

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

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Dakota called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, March 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 and Lee DeLeon, District 5.

Absent: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on February 9, 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.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for February 2026 (\$1,120.00). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the payment of the Claims and Accounts for the period of February 10, 2026 through March 9, 2026 in the amount of \$52,936.80. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of February 10, 2026 through March 9, 2026 in the amount of \$976,862.13. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Commissary Account expenditures for February 2026 in the amount of \$7,297.82. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Chairman Dakota provided an update on the Emergency Manager/911 Director position. Todd Peltola and Sheriff Brogan updated the Board on a partnership with BCMH. A Memorandum of Agreement will be in place between the County and BCMH for BCMH to take on the duties of the Baraga County Emergency Manager. BCMH is working on a job description and will present it to the County within the next few weeks. No action was taken.

The Board discussed whether or not to place the 2021 Ford Explorer patrol vehicle or keep it for Probate Court to use for travel and transport. Probate Judge Timothy Brennan expressed the Probate Court's need for a vehicle for transports of juveniles as well as use for Probate Court staff to attend meetings and required juvenile visits. Sheriff Brogan had no objection to the vehicle being given to the Probate Court. Commissioner Niemela would like to see a log be kept of vehicle usage. Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to keep the 2021 Ford Explorer for use by the Probate Court. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS:

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to sign a contract with Copper Country Humane Society for animal control services. Contract is for \$30.00 per day per animal for statutory holds, \$30.00 per day per animal for the first 10 days, \$20.00 for additional days for court ordered holds. The amount of the services is not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$5,000.00. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approved the following Resolution authorizing the assessment of a county 911 surcharge of \$.42 per month to service users:

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, 2026.

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.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Commissioner Kent cannot make the next Materials Management Plan meeting. Commissioner Niemela volunteered to go in Mr. Kent's place. Commissioner Kent gave a very informative report on the issue of using old tires for fuel, the current state of the Warden Station and energy production in the U.P.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- BCMH – Board of Trustees, Minutes
- NorthCare, FY2025 funding and services

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to adopt the following Resolution repealing MCL 46.415(2):

WHEREAS, the County Board of Commissioners currently establishes all aspects of compensation, benefits and mileage reimbursements for its officials and its employees and fund the same, solely from County funds; and

WHEREAS, mileage reimbursement for County Board of Commissioners and county officials and employees is currently statutorily different as the County Board of Commissioners is limited by the limitations set forth in MCL 46.415(2); and

WHEREAS, many counties adopt the applicable IRS mileage rate for business travel which for 2026 is 72.5 cents per miles; and

WHEREAS, a County Board of Commissioner generally is required to undertake travel in the performance of the duties of their office; and

WHEREAS, when officials and employees of a county travel, the mileage reimbursement exceeds that of County Board of Commissioners mileage reimbursement for their county travel; and

WHEREAS, the current statutory difference in mileage reimbursement for official travel at the County level is both irrational and illogical.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Michigan Legislature are called upon to repeal MCL 46.415(2) in its entirety to allow counties to establish all aspects of compensation and mileage for their commissioners, officials and its employees to be paid solely from county funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to all Michigan counties and members of the Michigan Legislature.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Menge discussed the need for mental health facilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Catherine Andrews reported on resistance to the FLOCK LPR program in other areas and thanked the Board for not approving them for Baraga County. She also expressed concerns for FLOCK's ability to add facial recognition to the platform.

Scott Artley voiced concerns over data centers and asked where the County stood on the issue.

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 Tuesday, April 14, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brad Dakota, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk