

A REGULAR MEETING of the Board of Chippewa County Road Commissioners was held in their offices located at 3949 S. Mackinac Trail, Sault Ste. Marie, MI on May 7, 2026.

Vice-Chairman Moser called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM

PRESENT: Commissioner Moser, Commissioner Sprague, Manager Laitinen, Office Manager Livermore, Foreman Johnston, Foreman Goodman, Fleet Manager Donajkowski, Foreman Johnson, Clerk McLean, Clerk Sillers, Union VP Besteman.

ABSENT: Chairman Gagnon, Engineer Boileau.

GUEST PRESENT: County Commissioner Jim Trayner and Rudyard Township Supervisor John Krentz

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to accept the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser that Payroll in the amount of \$198,787.42 and Vouchers in the amount of \$656,307.24 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

Office Manager Livermore noted payroll is significantly lower due to a decrease in overtime. This period reflects approximately 140 hours of overtime, whereas the prior periods have reflected 300+ hours of overtime due to prolonged winter weather.

It was also noted that this run of AP included a sizable refund of retiree health insurance premiums to a retiree due to an error and a payment to the State for projects from 2025. Manager Laitinen disclosed to the board that an authorization to procure gravel from Norris for emergency repairs became a miscommunication that led to an excessive amount being hauled, resulting in more than \$57,000 of gravel being purchased from Norris. Payment is included in this run. He noted a purchase of this size should have been put out to bid but wanted the board to be aware of the incident.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to approve the regular meeting minutes from April 23, 2026, and place them on file.

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

STAFF REPORTS

Office Manager Livermore

- Attended Straits Area Council meeting on Tuesday. It was reported that Neighborhood Road Funds (NRF) are currently being collected through Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and 24% wholesale tax on marijuana. The marijuana tax is currently being litigated and will be heard in the appellate court. CRA reported that all collected funds are being distributed and when all the off the tops are met Road Commissions will start seeing disbursements of the NRF. The on-going litigation of the pot tax will not affect the distribution of the funds, however if a higher court deems the tax unlawful, the road commissions could experience a future claw back of funds received. CRA reported that the legislature and treasury expressed confidence that while this is possible, it is unlikely.

Foreman Johnston

- Starting state highway shoulder work and tree removal.
- Grading county gravel roads.
- Crew on the by-pass road, removing the old road.

Foreman Goodman

- Replaced culverts on McLeod Road near Strongs. Crew did a good job.
- Winter equipment cleanup and road patching.

Foreman Johnson

- Cleaning up winter equipment.
- Dragging roads.
- Sweeping of intersections complete and sweeper sent on to next location.
- Had to close Springer Road due to excessive water on the road. It is the section with no residents.

Engineer Boileau

- No report.

Clerk Sillers

- Safety meeting completed and finishing up MSHA CPR.
- Working on state inventory next week.

Union Vice President Besteman

- Nothing new to report.

Clerk McLean

- Nothing new to report.

Fleet Manager Donajkowski

- Repairing winter equipment.
- Two of the new Western Star trucks delivered.
- Finishing the rebuild of one of the trucks.

MANAGER'S REPORT

- Thanked the crew and staff for putting together a successful spring safety meeting.
- Attended Straits Area Council. Good discussion with CRA regarding funding and the EPA letter and response from Congressman Bergman's office.
- Unit 648 was involved in an accident. The insurance carrier has determined it to be a total loss. We purchased the unit from the insurance company for \$450. The unit was a 2006 Peterbilt and insured using appreciation. We will receive approximately \$160,000 for the unit and plan to send it to Valley for a new frame and retain it in the fleet.
- Weight restrictions were removed from all paved roads on Monday. Restrictions still apply to gravel roads and permitting is being looked at case by case.
- Had a meeting with MDOT to review the non-winter budget items.
- State budget is out in both the House and the Senate. While the bottom line in each is similar, the line items are not. It is now with the conference committee.
- Spent part of yesterday looking at wetland banks with Holly Vickers from the Wetland Board.
- The M-129 Fletcher Creek project is scheduled to begin on Monday, May 18th. This will be a full-closure. during the bridge replacement with a burdensome detour. The closure will be just north of M-80 with the detour being M-80 to Gaines Highway and then to I-75. There is no projected end date for this project, and we expect it to be for most of the summer.
- Engineer Boileau is on Drummond Island working with the Quarry to identify a workaround for us to haul material for a project to the haul road. The autonomous vehicles working for the Quarry are programmed to stop all autonomous vehicles when an unexpected object is detected in the programmed path.

NEW BUSINESS

- a.) Bruce Township Road Agreement - Ridge Road between 6 Mile Road and 9 Mile Road. Township share \$423,000.

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to sign the Township Road Agreement with Bruce Township for Ridge Road.

MOTION CARRIED

- b.) RESOLUTION 2026-05 - Approval of Contract 26-5117 and authorization for Engineer Boileau to sign the contract.

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to approve RESOLUTION 2026-05.

MOTION CARRIED by UNANAMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE

- c.) Blade Bid Award - Manager Laitinen requested this item be tabled until the next meeting, requesting additional time to review specs.
- d.) Non-Duty Disability Determination - Manager Laitinen explained MERS sent notification that Brad Dumback has been deemed eligible for non-duty disability retirement benefits. CCRC can support this decision or appeal it. Manager Laitinen informed the board that Brad voluntarily terminated employment for health reasons earlier this year and recommended a response supporting this decision to be sent to MERS.

MOTION by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to authorize Office Manager Livermore to respond to the notification supporting the finding that Brad Dumback should receive disability retirement benefits.

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS

- NONE

County Commissioner's Comments

- Commissioner Traynor reported some parking lots need repair this year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Union Vice-President Besteman thanked the board for approving Brad's disability retirement.

ROAD COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Sprague voiced everything looks good.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 A.M

Bobbie Livermore
Clerk for the Board

Charles Moser
Vice-Chairman