

BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Dakota called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, February 9, 2026 at 5:00 p.m., Baraga County Courthouse, 16 N. Third Street, L'Anse, MI 49946.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Chairman Dakota led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

Clerk Goodreau took roll call with the following results:

Present: James Niemela, District 1, Brad Dakota, District 2, Craig Kent, District 3, and William Menge, District 4.

Absent: Lee DeLeon, District 5.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the Agenda, as presented. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on January 12, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT-Agenda Items Only:

Chairman Dakota opened the meeting up for public comment. No Public Comment on Agenda Items was offered.

TREASURERS REPORT:

As presented by Treasurer, Ashley Kristo.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for January 2026 (\$990.00). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the payment of the Claims and Accounts for the period of January 13, 2026 through February 9, 2026 in the amount of \$47,163.37. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of January 13, 2026 through February 9, 2026 in the amount of \$239,066.90. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Commissary Account expenditures for January 2026 in the amount of \$7,057.21. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Chairman Dakota provided an update on the Emergency Manager/911 Director position. Talks with other organizations are taking place. For now, the position remains at the Sheriff's Office.

ACTION ITEMS:

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to enter into a contract with Susan Sanford, CPA for services related to the FY2025 audit. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

The Board discussed whether or not to place the 2021 Ford Explorer patrol vehicle or keep it for County departments to use for travel and transports for the Probate Juvenile Court. Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to table advertising for bids for the 2021 Ford Explorer patrol vehicle. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to submit a letter of support for the Baraga County Road Commission grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for funding under the FY2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grant program. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

No action was taken on a request from the Baraga County Chamber for sponsoring Chamber events throughout 2026.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to support InvestUP's letter supporting energy legislation – RICE generators (HB 4007 and 4283). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

No reports received.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- BCMH – Board of Trustees, Minutes
- Copper Shores Community Health Foundation, Note of thanks
- Village of L'Anse, Notice of Intent – Master Plan

RESOLUTIONS:

No Resolutions for consideration.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Kent has been working with Recharge Services to update the fire extinguishers in the Courthouse and Administration Building.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Catherine Andrews provided information to the Board regarding the impact of data centers.

Dr. Eileen Schweikert voiced concerns over data centers.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the County Board, Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to adjourn the meeting until Monday, March 9, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brad Dakota, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk