

BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2024
“OFFICIAL”

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Eilola called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, February 12, 2024 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 Eilola 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: Gale Eilola, District 1, Brad Dakota, District 2, Craig Kent, District 3, William Menge, District 4 and Chad Cichosz, District 5.

Absent: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the Agenda, adding EDC, application process 501(c)6 and Baragaland Senior Citizens, Request for ARPA funds. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on January 8, 2024. On Voice Vote, the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman Eilola opened the meeting up for public comment on Agenda Items. No public comment was received.

TREASURERS REPORT:

As presented by Treasurer, Jill C Tollefson.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for January 2024 (\$990.00). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the payment of the Claims and Accounts for the period of January 9, 2024 through February 12, 2024 in the amount of \$70,981.76. On Vote Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of January 9, 2024 through February 12, 2024 in the amount of \$684,69.88. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Checking Account expenditures for December 2023 in the amount of \$20,165.94. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commissioner Dakota reported that he had contacted the KBIC regarding the appointment to the Veterans' Affairs Committee. No letter had yet been received.

ACTION ITEMS:

Rob Stowe, CEO – BCMH, provided an update on the state of the hospital. The is in very good standing, thriving.

Burt Mason provided an idea on how to address the shortage of affordable housing in Baraga County that was used in Newago County. No action was taken.

Catherine Andrews informed the Board that she will be circulating petitions to place a referendum on the ballot to repeal the part of the 2023 Clean Energy Legislation that gives state regulators the authority to decide where to locate large wind and solar projects. The organizers of the petition are hoping to have the initiative on the November 5th, General Election ballot.

The Baraga County EDC provided an update of services and accomplishments. The EDC is requesting the Board authorize an application for 501(c)6 status. This will allow the EDC to seek grant funding and expansion of fundraising opportunities. Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to authorize the Baraga County Economic Development Corporation to begin the process and apply for 501(c)6 status. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to appoint Michael Koskinen (at-large) and Chairman Eilola to the Copper County Mental Health Services Board of Directors for a three-year term expiring March 31, 2027. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to accept the resignation of Carole LaPointe from the DHHS Board and appoint Mary Dee Shanahan to fill the vacancy with the term expiring September 30, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to issue the 2024 Remonumentation contracts to U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc and CHN Surveying. Each contract is in the amount of \$21,651.00 and will complete 17 corners. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the following resolution which allows employees the choice of pre-tax or post tax contributions to their 457 accounts:

RESOLVED, that Amendment Number 1 to the Baraga County 457b Plan effective 2/12/2024, presented at this meeting to the Baraga County Board of Commissioners is hereby approved and adopted and that the proper [officers] of Baraga County are hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the Administrator of the Plan one or more counterparts of the Amendment.

RESOLVED, that the proper [officers] of Baraga County shall act as soon as possible to notify Plan Participants of the adoption of this Amendment by delivering to each Participant a copy of the summary description of the changes to the Plan in the form of the Summary of Material Modifications presented at this meeting to the Baraga County Board of Commissioners, which form is hereby approved.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approved overnight travel for Maddy Barnett, Probate Court to attend training in Lansing, MI. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to approve the following Resolution authorizing the 2024 911 surcharge:

WHEREAS, the Section 401b of the Emergency 9-1-1 Service Enabling ACT, Act 32 of the Public Acts of 1986, as amended, being MCL 484.1401b permits the Baraga County Board of Commissioners to assess a county 9-1-1 charge of \$.42 per month (surcharge) to services users, except for users of a prepaid wireless telecommunications service, located in Baraga County by adoption of a Resolution assessing surcharge within the county; and

WHEREAS, the revenues from the surcharge shall only be used to fund cost described in Section 401b (14), as amended, of the 9-1-1 Service Enabling Act [MCL 484.401(b)(9)(10)]; and

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners intends to adopt this Resolution assessing a county 9-1-1 charge of \$.42 per month (surcharge) to service users, except for users of a prepaid wireless telecommunication service, located in Baraga County primarily to fund operations of Baraga County 911 Services; and

WHEREAS, Section 401b (6) of the Emergency 9-1-1 Service Enabling Act [MCL 484.401b(6)] provides that the revenue produced by the surcharge shall be distributed to Baraga County 911 to provide 911 services within the County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Baraga County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts and assesses a county 9-1-1 charge of \$.42 per month (surcharge) to service users, except for users of a prepaid wireless telecommunications service, located in Baraga County, as permitted under Section 401b of the Emergency 9-1-1 Service Enabling Act, Act 32 of the Public Acts of 1986, as amended, being MCL 484.1401b.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Baraga County 911 Director is hereby directed to notify the State 9-1-1 Committee of this rate as prescribed by law prior to the fifteenth day of May, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the surcharge revenues shall be collected by Baraga County and allocated for the purpose of defraying the cost of operating the Emergency 9-1-1 system.

The Board obtain three proposals from engineering firms to provide a structural engineering assessment of the Baraga County Courthouse. UPEA, \$42,000.00; OHM, \$25,000.00 and Jurmu Engineering, \$13,500.00. Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the proposal of \$13,500.00 from Jurmu Engineering to be paid from ARPA funds. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

The Sheriff's Department needs to update their taser equipment. The Sheriff has applied for a RAP grant through MMRMA which will pay for 50% of the expense. There has not been a decision made on the grant application at the time of the meeting. Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the purchase of 5 tasers for the Sheriff's Department in the amount of \$27,623.89 with a five-year payment program (\$5,074.40/annually). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to sign a Purchase Agreement for the Covington Township property – Wild River Properties, LLC. The Purchase price is \$2,700,000.00 with a MDNR Trust Fund Grant funding \$2,025,000.00 and the seller donating all proceeds in excess. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to donate \$10,000.00 of ARPA funds to the Baragaland Senior Citizens to make improvements to the senior meals kitchen. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Commissioner Cichosz reported the Parks & Recreation Committee will meet on Thursday and discuss a maintenance plan.

Commissioner Dakota reported the Trails Authority met with representatives from MTU regarding trails through Alberta. MTU continues to refuse trail access on their Alberta property.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

RESOLUTIONS:

There were no Resolutions.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Menge reported on a discussion regarding opioid funding at the UPCAP meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no Public Comment offered.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the County Board, Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to adjourn the meeting until Monday, March 11, 2024. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Gale Eilola, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk