

**BARAGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**July 14, 2025**

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice-Chairman Kent called the Regular Meeting to order on Monday, July 14, 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:**

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, 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 Niemela to approve the minutes for the Regular meeting held on May 12, 2025 and the minutes from the Closed Sessions held on April 8, 2025 and May 12, 2025. On Voice Vote, the motion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – Agenda Items Only:**

Fran Whitman asked questions about the Child Care Budget Amendments and made a comment in regards to the cuts to the Federal Medicaid program.

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

As presented by Treasurer, Jill C Tollefson.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the following Special Revenue Budget Amendments (02-2025):

**BARAGA COUNTY**  
**BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

For the Fiscal Year Ending 09/30/2025

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

10% Admin Fee	292-000-588.00	\$	1,847.00
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Child Care Fund Chargeback                      292-000-686.00    \$   16,592.00

**SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS - EXPENDITURES**

Salary and Wages	292-662-703.00	\$	11,100.00
Social Security/Medicare	292-662-715.00	\$	850.00
Health Insurance	292-662-716.00	\$	1,074.00
HSA Expense	292-662-716.02	\$	2,450.00
Life Insurance	292-662-717.00	\$	50.00
Mers Pension	292-662-718.00	\$	665.00
IHC Operating Supplies	292-662-731.00	\$	1,000.00
IHC Non-Scheduled	292-662-804.00	\$	(4,950.00)
IHC Contractual	292-662-806.00	\$	7,200.00
IHC Incentives	292-662-960.00	\$	(1,000.00)

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\$ 18,439.00	\$ 18,439.00
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**REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:**

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the BCMH Trustee Per Diem for June 2025 (\$990.00). 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 June 10, 2025 through July 14, 2025 in the amount of \$97,463.13. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the payment of the Prepaid Bills and Trust and Agency Accounts for the period of June 10, 2025 through July 14, 2025 in the amount of \$310,475.98. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to approve the Sheriff's Dept. Checking Account expenditures for June 2025 in the amount of \$19,319.31. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

There was no unfinished business.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Representatives from FLOCK Safety attended via video conference to answer any questions or concerns regarding the License Plate Recognition camera system project that the Board is considering. Many questions were presented from the Board and the public. Commissioner Menge made a motion to table the issue; the motion died for lack of support. Further discussion took place. Commissioner Niemela made a motion,

supported by Commissioner DeLeon to table the issue until there was a full board present to vote. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

The Board was presented with two quotes for patrol vehicles: 2025 Ford Explorer, \$62,569.41 and 2026 Ford Interceptor, \$68,604.00. It was that an application for a Stone Garden grant will be submitted to pay for the vehicle. Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to approve the purchase of the 2025 Ford Explorer from Utilitac Equipment & Upfitting in the amount of \$62,569.41. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve 2025-2026 Business Membership with the Baraga County Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$175.00. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to approve the Materials Management Planning Grant Agreement with Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

#### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

No reports were presented.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- BCMH Board of Trustees, Minutes

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

Commissioner Niemela made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to adopt the following resolution:

#### **STATE DISASTER CONTINGENCY FUND GRANT RESOLUTION**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY the County of Baraga.**

WHEREAS, Baraga County, Michigan is a political subdivision within the State of Michigan with an official Emergency Operations plan in compliance with Section 19 of the Emergency Management Act, Act 390, Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

WHEREAS, Baraga County, sustained severe losses of major proportions brought on by the May 15, 2025 Flash Flood resulting in the following conditions flooding in the Baraga County Administrative Building.

WHEREAS, Baraga County certifies that the Baraga County Emergency Operations Plan was implemented at the onset of the disaster at May 15, 2025 and all applicable disaster relief forces identified therein were exhausted.

WHEREAS, as a direct result of the disaster, public damage and expenditures were extraordinary and place an unreasonably great financial burden on Baraga County totaling up to \$250,000.00.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Baraga County Board of Commissioners requests the Governor authorize a grant to the County of Baraga from the State Disaster Contingency Fund pursuant to Section 19, Act 390, Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

FURTHERMORE, Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk is authorized to execute for and on behalf of Baraga County the application for financial assistance and to provide to the State any information required for that purpose.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

No action was taken on a resolution to support bringing Amtrak to the U.P. of Michigan.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner DeLeon to adopt the following resolution:

**OPPOSING THE MICHIGAN DHHS' PLAN TO IMPLEMENT A  
COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR PREPAID  
INPATIENT HEALTH PLANS**

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan currently operates a publicly managed and community-based system for the delivery of specialty behavioral health services through 10 Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs), which are responsible for managing Medicaid mental health, developmental disability, and substance use disorder services; and

WHEREAS, the current PIHP system has consistently demonstrated value, local accountability, and community engagement, while successfully managing costs and improving health outcomes for vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recently announced plans to initiate a competitive procurement process for the management of PIHP functions, which may open the door to private, non-profit health plans or managed care organizations (MCOs) assuming control over behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, such privatization could disrupt longstanding relationships between local mental health authorities, providers, and the communities they serve, and jeopardize the person-centered, recovery-oriented approach that has been cultivated under the public system; and

WHEREAS, many stakeholders, including individuals receiving services, advocates, local officials, and providers have expressed significant concerns about the potential impact of a competitive procurement process on care quality, access, local control, and transparency; and

WHEREAS, counties across Michigan have historically played a vital role in the governance, funding, and oversight of the public behavioral health system, and any change to that structure without meaningful county input undermines the principle of local governance; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a publicly accountable and locally governed behavioral health system is essential to ensuring that individuals with mental health and substance use needs receive timely, appropriate, and high-quality care.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the [County Name] Board of Commissioners formally opposes the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS) plan to implement a competitive procurement process for Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board urges Governor Whitmer, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Michigan Legislature to halt any plans for privatization and instead work collaboratively with counties, PIHPs, Community Mental Health Services Programs (CMHSPs), service users, and other stakeholders to strengthen and improve the public behavioral health system, by only allowing public organizations with experience in managing Michigan's public mental health system to be part of any bid process should one occur; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Whitmer, MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel, members of the Michigan Legislature representing Baraga County, and the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC).

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner DeLeon made a motion, supported by Commissioner Menge to adopt the following resolution:

**URGING ACTION TO OPPOSE PROPOSED CUTS TO MEDICAID  
BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

WHEREAS, the Baraga County Board of Commissioners recognizes that Michigan's public mental health system is facing a serious and escalating funding crisis, driven by several compounding factors, including the loss of Medicaid-covered lives, inflationary pressures, increasing demand for services, and expanding regulatory burdens; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan public mental health system funding increases for core behavioral health and intellectual/developmental disability services have not kept pace with medical inflation and have in fact, recognized flat funding for the last five years, while medical inflation has increased by over 10% and Medicaid expenses have increased by nearly 25%; and

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has lost nearly 700,000 Medicaid beneficiaries since the end of the Public Health Emergency (PHE), resulting in reduced capitation payments to CMHSPs despite continued or increasing demand for mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the proposed cuts to Medicaid would force impossible choices including-shrinking access to care, shifting costs onto the state budget and to local providers and threatening the coverage of people with disabilities who require daily support; and

WHEREAS, additional factors exacerbating this crisis include skyrocketing inpatient psychiatric and residential costs, AND Misclassification of Medicaid eligibility groups resulting in lost revenue; and

WHEREAS, failure to adequately fund the public behavioral health system undermines the ability of CMHSPs and the State of Michigan to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents-including children, adults with serious mental illness, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and those with substance use disorders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners urgently calls on the United States Legislature, and the President to:

1. Fully allocate Medicaid behavioral health funds to the State of Michigan in fiscal year 2025 and beyond.
2. Forego propose reductions to Medicaid through; Shifting to block grants, Per Capita Caps, reducing Medicaid expansion, or other suggested means of reducing the federal share for Medicaid spending which would transfer the financial burden to the state of Michigan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to local and state members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the U.S. legislature and the Michigan Association of Counties.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Menge made a motion, supported by Commissioner Niemela to adopt the following resolution:

**U.P. AREA AGENCY ON AGING  
2026 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY**

WHEREAS, UPCAP, which serves as the U.P. Area Agency on Aging, is responsible for developing the 2026 Annual Implementation Plan for fiscal year 2026, which outlines the funding, coordination, and delivery of services to older adults throughout the Upper Peninsula; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with state and federal requirements, the planning process for the Annual Implementation Plan included one public hearing and the solicitation of input from service providers, older adults, county officials, human service agencies, and other community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, each of the 15 counties in the Upper Peninsula is represented by a designated county official serving on the UPCAP Board of Commissioners, ensuring that local perspectives and needs are considered in the planning process; and

WHEREAS, the UPCAP Board of Directors has unanimously reviewed and approved the proposed 2026 Annual Implementation Plan as a continuation of the FY2023–2026 Multi-Year Area Plan for services to the elderly; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baraga County Board of Commissioners acknowledges receipt of and hereby supports the U.P. Area Agency on Aging 2026 Annual Implementation Plan for Services to the Elderly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be submitted to UPCAP and placed on file for record-keeping and compliance purposes.

On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

**COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Niemela stated his concerns regarding the FLOCK Safety LPR program. He also stated his support for Sheriff Brogan. He noted his opposition to the LPR program is not against Sheriff Brogan and his department.

Commissioner DeLeon said maybe the LPR program should be tried with a short contract, especially if we have grant funds to pay for it.

Commissioner Menge is very concerned about the amount CFR lands in Baraga County owned by foreign entities.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Al Punser said he likes the idea of a public hearing. He has concerns over the FLOCK Safety LPR program.

Catherine Andrews stated her support for Sheriff Brogan and his Department but commented on her opposition to the FLOCK Safety LPR program stating privacy issues.

Robbie Schultz offered comments on the FLOCK Safety LPR program.

**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 at approximately 6:58 p.m. On Voice Vote, the motion carried.

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Craig Kent, Vice-Chairman

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Wendy J. Goodreau, Clerk