

BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Kent called the Regular Meeting to order on Tuesday, April 14, 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:

Vice-Chairman Kent 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, Craig Kent, District 3, and William Menge, District 4 and Lee DeLeon, District 5.

Absent: Brad Dakota, District 2.

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 DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on March 9, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT-Agenda Items Only:

Vice-Chair Kent opened the meeting up for public comment. No Public Comment on Agenda Items was offered.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Report received, as presented.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion supported by Commission Niemela to approve Special Revenue Budget Amendment #02-2026:

BARAGA COUNTY
BUDGET AMENDMENTS
For the Fiscal Year Ending 09/30/2026

BA # 01-2026

Account Name	Account Number	Revenue Increase - (Decrease)	Expense - Increase- (Decrease)
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SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS - REVENUES

SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS - EXPENDITURES

CCF Basic Contractual	292-662-805.00	(\$24,615.00)
CCF Salary and Wages	292-662-703.00	\$23,000.00
CCF SS and Medicare	292-662-715.00	\$1,615.00

SPECIAL REVENUES - JOURNAL TOTALS \$0.00

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

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

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the payment of the Claims and Accounts for the period of March 10, 2026 through April 14, 2026 in the amount of \$94,072.60. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of March 10, 2026 through April 14, 2026 in the amount of \$617,238.20. 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 March 2026 in the amount of \$6,342.18. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

The 911 Committee/BCM Administration has finalized the job description for the combined 911 Director/EM Manager/Patient Transport position. Once all parties have agreed the position will be posted. Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve an extension for the Sheriff and Undersheriff to continue managing the duties of 911 Director and EM Manager for an additional 90 days. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS:

Equalization Director Elizabeth Anderson presented the Board with the 2026 Baraga County Equalization Report. Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has examined the assessment rolls of the several townships in the County, through its Equalization Department, to ascertain whether the real

property in the respective townships has been equally and uniformly assessed at true cash value, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners deem such assessments to be relatively equal,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the assessment rolls on the real property of the various townships in the County for the year 2026 and the same are equalized as follows, and the breakdown by class be filed in the County Clerk's office.

TOTAL AS EQUALIZED

<u>TOWNSHIP</u>	<u>REAL PROPERTY</u>
Arvon	\$113,158,355
Baraga	\$143,945,793
Covington	\$ 42,713,247
L'Anse	\$170,945,549
Spurr	\$63,604,014

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to place the county-side roads and street millage for 2 mills on the Primary Election ballot with the following language:

“Shall an ad valorem tax of two (2) mills (\$2.00 per \$1,000.00 of taxable value) over and above the rate of taxation now in effect be levied upon all property within Baraga County, Michigan for a period of 5 years, from 2027 to 2031 inclusive, to provide funds for the purpose of providing tax money with which to make necessary improvements and construction of primary and local roads in the County Road System, including streets in the Village of L'Anse and the Village of Baraga, within the County of Baraga, which would raise in the first year an estimated \$798,901.58? (this is a RENEWAL of the millage proposal which will expire in 2026)”

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve to place an advertisement with the Baraga County Lake Trout Festival in the amount of \$200.00. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Commissioner Niemela discussed the Materials Management Planning meeting he attended. There \$28,000.00 in grant funds available for the County to spend. The question is what are the allowable expenses.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- BCMH – Board of Trustees, Minutes

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to adopt the following Resolution Supporting State Legislature Action for Fiscal Accountability and local Zoning Authority:

WHEREAS, State Representative Jimmie Wilson Jr. has introduced House Bill 5362 to rescind a \$100 million state grant previously allocated to the University of Michigan for a high-performance computing facility in partnership with Los Alamos National Laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners recognizes that the University of Michigan is one of the wealthiest public institutions in the United States, and that taxpayer-funded site readiness grants should be prioritized for projects with clear, locally-negotiated community benefits rather than facilities exempt from local taxation; and

WHEREAS, serious concerns have been raised by local residents and officials within the University of Michigan area regarding the transparency of the project's scale, its proximity to residential areas, and its massive projected energy demand of 110 megawatts, nearly four times the power used by all households in the local township; and

WHEREAS, the University's current constitutional independence allows it to bypass local zoning ordinances, leaving municipalities with no legal mechanism to ensure that large-scale industrial projects adhere to community standards for noise, safety, and environmental protection; and

WHEREAS, Representative Wilson has proposed a Michigan Constitutional Amendment that would require state universities to comply with local zoning and public planning processes for non-academic industrial developments;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners formally supports House Bill 5362 and the "clawback" of the \$100 million grant, urging that these funds be reallocated to urgent community infrastructure needs;

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports the proposed Constitutional Amendment to restore local planning authority, ensuring that large-scale university developments are subject to the same public scrutiny and zoning requirements as any other industrial developer;

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Michigan, the Baraga County's state legislative delegation, and other Counties as a communication.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Catherine Andrews asked who is responsible for the installation of the camera at the Fall's River Bridge on U.S. 41 and what its purpose is.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the County Board, Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to adjourn the meeting until Monday, May 11, 2026. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Brad Dakota, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk