

BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2024

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Eilola called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, June 10, 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, and Chad Cichosz, District 5.

Absent: William Menge, District 4.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on May 13, 2024. On Voice Vote, the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Comment offered.

TREASURERS REPORT:

As presented by Treasurer, Jill C Tollefson.

REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for May 2024 (\$1,120.00). 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 May 14, 2024 through June 10, 2024 in the amount of \$49,986.71. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of May 14, 2024 through June 10, 2024 in the amount of \$726,680.18. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Checking Account expenditures for May 2024 in the amount of \$21,881.74. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to table the KBIC appointment to the Baraga County Veterans' Affairs Committee. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS:

Commissioner Dakota made a motion to take \$63,071.00 from the LATCF to deposit in the County's MERS Retiree Health Funding Vehicle for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) to meet the requirements of GASB 75. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to table the decision on proposals from Payne & Dolan (\$79,200.00) and Bacco (\$80,000.00) to remove and replace the current asphalt pavement at the Baraga County Sheriff's Department until additional information can be collected. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to support the UPSET West program administered through the Copper Shores Community Health Foundation by committing \$5,000.00 from the General Fund annually. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Cichosz made a motion supported by Commissioner Kent to approve the interlocal agreement with Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Ontonagon Counties and Western UP Planning and Development Region Commission to create a Multicounty Materials Management Planning Committee. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the business membership with the Baraga County Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$175.00. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to approve the following resolutions approving Letters of Understanding with the Sheriff Deputies and Corrections Officers unions:

WHEREAS the Employer and the Union are parties to a collective bargaining agreement with an effective date of October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2025 (hereinafter "CBA").

WHEREAS Article 38 of the CBA is entitled VACATION and provides for accrual of paid vacation days.

WHEREAS, Article 39 of the CBA is entitled VACATION PERIOD and outlines the scheduling and use of paid vacation days.

WHEREAS, Article 40 of the CBA is entitled PAY ADVANCE and outlines the form of payment and rates of pay for paid vacation days.

WHEREAS, Articles 38, 39 and 40 of the CBA do not define the term “day” for vacation purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, the EMPLOYER and UNION agree as follows:

1. For vacation accrual, use, and payment purposes, the term “day” is defined as and understood to mean the number of hours a bargaining unit employee works in a regularly-scheduled shift.
2. The remainder of the CBA remains unchanged and in effect.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

No reports were offered.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Baraga County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees, Minutes
State Tax Commission, 2024 Report

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Cichosz to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners believes that it is desirable to provide for the future of public transportation available to residents by continuing state support for this purpose; and,

WHEREAS, the Michigan Constitution of 1963 provides for this purpose; and,

WHEREAS, the State Legislature, by statute, has determined that state support for non-urban transit agencies may be 60% of their annual eligible expenses (50% for urban agencies); and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports restoring funding for public transit authorities in Michigan’s FY25 budget.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the federal Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy does not allow county jail inmates or juvenile detainees to receive Medicaid benefits while incarcerated; and,

WHEREAS, counties are responsible for the healthcare costs of uninsured youth and adult detainees; and

WHEREAS, Governor Whitmer's FY25 Budget recommendation includes funding to cover healthcare costs for prisoners, county jail inmates, and juveniles in detention for 90 days before release; and,

WHEREAS, we encourage the legislature to support a budget including the aforementioned funding; and,

WHEREAS, we also encourage the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to apply for a Federal Section 1115 Re-entry waiver, exempting Michigan from the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy and allowing Medicaid benefits to be reinstated for inmates; and

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports action by the legislature and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to provide funding to counties for uninsured inmates and progress toward reforming the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners supports Michigan's proposal for a Federal Section 1115 Re-entry Waiver.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Kent made a motion, supported by Commissioner Dakota to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2024, Governor Whitmer released her Executive Budget Recommendation for fiscal year 2025 which included under the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) recommended budget a \$1,000,000.00 cut to Michigan Conservation District's operating budget; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2025 budget recommendation for MDARD also recommended the termination of local Conservation District Technicians who administer the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program and replace them with 24 State employees; and

WHEREAS this recommendation undermines the local conservation delivery system led by local Conservation Districts covering all 83 Michigan counties using the voluntary, nonregulatory, educational approach used all across the country to address natural resources concerns at the local level; and

WHEREAS, Michigan passed Public Act 297 of 1937 to establish Conservation District's as local units of State Government to work with landowners in every county to address natural resource concerns driven by a five member publicly elected Board of Directors. These Boards establish conservation priorities based on their local needs and voluntarily work with landowners to address critical natural resource concerns, the only organization that can do this on private land with the trust of the landowner; and

WHEREAS, Michigan Conservation Districts have been critically underfunded for decades. This has left many Conservation Districts without staff to implement programs or provide assistance. Because of this, Michigan Conservation Districts experience high employee turnover which undermines the success of programs and the ability to administer assistance to the public; and

WHEREAS, Michigan cannot effectively allocate federal funds from the Inflation Reduction Act and Title II of the Farm Bill due to the lack of funding provided by the State of Michigan that can deliver Farm Bill dollars more effectively.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS requests that the FY 2025 budget maintain the operational budget for Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) at its current capacity with the local technicians employed by Conservations Districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County of Baraga implores that State of Michigan Legislature to properly fund Michigan Conservation Districts and work with MDARD and the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) to find or develop a restricted funding source to provide Conservation Districts with a yearly allocation of \$13,000,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be shared with Governor Gretchen Whitmer, State Senator Ed McBroom and Representative Jenn Hill as well as the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Director Tim Boring and Deputy Director Kathy Angerer, the Michigan Association of Counties and the clerks of the other 82 Michigan Counties.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

No Commissioner Comments were received.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Catherine Andrews updated the Board on the petition drive to initiate legislation to amend the clean & renewable energy and energy waste reduction act.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the County Board, Commissioner Dakota made a motion, supported by Commissioner Kent to adjourn the meeting until Monday, July 8, 2024. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Gale Eilola, Chairman

Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk