

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Session
September 11, 2025

The Chippewa County Board of Commissioners met at a regular session on Thursday, September 11, 2025, in the 91st District Courtroom.

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 4:29 P.M. with a quorum present. The meeting was also available via zoom. Chairman Martin had a moment of silence regarding the tragedy of Charlie Kirk. Commissioner Lieurance lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Commissioners Damon Lieurance, Justin Knepper, Scott Shackleton, James Traynor and Chairman Jim Martin

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator Kelly Church, Clerk Steven Woodgate, and 2 members of the public. 1 member of the public logged in via zoom.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Shackleton, to approve the agenda as written with the addition of Resolution 2025-21. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF COUNTY BOARD MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve the following minutes as presented:

- Regular Meeting – August 14, 2025

On a voice vote, the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE

It was moved by Commissioner Knepper, supported by Commissioner Shackleton, for the correspondence be acknowledged and forwarded to appropriate departments. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- County Clerk Steven Woodgate informed the board about withdrawing from the county early voting agreement.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Kelly Church provided for informational purposes only – *no action items*.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2025-18

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner Shackleton and supported by Commissioner Traynor.

**Conflict Resolution Day
Thursday, October 16, 2025,
Community Mediation Services
Proclamation 2025-18**

Whereas, conflict resolution helps people solve disputes and promotes a peaceful community;

Whereas, our citizens have the authority to resolve conflicts independently;

Whereas, conflict resolution empowers individuals, families, and organizations to communicate and find mutually acceptable solutions;

Whereas, Michigan's Community Dispute Resolution Act (Public Act 260 of 1988) established Community Dispute Resolution Centers statewide;

Whereas, the Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Office oversees sixteen such centers, which use trained volunteer mediators;

Whereas, *Community Mediation Services* serves Northern Michigan, with trained volunteers providing essential mediation services;

Whereas, these volunteers offer affordable, quality services that strengthen relationships and avoid costly litigation;

Whereas, Conflict Resolution Day, observed on the third Thursday in October, celebrates mediation and the work of volunteers;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners proclaims Thursday, October 16, 2025, as Conflict Resolution Day in Chippewa County, Michigan. We encourage all citizens to recognize and support conflict resolution through mediation and related services.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Commissioners Knepper, Lieurance, Shackleton, Traynor, and Chairman Martin

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-18 DECLARED ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2025-19

The following resolution was offered by Chairman Martin and supported by Commissioner Traynor.

R E S O L U T I O N 2 0 2 5 - 1 9

Resolution Supporting Michigan Senate Bills

293 and 294

WHEREAS, Senate Bills 293 and 294 would create an effective bond-or-forfeit process that would apply when an animal is seized due to a pending or active court case involving a violation of Michigan law prohibiting animal neglect (MCL 750.50) or cruelty (MCL 750.50b) by the animal's owner; and

WHEREAS, the inclusion of an effective bond-or-forfeit process in those statutes, which would require a defendant/owner charged with animal neglect or cruelty to forfeit the animals to the seizing agency or pay for the costs of the animal's care and housing with a bond, would benefit both animals and the people in Michigan; and

WHEREAS, the current bond-or-forfeit process applicable in cases of animal neglect or cruelty, creates a burden for seizing agencies such as Chippewa County Animal Control, as the one holding the animal, responsible for housing, food, veterinary care, and other costs as the animal is held for the duration of criminal proceedings; and

WHEREAS, without an effective process, animals continue to be victims and when they have to remain in a shelter for an extended period of time, it is not only detrimental to the animals, but to the staff and volunteers of the facility also; and

WHEREAS, precedent has been set in that the bond-or-forfeit process that is being proposed for MCL 750.50 and MCL 750.50b, is already included in MCL 750.49, Michigan's animal fighting statute; and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County Prosecutor Robert Stratton and Animal Shelter Manager Holly Henderson are asking the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners for a resolution of support for the Senate Bills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners support Senate Bills 293 and 294 that would create an effective bond-or-forfeit process for animals seized due to pending or active court cases involving violations of animal neglect or cruelty by the animal's owner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk shall forward copies of this resolution to the Governor of the State of Michigan, the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate, the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, all Michigan counties for their consideration and action and distribute to all County Clerks.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Commissioners Knepper, Lieurance, Shackleton, Traynor, and Chairman Martin

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-19 DECLARED ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2025-20

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner Knepper and supported by Commissioner Lieurance.

RESOLUTION 2025-20

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – ELIMINATE GEOGRAPHICAL DESIGNATION

Whereas the Chippewa County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) was established by the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners according to 1996 Public Act 381, as amended (“Act 381”) on September 8, 1997, under County Resolution 97-11;

Whereas at the time the BRA was created, Act 381 required a geographic area to be established over which the BRA would exercise its authority (the “Brownfield Zone”);

Whereas a Brownfield Zone was designated by the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners by its Resolution 97-11;

Whereas Act 381 was subsequently amended and its requirement limiting BRA authority to a particular geographic area or Brownfield Zone was rescinded;

Whereas the BRA may now exercise its authority over any property in Chippewa County, provided the municipality in which the property is located does not have its own BRA or opts to defer projects in that municipality to the Chippewa County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority;

Whereas the economic development tools authorized by Act 381 may be used by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to develop workforce housing, eliminate blight, clean up contaminated property, and improve communities throughout Chippewa County;

Therefore, the Chippewa County Commission rescinds its designation of a Brownfield Zone in its resolution 97-11 and authorizes any property in Chippewa County to be under the Chippewa County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority’s authority.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Commissioners Knepper, Lieurance, Shackleton, Traynor, and Chairman Martin

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-20 DECLARED ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2025-21

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner Shackleton and supported by Commissioner Knepper.

CHIPPEWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION # 2025-21

**OPPOSING HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' FY26 BUDGET CUTS TO COUNTY
REVENUE SHARING**

WHEREAS, counties are mandated by the State of Michigan to provide essential public services including courts, jails, elections, public health, public safety and human services; and
WHEREAS, unlike cities, villages and townships, counties do not receive constitutionally guaranteed revenue sharing and instead rely solely on statutory revenue sharing, leaving counties uniquely vulnerable to annual state budget decisions; and

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives' version of the Fiscal Year 2026 state budget proposes a \$34.9 million reduction in county statutory revenue sharing, wiping out the long-overdue progress made in FY25 to restore revenue sharing to sustainable levels; and

WHEREAS, the House plan, if enacted, would leave counties with just over \$256 million in statutory revenue sharing statewide, while constitutional revenue sharing for cities, villages and townships (CVTs) is set to reach \$1.1 billion, and when combined with statutory revenue sharing, CVTs would get \$1.4 billion; and

WHEREAS, the House plan shifts \$40 million into restricted sheriff funding with strings attached, requiring counties to maintain higher law enforcement funding levels, even as flexible revenue sharing is reduced, thereby further straining already-limited general funds; and

WHEREAS, public safety dollars directed exclusively to sheriffs are not equivalent to revenue sharing, since they cannot be used to support the wide range of mandated services counties must provide; and

WHEREAS, the Senate budget proposal provides just over \$320 million in county statutory revenue sharing, an increase of \$29.1 million over FY25, and includes \$60 million for public safety that can be allocated at the discretion of county boards of commissioners rather than bypassing them; and

WHEREAS, the Senate approach respects county governance, strengthens general fund flexibility, and better equips counties to meet their broad statutory responsibilities.

**Resolution #2025-21 OPPOSING HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' FY26 BUDGET
CUTS TO COUNTY REVENUE SHARING**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Chippewa County Board of Commissioners strongly urges the Michigan Legislature and governor to reject the House revenue sharing cuts and support the Senate's proposal to increase county revenue sharing and provide flexible funding for public safety needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, House Speaker Matt Hall and Chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.

Adopted this 11th day of September 2025

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Commissioners Knepper, Lieurance, Shackleton, Traynor, and Chairman Martin
NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-21 DECLARED ADOPTED

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

**FINANCE, CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 9, 2025**

AGENDA ITEMS

Health Department – Extended to 15-month Budget to end 12/31/2025, Equipment, Contracts and Travel

The Committee reviewed the proposed CCHD budget to extend their budget through 12/31/2025, the budget was broken down by Administration, Environmental Health, and Public Health; with combined revenues \$6,044,995 and expenditures totaling \$6,043,700. The Committee reviewed the personnel breakdown for wages and fringes; reviewed the IT equipment requests of \$7,200.00, travel requests, as well as the FY2025-2026 contract and agreements listing; which will authorize Health Officer Karen Senkus approval to sign. The Health Department allocation from the County would remain the same as the prior year at \$51,000.00. Discussion followed.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve the CCHD budget extension of three months to end 12/31/2025 as presented; including authorizing the Health Officer's signature on the various maintenance and support contracts, IT equipment, travel with the County allocation of \$51,000.00. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Health Department – Mission Statement, Organizational Chart, Annual Policy Review and Fee Schedules

The Committee reviewed the CCHD Mission Statement, the Organizational Chart, the Policy Manual Indexes for: Administrative, Financial, Human Resources, Clinical, HIPAA, BC3NP, Children's Special Health Care Services, Family Planning, Communicable Disease, Immunization, Sault Health Adolescent Care Center (SHACC), Maternal Infant Health Program, HIV Aids, Environmental Health, and WIC. The Committee next reviewed the various fee schedules including the CCHD's PFH, SHACC, and Environmental Health. It was noted that the SHACC and PFH fees are adjusted according to changes in insurance reimbursement or new vaccines, and there were slight changes in water sampling fees, due to increased cost at city lab.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the Chippewa County Health Department's Mission Statement, Organization Chart, the Policies, and the fee schedules as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED

Health Department – SHACC Lobby Furniture Purchase \$5,303.01

The Committee reviewed a purchase request for the SHACC renovation grant, to purchase new lobby furniture, which is student-friendly furniture, which is a bit more costly; these expenses are covered by the grant funds of \$5,303.01. Commissioner Knepper questioned if local businesses were contacted regarding this opportunity, which was confirmed by Health Officer Senkus that

the local businesses were contacted but did not have the type of furniture that was being looked for.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve and authorize the purchase of SHACC lobby furniture from schooloutfitters.com at a price not to exceed \$5,303.01, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

**Health Department – Billboard for Social Determinants of Health Grant/EUISD
Community Connections Promotion \$12,085.00**

The Committee reviewed quotes from Lamar to purchase billboards through the Social Determinants of Health Grant. The Health Department has been working with the EUPISD to update and expand a community information exchange 'EUP Connects/Community Connections', the project entail promotion of the website; the billboards will be run in Chippewa, Luce and Mackinac Counties for several months. Commissioners inquired about the length of the campaign and the billboards; the Family Planning advertising campaign was spoken about briefly.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve the billboard expense for Lamar at the cost of \$12,085.00 to promote the EUP Connects/Community Connections project through the Social Determinants of Health Grant. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Law Library (District Court) change to VLex Fastcase, Inc. to provide access to statutes, case law, and court rules public access - \$2,500.00

The Committee reviewed the quote from VLex Fastcase, Inc. to provide access to statutes, case law, and court rules for the County's public access computer annually for \$2,500.00.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve and authorize VLex Fastcase Inc. order to provide access to statutes, case law and court rules for the public access computer. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

50th Circuit Court - Drug Court contracts 10-1-2025 to 9-30-2026

The Committee reviewed contracts for the 50th Circuit Court Drug Court Forensic Fluids \$31.00/kit, \$22/sample and \$12/bag and Great Lakes Recovery Centers, Inc. \$20,040.00 for approval.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the 50th Circuit Drug Court contracts for 2025-2026 for Forensic Fluids and Great Lakes Recovery Centers, Inc. (\$20,040) fees as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

MIDC/Public Defender contracts – Legal Services Agreement (Conflict Attorney) 10-1-2025 to 9-30-2025

- **Alfred Feleppa, Brian Bloch, Chad Peltier, Noah Nightingale, Jana Mathieu, Diane Kay-Hougaboom, and Craig Elhart**

Upon review, the Committee noted the increase in hourly rates of pay per the MIDC; \$130/hour for arraignments/misdemeanors, \$142.50/hour for felonies, \$155/hour for capital cases plus mileage at \$0.70/mile, or current federal mileage rate. The Committee approved the contracts as presented.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve and authorize the new Legal Services contracts starting October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, for MIDC Conflict Attorneys, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Information Systems – Bid Summary - LTO 9 Tape Library Backup System

The Committee reviewed the LTO 9 Tape Library bid summary from Information Systems; reviewing three bidders, the projected budget of \$15,000.00 not covering the cost and after reviewing the recommendation from Information Systems to decline the bids and re-write the specifications for a more budget friendly option.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to reject the bids received for the LTO 9 Tape Library and to rewrite and release a new RFQ. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Information Systems – Bid Summary - Domain, AD, Microsoft 365 & Email Migration

The Committee reviewed the eight bidding prices and notes, along with the notes and recommendations from Information Systems: to award the bid to Avalon Technologies including the G3 and F3 licensing. This migration plan is due to Microsoft forcing everyone to their subscriber-based 365 platform by discontinuing traditional box licensing.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the Information Systems Department to work with Avalon Technologies to not exceed the bid of \$78,618.42 including G3 & F3 licensing following recommendation of Brian Bartlett as he works on the Statement of Work. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Administration – Audit Quote

The Committee reviewed a quote from Anderson Tackman and Company, PLC to complete the audits for FY2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 for the County including the Health Department at the price of \$40,000, \$42,000, \$44,000 and \$44,000 per year.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve the professional services agreement with Anderson, Tackman and Company, PLC to complete the County FY2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 audits at the price of \$40,000, \$42,000, \$44,000 and \$44,000 per year. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Administration – OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) Withdrawals

- **County - \$600,000.00**

- **EDC \$39,134.82**
- **Health Department - \$400,000.00**

The Committee was updated on the OPEB withdrawals for the County, EDC and Health Department to cover the cost of retiree health care for FY2025, noting the withdrawals will be made on 9/30/2025 following the advice of Morgan Stanley's Jessica Fitzgerald. The Committee briefly spoke about the significance of this first-time withdrawal and the prior insight that went into financially getting to this point.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve and authorize OPEB FY2025 withdrawals to cover retiree health care expenses for FY2025; withdrawals of \$600,000 for the County, \$39,134.82 for the EDC and \$400,000.00 for the Health Department, to be made on 9/30/2025. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Administration – Release Snowplowing and Removal RFQ's

The Committee was asked to authorize release of annual snowplowing and removal RFQ's for the County Building lot, Bingham Street parking, Animal Control and Sheriff's Storage/Training Building, and at Central Dispatch, and adding a three-year contract option.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to release the RFQ's for snowplowing and removal, adding a three-year contract option. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Finance - Claims and Accounts – August – County and Health Department

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to recommend the approval of August County bills and payroll: general claims \$392,843.67, other fund claims \$1,737,939.14, payroll \$618,340.46 and Health Department claims \$180,584.49 payroll \$153,283.99 total claims \$2,749,123.27; as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, for the meeting minutes of the Finance, Claims and Accounts Committee for September 9, 2025, be accepted and approved. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

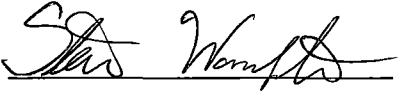
COMMISSIONER REPORT ON MEETINGS AS BOARD REPRESENTATIVES AND GENERAL COMMENTS

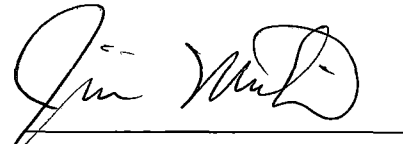
- Commissioner Knepper acknowledged the County Clerk's presentation and has previously spoke with the Clerk about the challenges the office faces. He was also wondering if the reason there was not a lot of participation in the meeting was because of the time change. He also mentioned the second opioid meeting is on Monday.
- Commissioner Shackleton asked how the early voting will work without the county involvement. He looks forward to finding out more about this.

- Commissioner Lieurance attended the prison meeting and they are looking for more employees. He also mentioned the new election law presents some challenges and is curious on how other counties are handling it.
- Chairman Martin stated early voting is an unfunded mandate. He also mentioned the city/county relationship has not been good and would like to restore the relationship. Discussion followed.
- Commissioner Traynor mentioned the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new EDC building in Kinross Friday at 11:00 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to adjourn, accordingly. On a voice vote, the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 6:15 P.M.


Steven Woodgate, Clerk


James Martin, Chairman