

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
5/5/2026

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the May 5, 2026 meeting of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority Board to order at 10:34 a.m.

II. Roll Call was taken:

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Lynda Garlitz, and Joe Henne,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Middlestead (excused), Brandon Wheeler (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: Joe Henne	Approve agenda with addition of Closed Meeting to discuss personnel after new business
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V. Public Comment:

- Leon Hank
- Bob Malpass
- Jim Traynor

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

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Approve the April 7, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
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VII. Finance Director Report:

- Ms. Gordon fielded questions regarding the A/P and EFT transfers for March 2026.
- Bussing – Rural fares have increased 19% for the month and are up 48% for year to date. The trend and growth over 5 years and has increased with the mobility manager position. Discussed the drivers we have employed and their dedication to the program to drive people to appointments. The number of customers is extraordinary. We took possession of two of the three busses that were ordered in January. The busses that arrived do not have a lift; the third bus does have a lift. We will be disposing of two busses; one the transmission has failed and would cost more to replace than it's worth. Both of the busses were purchased from other agencies. We have a grant for a SUV for NEMT, and are currently working on procurement and approval from MDOT. Once the approval is finalized, Ms. Gordon will solicit

dealerships for bids for another Equinox. Ms. Gordon reviewed and discussed the bussing graphs for Chippewa and Luce County.

- Ferries – This weekend is Jeep the Mac. They usually contact EUPTA regarding ferry passes for the participants. Apparently, they are not including a pass in registration and Jeep the Mac participants will be required to pay on own. We won't have a way to keep track of the increased traffic from this event, like we have in the past.
- March fares are down 13%. The ice issues at Sugar lasted a few days, therefore there were days of little or no revenue. The traffic was down, even when the ferry was running, as customers were hesitant to ride, in case of shutdowns. This created a significant decrease in fares and counts. We will see the same pattern in April due to ice issue at the Neebish crossing.
- Graphs are per island and show the difference in full fare vs commuter fares, as well as a breakdown of ticket categories. Ms. Gordon stated she did not anticipate a fuel surcharge any time soon. She will continue to monitor the prices of fuel. Today the price is \$5.75 per gallon. Ms. Gordon receives daily quotes (rack prices) on fuel. The current prices are the highest it has been in her 26-year tenure.
- Finance Director's Report: Discussion; It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Joe Henne
SECOND: Lynda Garlitz

Approve March A/P and EFT Transfers,
Financial statements, and Finance Director's
Report as presented

VIII. Director's Report

- Drummond Islander V Design: Director Paramski stated the Drummond Islander V design is going well. Director Paramski was hoping for updated drawings, but has not received any as of today. Mr. Paramski will email out the updated sheets, once he receives them. There has been some controversy on the design of Drummond V due to some individuals thought that they should have a say in what type of ferry will be built. The matter of the fact, is that they feel they have a say in the build, but the money was in the prior year's budget. The funding was provided to MDOT and then funneled to us from MDOT. The administrator of OPT used some of her discretionary funds to complete the balance of the \$15 million. She is ultimately responsible for funding our ferryboat. It was her decision. Chair Waltman stated that there is a group that hired a lobbyist to get funding from the legislature. The funding was in the budget before the lobbyist under a generic line item. Mr. Waltman stated that EUPTA has a duty to have a ferry for EUPTA that will work at all 3 docks. This is good use of public funds. Senator Damoose's office has all of the information and Director Paramski has met with and spoke to Senator DaMoose regarding this issue.

- Drummond Islander III Drydock: Very close to being done. We continue to hope for warmer weather so MCM can finalize the painting and other small projects and then send it to Drummond. Once it is completed, we will need to begin training and drills with Sugar crew, along with scheduling the annual inspection. The DIII will then be set for the season. Sugar Islander II is set to go to drydock in early June. MCM does have two projects to finish before the Sugar Ferry drydock.
- Neebish Island Ferry: Director Paramksi and Captain Calloway have conducted interviews and are excited about the new hires to fill out the staff at Neebish. We currently have one crew member on extended family leave at Neebish. We are fully staffed at Neebish. May 18th, 2026 is the tentative date of to begin the newly, expanded Neebish schedule. We are hoping to finalize and then release the schedule later this week.
- USACE Ice Meeting: Justin Proulx requested Director Paramski's presence for meeting the USACE Ice Meeting. A group was formed (CREEL) to analyze ice islands, and flow. The last ice study was in 1999-2000 and since then the causeway was added. The group analyzed the ice throughout the winter. They monitored the current and flow rate monitoring during that time. Director Paramski and Head Captain Phil Roy attended and felt it was very interesting and informative. The group will now to use data to propose changes to boom/islands, as they feel this will help mitigate the ice at that location. Infrastructure project may be rolled into the USACE project with no cost to EUPTA.
- The office assistant left last Friday and hoping to conclude interviews and hire the end of this week.

IX. Old Business

- None

X. New Business:

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

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Go into closed session to discuss personnel issue at 11:01 a.m.
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- Open session: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Leave closed session and go into open session at 11:26 a.m.
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- Personnel: Discussion; It was moved and carried by roll call vote:

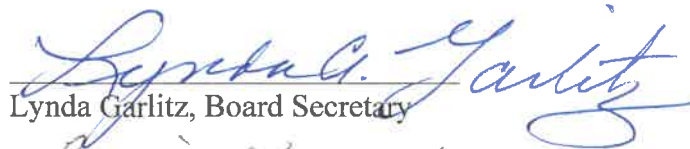
MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Approve the payment of a one-time discretionary stipend to staff members for exemplary performance of duties.
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XI. Board Comment:

- Lynda
- Joe

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

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Adjourn the meeting at 11:31 AM
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Lynda Garlitz, Board Secretary


Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: 6/2/2024