

BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2025
“Official”

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Dakota called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, March 10, 2025 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, William Menge, District 4, Lee DeLeon, District 5.

Absent: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on February 10, 2025. On Voice Vote, the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT-Agenda Items Only:

Chairman Dakota opened the meeting up for public comment. No Public Comment was received.

TREASURERS REPORT:

As presented by Treasurer, Jill C Tollefson.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for February 2025 (\$1,020.00). On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the payment of the Claims and Accounts for the period of February 11, 2025 through March 10, 2025 in the amount of \$44,482.93. 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 11, 2025 through March 10, 2025 in the amount of \$360,563.26. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Commissary Account expenditures for February 2025 in the amount of \$7,746.23. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

ACTION ITEMS:

The Board received a report from Rob Stowe, CEO, Baraga County Memorial Hospital. Our local hospital is doing remarkably well!

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to comply with the Earned Sick Time Act the County shall take the following actions: PTE employees will be allocated 72 hours of paid sick time for immediate use each year with no carryover option. The specific language will be circulated to the employees before 3/21/2025 and that language will be incorporated into the Personnel Handbook and presented to the Board of Commissioners at the 4/8/2025 Board meeting. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

No reports received.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- BCMH – Board of Trustees, Minutes

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the following Resolution:

Resolution to Support Local Control and Claim of Appeal Against Michigan Public Service Commission Order - Board of Commissioners

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports state policies that maintain and advance local control; and

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has adopted policies and introduced legislation that attempts to further reduce local control in key areas affecting unique interests in local communities; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the State of Michigan adopted Public Act 233 of 2023 ("PA 233"); and

WHEREAS, only under limited circumstances, PA 233 confers powers and duties to the Public Service Commission ("PSC") regarding the siting of utility-scale solar energy facilities, wind energy facilities, and energy storage facilities allowing developers to bypass local zoning authorities when proposing qualifying developments; and

WHEREAS, the PSC issued an order on October 10, 2024 (the "Order") implementing the provisions of Public Act 233 of 2023 ("PA 233"); and

WHEREAS, the Order attempts to vastly expand the PSC's limited and enumerated jurisdiction in PA 233 and is both unlawful and unreasonable; and

WHEREAS, the Order is unlawful and unreasonable because, among other reasons: (1) the PSC's issuance of, the Order violates the Administrative Procedures Act, MCL 24.201 *et seq.*, and (2) the Order unlawfully and unreasonably redefines key terms and concepts and creates processes and procedures that violate the Legislature's express and unambiguous intent for local input in the regulation of energy facilities; and

WHEREAS, a coalition of Michigan Municipalities timely filed a claim of appeal from the Order on November 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports the coalition of Michigan Municipalities in their efforts to protect local control in the regulation of energy facilities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Baraga County Board of Commissioners resolves its unequivocal support of local control and the coalition of Michigan Municipalities that have filed an appeal from the Order.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Michigan State Senator Ed McBroom, Michigan State Representatives Karl Bohnak and the other 82 county Board of Commissioners in the State of Michigan.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

No Commissioner Comments received.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The Board received several comments from concerned citizens regarding the cuts to federal jobs and programs, such as Medicaid, Medicare, U.S. Fish & Wildlife (lamprey program), and Veteran's Affairs, by President Trump and the Department of Government Efficiency as well as the involvement of Elon Musk. The group asked the Board to send a resolution to our federal elected officials. No action was taken

The Board received a comment from Catherine Andrews in regards to the negative impacts COVID lockdowns and vaccine mandates. Ms. Andrews stated that while she agrees with some concerns regarding cuts, she asks that any resolution that would interfere with federal authority in investigating fraud and abuse be tabled.

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 at approximately 5:43 p.m. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brad Dakota, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk