Clisch, and there would be a cost of $5-$7,000 for them. Currently, four units are on BS&A; seven are not.

Commissioner Rosalie King suggested the matter be referred to the county finance committee, and the board approved the action.

in other business:

--With the November ballot requiring finalization by the end of September, County Clerk Joan Luhtanen presented a list of general election candidates and proposals to the board.

She reported the August primary election went well, and there were "good races."

--Iron County Sheriff Mark Valesano reported his department is applying for a secondary road patrol grant; and Prosecuting Attorney Melissa Powell reported 300 adult and juvenile cases had been tried by her office from January through July.

--The board approved lowering the rent Dickinson-Iron Community Services Agency pays to the Iron River Senior Center for office space from $700 to $500.

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