

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
Organizational Meeting
January 5, 2026

The Chippewa County Board of Commissioners met for their Organizational Meeting on Monday, January 5, 2026 in the 91st District Courtroom.

Chairman Jim Martin called the meeting to order at 4:32 P.M. with a quorum present. The meeting was also available via zoom. Commissioner Shackleton lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator Kelly Church, Clerk Steven Woodgate, Administrative Assistant Cady Bauers and 1 member of the public. 19 members of the public logged in via zoom.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was moved by Commissioner Traynor, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to nominate Commissioner Shackleton for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Shackleton accepted the nomination. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Shackleton was declared Vice-Chairman for the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Traynor, supported by Commissioner Shackleton, to approve the agenda as stated. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF COUNTY BOARD MINUTES

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

- Regular Board Meeting – December 18, 2025
- Public Hearing Meeting – December 18, 2025

On a voice vote, the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, for the correspondence be acknowledged and forward as appropriate. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Phyllis Reed spoke about needing people on the EUPTA Board that Marshall17 work hard, and she spoke about problems with Neebish Island's ferry schedule. Lori Miller talked about EUPTA Board residency, what makes a good board member, and the need for representation for Neebish Island. Sarah Karasinski stated she strongly supports Leon Hank for the EUPTA Board member. Matt Keller, Mike O'Connor, and Emily Birknes spoke about the issues with the limited Neebish Island ferry schedule and endorsed Leon Hank for EUPTA Board member.

NEW BUSINESS

County Bylaws and Rule of Procedure

The Commission spoke about an issue regarding an applicant for the EUPTA Board who owns property on Neebish Island, but does not reside in Chippewa County. The application asks what district the applicant lives in, but does not state the applicant needs to be a resident. It is not clearly in the bylaws that an individual must be a resident of Chippewa County to be appointed on a board. Commissioner Shackleton does not believe non-residents should be appointed to any boards. He proposed to add in two places in the bylaws that an applicant must be a resident of Chippewa County to be considered for board appointments. Discussion followed.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, for approval the County policies and bylaws with the amendment that include board appointments be County residents. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Appointments to Various Boards, Committees, and Agencies

Department of Health & Human Services – One appointment to expire 10/31/2029

Current Member: Christine Curtis

Applicants: Christine Curtis

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, for a unanimous consent for Christine Curtis for the Department of Health and Human Services appointment. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Christine Curtis was re-appointed to the Department of Health & Human Services with a term to expire 10/31/2029.

Department of Veteran's Affairs – Two appointments, to expire 3/31/2030 and 3/31/2028

Current Member: Brooks Partridge

Resigned: Jim Shogren

Applicants: Brooks Partridge, David Pearce, Jacob Snyder, and James Williams

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

For appointment to expire 3/31/2030

Commissioner Knepper: Pass

Commissioner Lieurance: Brooks Partridge

Commissioner Shackleton: Brooks Partridge
Commissioner Traynor: Brooks Partridge
Chairman Martin: Brooks Partridge
Commissioner Knepper: Abstain

For appointment to expire 3/31/2028

Commissioner Knepper: David Pearce
Commissioner Lieurance: David Pearce
Commissioner Shackleton: David Pearce
Commissioner Traynor: David Pearce
Chairman Martin: David Pearce

Having received a majority vote, Brooks Partridge was re-appointed to the Department of Veteran's Affairs with a term to expire 3/31/2030 and David Pearce was appointed to the Department of Veteran's Affairs with a term to expire 3/31/2028.

Economic Development Corporation – Three appointments to expire 3/31/2030

Fill Vacancy: Jeff Hagen, Tim Ellis, and Brien Hanna
Applicants: Jeff Hagen, Tim Ellis, Brien Hanna and John Sawruk

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Commissioner Knepper: Jeff Hagan
Commissioner Lieurance: Jeff Hagan
Commissioner Shackleton: Jeff Hagan
Commissioner Traynor: Jeff Hagan
Chairman Martin: Jeff Hagan

Commissioner Knepper: Tim Ellis
Commissioner Lieurance: Tim Ellis
Commissioner Shackleton: Tim Ellis
Commissioner Traynor: Tim Ellis
Chairman Martin: Tim Ellis

Commissioner Knepper: Brien Hanna
Commissioner Lieurance: Brien Hanna
Commissioner Shackleton: Brien Hanna
Commissioner Traynor: Brien Hanna
Chairman Martin: Brien Hanna

After receiving a majority vote, Jeff Hagen, Tim Ellis, and Brien Hanna were re-appointed to the Economic Development Corporation with a term to expire 3/31/2030.

EUP Transportation Authority – One appointment to expire 12/31/2028

Current Member: Joseph Henne
Applicants: Leon Hank, Joseph Henne, and Burt Menard

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Commissioner Knepper:	Joseph Henne
Commissioner Lieurance:	Joseph Henne
Commissioner Shackleton:	Joseph Henne
Commissioner Traynor:	Burt Menard
Chairman Martin:	Joseph Henne

Having received a majority vote, Joseph Henne was re-appointed to the EUP Transportation Authority with a term to expire 12/31/2028.

Regional Planning – One appointment to expire 1/31/2028

Current Member:	Mark Eitrem
Applicants	Mark Eitrem

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, for a unanimous ballot for Mark Eitrem. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Mark Eitrem was re-appointed to Regional Planning with a term to expire 1/31/2028.

Hiawatha Behavior Health – Two appointments, to expire 3/31/2029 and 3/31/2027

Current Member:	Ronald Meister
Resigned:	Tara Trembley
Applicants:	Zara Masood, MD and Ronald Meister

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Appointment to expire 3/31/2029

Commissioner Knepper:	Ronald Meister
Commissioner Lieurance:	Ronald Meister
Commissioner Shackleton:	Ronald Meister
Commissioner Traynor:	Ronald Meister
Chairman Martin:	Ronald Meister

It was moved by Commissioner Knepper, supported by Commissioner Shackleton, for a unanimous appointment for Zara Masood, MD to the term to expire 3/31/2027. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Having received a majority vote, Ronald Meister was re-appointed to the Hiawatha Behavior Health with a term to expire 3/31/2029, and Zara Masood, MD was appointed to the Hiawatha Behavior Health with a term to expire 3/31/2027.

Substance Abuse Disorder Policy Board – One appointment to expire 7/30/2029

Current Member:	Damon Lieurance
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Applicants: Zara Masood, MD and Debbie Sirk

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Commissioner Knepper: Debbie Sirk
Commissioner Lieurance: Debbie Sirk
Commissioner Shackleton: Debbie Sirk
Commissioner Traynor: Debbie Sirk
Chairman Martin: Zara Masood, MD

Having received a majority vote, Debbie Sirk was appointed to the Substance Abuse Disorder Board with a term to expire 7/30/2029.

Meeting Schedule and Times and Holiday Schedule

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve the meeting schedules and times and holiday schedule as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Organization Chart

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Chairman Martin, to accept the Organization Chart as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Annual Policy Review

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to accept the policies as presented.

- Police Manual
- Policy 407 Jury Reimbursement
- Policy 410 Travel and Business Expenses
- Application of Interest

On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Approve December Claims and Accounts

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve the December claims and accounts for the County and Health Department. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

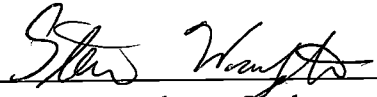
COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

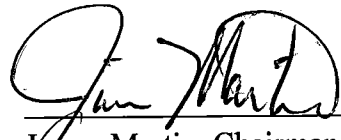
Commissioner Lieurance thanked everybody who applied for the board positions and wished there was a place for everybody who applied. Commissioner Shackleton said he is confident the commission votes for the person they think would do the best job for that position.

Commissioner Knepper mentioned it was more difficult than he thought in making the decision on who to vote for on the board positions. Chairman Martin agreed it is difficult in making a decision on who to vote for on the board positions.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Traynor to adjourn. The Board adjourned at 5:38 P.M.


Steven Woodgate, Clerk


James Martin, Chairman