

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority  
Board Meeting Minutes  
12/2/2025

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the December 2, 2025 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, Jeff Middlestead, Brandon Wheeler, and Joe Henne

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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 additions to Old Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Add Closed session After New Business above board comment</li><li>2. Move Policy to Old Business</li><li>3. Under Director Report – Add Bus Drivers</li></ol>
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V. Public Comment:

- None

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

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the November 4, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
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VII. Closed Minutes: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the November 4, 2025 Closed Meeting Minutes as presented.
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VIII. Finance Director Report:

- Ms. Gordon fielded questions on the A/P and EFT transfers for October 2025.
- Bussing – New bus from Gogebic and the new 2 new Equinoxes are working out well that have been added to the fleet. Auditors will be here tomorrow to begin field work. You will receive an email from them to the board members, this is a common procedure
- Bussing had a 46% increase and 99% is from NEMT contracts. Kathy has begun her mobility manager job. She is doing outreach in the community has part of the job.

She attended a Luce and Chippewa county health fairs. She will be meeting with VA in the near future. Ms. Gordon reviewed graphs. She discussed the NEMT and how well the program is doing. It is quite impressive. The board discussed other avenues of communication i.e. website, mailings, face to face meetings, referrals from other mobility managers.

- Ferries – increase in fares, vehicles and passengers comparable to the same as last year.
- Finance Director's Report: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

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

- Drummond V Naval Architect Update: Director Paramski, Captain Brad Kuusinen, and the mechanics met with naval architect, Mark Pudlo on November 25<sup>th</sup>. This was the initial brainstorming session regarding concept, engineering, and scoping. The team discussed size, drive, props, pilot house, etc. The team came to 100% agreement on a double ender. There may be some push back from the community, but this is the best option for EUPTA agency-wide. The worst ice conditions are at Neebish Island and the double ender is working well for the crew at that site. Discussed the overhead pilot house. They have requested there not be a tunnel for the new vessel. They will begin designing for the next step. The meeting was very productive.
- Drummond III Update: All steel work is completed and everything except for aesthetics and non-skid surface are finished. There is a list of things to do for it to be ready for an emergency, including fuel, sea trials, etc. Once this is satisfied, we will still need to do an annual inspection with USCG. The inspection is scheduled next week. MCM is going to moor the vessel for the winter with no charge. It will be ready for emergency. In the spring they will finish and then it will go to Sugar to fill in there while the Sugar is in Dry-Dock next summer. It will not need to come out of the water in the spring to complete the remaining work.
- Director Paramski discussed bus driver and NEMT driver wages. The bus and NEMT drivers are currently earning a wage comparable to fast food restaurants and this has been the same for the last three years. Director Paramski would like to raise the wage by \$2.00. Ms. Gordon gave a breakdown for the wages and the cost of the increase to EUPTA. Ms. Gordon discussed the fact that the drivers contribute considerably to the success of our NEMT program. This is a low-cost attempt to keep good people. There are 20 employees who would receive the increase. Their new rate is average but not high. All of our drivers are considered part time and do not receive benefits. Ms. Gordon discussed other agencies in the state and the fact that many of their employees are full-time and receive benefits. Director Paramski is not necessarily looking for a motion today. Chair Waltman stated the he felt a motion was plausible today. Trustee Henne stated he would like to see a larger bump to bring closed to other drivers in the area wages. Trustee Wheeler stated he

would like to see the recommended increase today and then revisit another increase in 6 months.

- Bus Driver Increase: Discussion; Trustee Middlestead suggested to inform the drivers in a festive way. It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Brandon Wheeler SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve \$2.00 per hour increase for bus and NEMT drivers beginning with the first pay period of January 2026 and revisit in six months for another potential bump.
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X. Old Business

- Overdraft Collection Policy: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve Overdraft Collection Policy as presented.
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XI. New Business:

- Closed Session: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve going into closed session regarding matters of personal privacy that are exempt from disclosure by state of federal law at 11:14 am
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- Open session: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

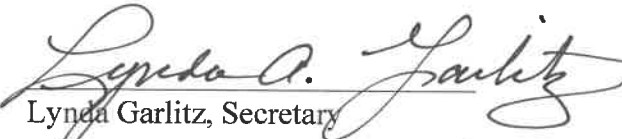
MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Approve to move to open session. 11:35
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XII. Board Comment:

- Jeff Middlestead
- Lynda Garlitz

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

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	Adjourn the meeting at 11:46 AM
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Lynda Garlitz, Secretary

  
Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: 11/13/2024