



BARAGA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Our mission is to grow, enhance, and support a vibrant business climate through leadership, professional development, and community involvement.

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, September 9, 2026 - 8:45 AM

Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

Call Meeting to Order - President Debbie Stouffer called the meeting to order at 8:36 AM.

BCCC Mission Statement - The mission statement was read by Dianne Koskinen.

Roll Call -

- Board Present: Debbie Stouffer, Daniel Mares (remote), Jim Tolan, Danielle Reeves, Chris Davidson, Rhonda Nachtigall, Nathan Grave (remote), Stacy Froese
- Board Absent: Cody Mayer (absent), Burt Mason (excused)
- Staff Present: Mary Mervar, Dianne Koskinen

Guests and Visitors - Kevin Patana, Will Cronin

Consent Agenda -

Agenda 9/9/26, Minutes 8/12/26

Discussion: Additions to agenda - Action Item C. Board Member Appointment.

Action: A motion to approve the consent agenda with one addition was made by Stacy Froese, supported by Chris Davidson. Motion carried with all in favor.

Board Training - Strategic Planning (see discussion item E)..

Support Staff Report -

- Dianne: Presented Chamber Checks In and thank you letter from Kaleidoscope..
- Mary: Gave update on ATV ride and presented the Kaldeco Calendar asking for 2027-2028 events to be listed..

Action Items -

A. Board Member Resignation - Cody Mayer

Discussion: Dianne read Cody's letter of resignation.

Action: Motion by Rhonda Nachtigall to accept Cody Mayer's resignation with regrets, supported by Stacy Froese. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Request for Donation - KBIC Domestic Violence Walk

Discussion: The Chamber donated \$100 to this Chamber member event in 2025..

Action: Motion by Rhonda Nachtigall to donate \$100 to the KBIC Domestic Violence Walk, supported by Jim Tolan. Motion carried with all in favor.

C. Board Member Appointment - Kevin Patana

Discussion: Kevin Patana of Silver River Bakery is seeking a board of directors position. The term to be filled will be up for renewal in February 2027.

Action: Motion by Dan Mares to appoint Kevin Patana to the Baraga County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, supported by Danielle Reeves. Motion carried with all in favor.

Discussion Items -

- A. Quick Books fees - Dianne presented the available QuickBooks tier options and will review whether a non-profit subscription is available before the next meeting. Board consensus is to keep the current subscription in place.
- B. Baraga Bucks - The CVB is discontinuing the Baraga Bucks program. Dianne presented research on potential Chamber-run replacements. Options reviewed included:
- **Keweenaw Cash** — A successful paper-check program operated by the Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce, redeemable at participating businesses.
 - **Love on Local** — A plastic debit-card model formerly used in Marquette County; discontinued due to provider issues and low consumer participation.
 - **Giverrang** — A customizable plastic-card system offering attractive features and low effort to the Chamber, but requiring fees for consumers, merchants, and the Chamber.
 - **Custom Debit Card** -- A VISA-style debit card requiring substantial upfront Chamber funding to load the cards, activation fees for each card, and standard credit-card processing fees charged to merchants when the cards are redeemed.
- Board consensus favored launching a **paper check program** as the most practical and cost-effective option. Dianne and Mary will begin implementation immediately.
- C. Follow up on reaching out to other chambers - Dianne met with Zach Hutula (Iron County Economic Chamber Alliance) and Kathy Reynolds (Munising Chamber of Commerce) to discuss best practices. Both Zach and Kathy noted that combining Chamber operations with tourism departments has worked well in their regions, primarily because it reduces duplication of efforts and eliminates duplicate membership fees across multiple organizations. Hutula offered to attend a future Chamber meeting to explain how their structure functions in Iron County. Neither chamber currently celebrates member business anniversaries. Their advertising efforts focus on county guides, with promotional paper placemats placed in most local restaurants.
- D. Advertising - The L'Anse Sentinel has not responded to Dianne's proposal for a monthly Chamber Chat column. No additional progress has been made on advertising initiatives. The topic will be referred to the PLAN Committee for further exploration.
- E. Strategic planning - Will Cronin from MSU Extension assisted the Board of Directors with strategic planning. He presented and discussed the survey results, highlighting key themes, what is working well, existing challenges, and potential action items. Cronin guided the board through the SMART goals process, resulting in the development of three initial SMART goals (with the option to add more). The goals focused on:
1. Community investment
 2. Workforce and staffing
 3. Membership growth
 4. Board development

Committees Updates -

- **Next Gen** - no report.
- **PLAN** - see notes in the board packet.
- **Membership** - Dianne shared the breakdown of paid versus unpaid memberships along with a list of outstanding businesses.

Announcements / Members' Good News -

- Brandon Adolph (SBA) will visit Massie Manufacturing from 1:50–2:30 PM and Peninsula Powder Coating from 2:40–3:35 PM on Tuesday, September 22, 2026. Rhonda Nachtigall will accompany Adolph during these member visits. Additional ASK SBA Town Hall sessions are scheduled for September 22 in Houghton and September 23 in Manistique.
- ATV Ride 10/3/26
- BCMH Lunch & Learn 9/21/26

Next Meeting - The next BCCC board meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 14, 2026, in the Chamber conference room. Closed session at 8:30 AM. Open session at 8:45 AM..

Adjournment -

Action: A motion to adjourn at 10:29 AM was made by Jim Tolan, supported by Chris Davidson. The motion carried with all in favor.