

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
2/3/2026

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the February 3, 2026 meeting of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority Board to order at 10:31 a.m.

II. Roll Call was taken:

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Lynda Garlitz, and Brandon Wheeler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Middlestead (excused), Joe Henne (excused)

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

Those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

IV. Agenda: Discussion. It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve agenda with addition to add "Resolution Honoring Scott Lazarz Retirement from EUPTA" under New Business; Item 2
--	---

V. Public Comment:

- None

VI. Minutes: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the January 13, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
--	--

VII. Closed Minutes: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the January 13, 2026 Closed Meeting Minutes as presented.
--	---

VIII. Special Meeting Minutes: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve the January 27, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes as presented.
--	--

IX. Finance Director Report:

- Ms. Gordon fielded questions on the A/P and EFT transfers for December 2025.
- Bussing – There are four applications due to MDOT February 16, 2026. MDOT switched software program and because of this, they extended the deadlines. MDOT

has trained very little on the new program, so it has been a process navigating the applications.

- Ms. Gordon explained the Resolution of Intent FY2027 and the fact we are applying for next fiscal year. The resolution needs to be board approved. The resolution encompasses bus and ferry and it is for state and federal money. There was discussion on how the reconciliation process works. EUPTA was advanced operating funds for FYE 2025. Once MDOT reconciles the OAR reports, EUPTA either owes funds back to the State or the State will owe EUPTA. In FYE 2025 MDOT advanced more funds than was earned, therefore, we will owe the State back some money.
- Anderson and Tackman will attend the March meeting. They will be discussing adding in the State chart of accounts, and recommending we use account numbers on the financials. It does not affect the statements at all.-GASB 101 is new this year, which is in regards to accumulated sick leave. There will be adjustment to financials statements due to this. This will fluctuate every year.
- Ms. Gordon discussed bussing and ferries. She reviewed the quarterly graphs. She pointed out the 56% increase in fare revenue in December for bussing and the fact it is up 51% for the 1st quarter. Luce revenue is down, due to only one driver at this time. We continue to search for another driver for the second vehicle. NEMT has been extremely busy with appointments. We are often maxed out of vehicles and employees. The procurement and solicitation for the board approved vehicle were sent out for bids. They are due next Thursday.
- The ferry revenue was up 6% in December and up 5% in the first quarter. The income statement shows a deficit due to the fact that winter is slowest time for traffic and expenses remain the same. Ms. Gordon reviewed the graphs for each island.

- FYE2027 Resolution of Intent: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the FY2027 Resolution of Intent as presented.
--	---

- Finance Director's Report: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve December A/P and EFT Transfers, Financial statements, and Finance Director's Report as presented
--	--

X. Director's Report as sent via email to the board

- Drummond Islander V Design:

- i. SeaCraft Design, the Naval Architecture firm that we hired to design our new ferry boat is continuing to make progress towards final plans and specifications for the Drummond V. We have received our first glimpse of what she may look like in her final form. You should have a copy of the two preliminary plan sheets in front of you. What you see is a preliminary rendition of the scoping meeting we held with Seacraft a couple months ago. They have provided this initial plan for our review and comment. After reviewing these sheets, we had very few comments. Everything we discussed at the scoping meeting appears to be incorporated in this rendition. Seacraft will continue moving forward with design. We anticipate the design to take approximately one year to complete so just under a year now. All is progressing as anticipated with the design of our new boat.

- Drummond III Dry-Dock:

- i. The Certificate of Inspection (COI) inspection was conducted on the Drummond Islander III by the Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection USCG Sector Northern Great Lakes on 21 JAN 2026. A COI inspection is almost synonymous with our annually required Annual Inspection with the only difference being it is only conducted once every five (5) years and is a little more extensive of an inspection and requires demonstration of some training drills. So, we have a USCG inspection every year. Four (4) consecutive years we have an Annual then on the fifth year we have a more extensive COI inspection. Also worth noting the COI is a physical document that we must display in two places at all times on our vessels; one in the pilot house and one on deck or in the passenger cabins for the public to see. They need to be signed, dated and valid. We passed the inspection on a very cold January day and now have a backup boat in the water and ready to respond in the case of a disabling mechanical breakdown to one of our other vessels. This is comforting. We have a backup. As I mentioned at an early board meeting, the Drummond Islander III will remain at MCM, Marine in the Sault for the winter. There is still about 2-3 weeks remaining of painting work to complete after the weather breaks in the spring. Additionally, it will need to go into service at the Sugar Island Ferry operation as soon as possible in the spring so that the Sugar Islander can go into Dry-Dock for the season. I am anticipating the Sugar Islander to be out of commission all of the construction season and the DIII to be in service at Sugar during this time. Not only will the Sugar Islander be undergoing the routine work tasks but also a partial re-powering with a new main engine, genset and marine transmission being replaced. It will be a fairly extensive maintenance down.

- Legislative Update:
 - i. We were contacted by our Michigan Public Transit Association (MPTA) lobbyist recently informing us that there are some things happening legislatively in Lansing and there is a possibility of some large sums of funding that may be coming to the Office of Passenger Transportation (OPT). They asked that we be ready to come up with possible large-scale projects to utilize these funds. We will be submitting a new vessel for replacing the Sugar Islander II as a possible project. This is a very preliminary discussion and I would think odds are slim but on the other hand this is how things work in the state legislature. I call it "magic" money. There is nothing on the radar and then one day you get a call and MDOT Lansing says "get something pulled together, we have money we need to spend ASAP" .Again, I repeat, I wouldn't get too excited but there is a chance.
- Newberry Dial-a-Ride (DAR):
 - i. We are still running only one van and driver short in Newberry. We historically have run two vans and two drivers. We have secured a driver that will be able to fill the Saturday DAR obligations. The past month or so we have only been operating not only with one van but only M-F. Now at least we will be able to run six (6) days a week.
 - ii. We do have a couple interviews scheduled for 11 FEB 2026 in Newberry for filling the vacant position. We are keeping our fingers crossed.
- Miscellaneous:
 - i. We have been experiencing some complications due to ice at the Sugar Island Crossing. We have not had any delays or shut-downs yet but have been close. It is developing into quite the winter for ice formation. Neebish and Drummond have been doing fine so far. There is lots of winter left.
 - ii. We had an unscheduled fueling at Sugar today (Mon., 02 FEB 26) at 1000 hrs. With all the prop washing of the docks between runs and the difficulty running in ice, we have burned considerably more fuel.
 - iii. Scott Lazaraz, a captain at Drummond has now officially retired.

XI. Old Business

- Weather Policy 2.01: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve Weather Policy 2.01 with presented changes.
--	---

XII. New Business:

- Board Meeting Change of Date – September 2026. Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Change September 8, 2026 Meeting to September 1, 2026 to fix administrative error.
--	--

- Resolution #100 Honoring Scott Lazarz Retirement: Resolution #100 read by Finance Director Gordon: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve Resolution #100 as presented.
--	---------------------------------------

XIII. Board Comment:

- None

XIV. Adjourn: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote to:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Adjourn the meeting at 11:00 AM
--	---------------------------------



John Waltman, Board Chair



Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: 3/3/2026