

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Session

June 12, 2025

The Chippewa County Board of Commissioners met at a regular session on Thursday, June 12, 2025, in the 91st District Courtroom.

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 4:31 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 3 members of the public. 9 members of the public logged in via zoom.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve the agenda as presented. 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:

- Regular Board Meeting – May 15, 2025

Commissioner Knepper requested the word “not” be added to the last sentence of the Commissioner Report on Meetings as Board Representatives and General Comments where it should state “EUPTA Board is not elected by the citizens”.

It was moved by Commissioner Lieurance, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to accept the regular board meeting minutes of May 15, 2025 as amended. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE CLERK’S OFFICE

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to acknowledge correspondence received in Clerk’s Office and forward as appropriate. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Phylis Reed, President of Neebish Island Improvement Association, spoke about the part of the EUPTA Advisory Committee never being implemented.

Sara Karasinski stated since the County Commission has the responsibility to appoint EUPTA members, they also have the authority and responsibility to remove members when they are not following the EUPTA guidelines.

A man asked about where the opioid money is going and that there is more TCH in marijuana than ever before.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

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

OLD BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2025-08

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

Chippewa County RESOLUTION NO. 2025-08

Support Bringing Amtrak to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan

WHEREAS, The Chippewa County Board of Commissioners, the governing body for Chippewa County, Michigan, representing Chippewa County, including the city of Sault Ste Marie, the university community of Lake Superior State University, and citizens of Chippewa County, Michigan, as well as the growing Amish community of Chippewa County; and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County residents and visitors don't have access to the national transportation network, which limits economic development, greater access to quality healthcare, improved access to educational opportunities and better employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County is home to a major tourist destination, the Soo Locks, and also an international border community, which will provide additional passenger catchment for additional return on investment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners asks for access to the national transportation network for Chippewa County residents and visitors, and that we urge Amtrak (National Railroad Passenger Corporation), the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Rail, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WISDOT), as well as the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), to extend the Hiawatha train north of Milwaukee to the Upper peninsula of Michigan utilizing CN rail tracks and refurbished abandoned rail lines, to have stops in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan with St. Ignace, Michigan being the terminus of this route. Furthermore, it is recommended that trains arrive in Chicago at 9:30 AM, using Schedule 332, and the northbound schedule shall be Schedule 339, leaving Chicago at 5:08 PM.

This resolution shall be sent to the USDOT, Amtrak, MDOT, WISDOT, The Northwoods Rail Transit Commission, the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, and the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers. The Resolution shall also be sent to the governors of Michigan and Wisconsin, and U.S. Congressman Jack Bergman, and U.S. senators, Peters, Slotkin, and Johnson (WI). Furthermore, it shall be sent to Michigan legislative members, Wisconsin legislative members, and the Michigan Association of counties, for urgent approval support and quick service implementation.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

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

RESOLUTION 2025-08 DECLARED ADOPTED

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2025-09

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

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT INVESTMENT POLICY**

#2025-09

WHEREAS, Act No. 20 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1943, (MCL 129.91) as amended authorizes County Treasurer's to invest county surplus funds in certain specified investments; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners wishes to authorize the County Treasurer to invest surplus funds of the County in those investments permitted by MCL 129.91; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has, in accordance with MCL 129.95, adopted an Investment Policy, which gives the County Treasurer the authority to invest surplus funds; and

WHEREAS, Act No. 40 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1932 (MCL 129.12) as amended requires the Board of Commissioners to provide by resolution for the designation and deposit of public money coming into the possession of the County Treasurer, in one or more financial institutions in the proportion and manner as provided by the resolution,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners authorize the Chippewa County Treasurer to invest surplus funds of the County in accordance with applicable statutes as modified or restricted by the County's Investment Policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chippewa County Treasurer is authorized to deposit all public money coming into his or her possession in any financial institution per MCL 129.91.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-09 DECLARED ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2025-10

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

CHIPPEWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION # 25-10

**RESOLUTION IMPOSING 2025 PROPERTY TAX LEVY PURSUANT TO
MCL 211.24e, 211.34, 211.34d, 211.36, 211.37, and 211.44a, AND NOTICE OF
CERTIFICATION OF 2025 COUNTY TAX LEVY**

WHEREAS, CHIPPEWA County is authorized under the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, as amended, to levy and collect its allocated and voted property taxes; and

WHEREAS, the General Property Tax Act has been amended by Public Act 357 of 2004, being MCL 211.44a, to require each Michigan County to levy and collect its allocated millage in the summer; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Public Act 357 of 2005, 6.0861 mills, which is the County allocated millage, after application of the "Headlee" millage reduction fraction shall be levied and collected on July 1, 2025, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all other anticipated and authorized County operating millages, i.e., EMS millage of 0.4230 mill, Road millage of 0.9719 mill, Recycling Programs

millage of 0.4948 mill, Senior Programs millage of 0.7434 mill, and Animal Shelter millage of 0.1735 mill, after application of the “Headlee” and other applicable millage reduction fractions, will be levied and collected on December 1, 2025, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of each city, village, and township in CHIPPEWA County is directed to account for and deliver the County tax collections for 2025 in accordance with the provisions of statute pertaining to such collections; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution constitutes certification of the levy of the County millages as above described and as set forth on the attached 2025 TAX RATE REQUEST (L4029); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution will be delivered to the Treasurer of each City, Village and Township in CHIPPEWA County.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-10 DECLARED ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2025-11

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

Chippewa County

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-11

RESOLUTION TO EXECUTE OPIOID SETTLEMENT SPENDING

At a meeting of the County Board of the County of Chippewa (the “County”), Chippewa County, Michigan, held on June 12, 2025, located at Sault Ste. Marie, MI at 4:30 P.M.

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

WHEREAS, Chippewa County is the 41st most vulnerable county in Michigan related to substance use, with a rate of 15.5 overdose fatalities per 100,000 people, and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County participated and signed on in national litigation against manufacturers, distributors and pharmacies for their role in the opioid and overdose crisis; and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County is projected to receive \$1,689,836.78 over a total of eighteen (18) years, beginning in January 2023, because of litigation; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has the ability to file lawsuits for any forthcoming opioid-related settlements; and

WHEREAS, the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners held a public meeting to gather community voices related to community needs associated with the drug overdose crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Chippewa County Opioid Settlement Steering Committee (Steering Committee) has been created by the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners released a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process for opioid settlement funds; and

WHEREAS, there were three organizations who submitted proposals within the parameters of the RFP seeking opioid settlement funds; and

WHEREAS, the use of opioid settlement funds must meet certain requirements as outlined in Settlement Agreement Exhibit E and by the definition of opioid remediation as outlined in the settlement agreements; and

**RESOLUTION 2025-11 - RESOLUTION TO EXECUTE OPIOID SETTLEMENT
SPENDING**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED; the Chippewa County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the process to work with attorneys retained for purposes of opioid settlements to ensure allowability of activities outlined in submitted proposals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Chippewa County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the process of developing contracts for the allowable proposed services up to the \$90,000.00 limit set forth in the request for proposals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no funds will be distributed until the fully executed agreements have been received by Chippewa County.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION 2025-11 DECLARED ADOPTED

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE, CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES June 10, 2025

Approval of the Agenda

Public Comment

No public comments.

Correspondence and Informational Items

The Committee reviewed the County Treasurer's Investment reports, the VISA billing, and the travel requests. No action required.

AGENDA ITEMS

County – Audit Presentation and Approval FYE 12/31/2024

Ken Talsma from Anderson, Tackman and Company provided a presentation of the Chippewa County draft audit and financial statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024. The audit indicates that the financial statements and reports follow the government auditing standards and is classified as an unmodified opinion, a clean audit. There were no findings, and the Committee reviewed the various graphs presented.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve the Chippewa County Draft Audit FYE 12/31/2024 as presented but not to release until final approval of Administration, and to publish and release where necessary. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Health Department – 2024 Annual Report

The Committee reviewed the Health Department's 2024 Annual Report, which includes the mission statement, a breakdown of the various departments, their activities and services that were provided during 2024.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve and acknowledge receipt of the Chippewa County Health Department's 2024 Annual Report. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Health Department – Pink Ribbon Requests

Request #25-03 - \$897.79

The Committee reviewed Pink Ribbon reimbursement requests #25-03 for payment.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve and authorize Pink Ribbon request #25-03 for \$897.79, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Health Department – Grant Awards

Healthy Community Zones (HCZ) \$55,323.00 FY25 and up to \$175,825.60 for FY26

The Committee reviewed the Healthy Community Zones (HCZ) grant funding, which is for a 18-month period, April 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026 in the amount of \$55,323.00 for the first six-months and up to \$175,825.60 for FY2026, these funds will be utilized to establish partnerships between local farmers and clients receiving WIC and MIHP services to teach families to grow, harvest and prepare vegetables, funds will be used for the grant coordinator's time, the purchase of gardening supplies and stipends for farmers to work with the clients, this effort addresses food insecurity and nutritional deficits related to obesity within our region

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the Health Community Zones (HCZ) \$55,323.00 for FY25 and up to \$175,825.60 for FY26, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Health Department – Grant Awards

Superior Health Foundation (SHF) \$25,000.00

The Superior Health Foundation (SHF) grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 funding will be used to supplement nursing time in the Hepatitis C program as our award from MDHHS for this fiscal year had been reduced.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve and authorize the Superior Health Foundation (SHF) \$25,000.00 grant, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Prosecuting Attorney – Victims' Rights FY26 Funding \$92,895.00

General Grant \$90,380.00

Victim's Needs \$2,515

The Committee reviewed the estimates for the FY2026 Victim Rights Unit grant totaling \$92,895.00, which is the same amount as FY2025.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to authorize and approve acceptance of the FY26 Allocation for the Prosecutor's Victim Rights Unit Grant totaling \$92,895.00 (General grant \$90,380.00 and Victim Needs \$2,515.00), as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Central Dispatch – Notice of Receiving Bids – Generac 2000 Series 2001

The Committee reviewed the notice to receive bids for the Generac 2000 Series 2001 for release and advertising.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the release of the Notice of Receiving Bids for the Generac 2000 Series 2001 generator from Central Dispatch. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Veterans Affairs - MVAA Grant monies allocation

The Committee was asked to authorize the County Chairman's signature when necessary for the MVAA grant, to reallocate funds to different initiatives without prior approval to ensure that as much of the remaining funds are used as possible as the deadline to submit amendments is 6/30/2025 and all funds must be spent by 9/30/2025.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve and authorize Chairman Martin's signature for the MVAA grant amendments that are due by June 30, 2025, without prior approval of the Board of Commissioners. change, for the funds that need to be spent by September 30, 2025. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Sheriff's Office – Vehicles

Purchase two (2) Chevy Tahoe Police Package \$107,638.00, waive bidding per budget request

The Sheriff's Office during the FY2025 budget requested to purchase two (2) 2025 Chevy Tahoe Police Package patrol 4WD vehicles, directly from Berger Chevrolet, and to waive the County's purchasing policy, if the vehicle were available on the lot. The current price is \$53,819 per vehicle a total of \$107,638.00 from Berger Chevrolet Inc. and these vehicles are ready to purchase. The Committee spoke at length about the requests to waive the County Purchasing policy for equipment purchases.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve and authorize the purchase of two (2) Chevy Tahoe Police Package 4WD vehicles at the price of \$53,819 each from Berger Chevrolet Inc., to waive the County's Purchasing Policy, as requested by the Sheriff's Office, as these vehicles are available on the lot. Total cost \$107,638.00. Commissioner Knepper encouraged the Sheriff to do their upmost to give the local dealerships a chance to bid. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Sheriff's Office

Release Request for Quotation – 2025 Dodge Durango Police/Pursuit Package

The Committee reviewed the Request for Quotations for one (1) 2025 Dodge Durango Police/Pursuit Package AWD SUV.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to approve and authorize release of the Request for Quotation to purchase one (1) 2025 Dodge Durango Police/Pursuit package AWD SUV. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Sheriff's Office

Equipment Change from taser to Lenslock camera \$3,534.00

The Sheriff's Office is requesting to change an item from the FY2025 budgeted equipment, to purchase a new camera and storage system for the data from Lenslock at the cost of \$3,534.00, reducing the amount for tasers and equipment. This purchase falls in line with the Sheriff's Office future for the in-car-cameras.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve the equipment change to purchase the Lenslock camera and storage system at the cost of \$3,534.00, using the tasers and equipment dollars previously approved by the Board. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff's Storage Building parking lot expansion \$5,960.64 from Special Fund 232

The Committee reviewed a memo from the Sheriff's Office asking to use monies from Special Fund 232 to expand the Sheriff's Storage building parking lot, at the cost of \$5,960.64. This request is to help alleviate issues getting larger equipment in and out of building and add outdoor parking.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve the Sheriff's Office request to improve and expand the parking lot at the Sheriff's Storage Building at the cost of \$5,960.64, using funds from Fund 232. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Information Systems

Central Square Mobile CAD Testing Agreements

The Committee reviewed a request to authorize a Statement of Work between Chippewa County and five local agencies including the Sheriff's Office, City of SSM Fire and Police Departments, Kinross EMS and Sault Tribe Police Department to test the Central Square Mobile CAD (Computer-aided Design) first responder's software and tools. This arrangement will be able to provide the County with data to improve and eliminate bugs for the software before making it available to the full area serviced by Chippewa County Central Dispatch.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to approve and authorize the Central Square Mobile CAD Testing Agreements, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Treasurer's Office – Investment Policy (Bi-annual review – Resolution to Full Board)

No action was necessary as the Investment Policy will be voted on by resolution during Regular session; this is a bi-annual review with no changes this year.

Animal Shelter – Release Request for Proposals for Veterinary Services – No Proposals received

The Committee was notified that no proposals were received and the Shelter Manager Holly Henderson, will be checking into options.

91st District Court– Mental Health Court Grant Application \$127,071.14

The Committee reviewed the request from the 91st District Court Mental Health Program of \$127,071.14 from the State of Michigan; these amounts usually come back with lower amounts than requested; the courts then work with the coordinators to budget the funds for the program.

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Knepper, to approve the submittal of the 91st District Court – Mental Health Grant Program for \$127,071.14, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

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

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Lieurance, to recommend the approval of May County bills and payroll: general claims \$350,890.83, other fund claims \$455,776.19, payroll \$956,503.07 including the backpay from the MCL 45.421 correction, and Health Department claims \$184,721.13 and payroll \$140,913.07 total claims \$2,088,804.29 and to acknowledge the monthly financial reports received by email. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

Committee Comments

Commissioner Knepper wanted to thank everyone for the County's solid budget management in the years before he was a board member and spoke about investing the fund balance for critical projects, infrastructure, employees and reviewing the tax rates. Commissioner Martin agreed but urged caution, Commissioner Shackleton spoke about the annual revenue and expenses needing to remain balanced or the fund balance could be depleted quickly; noting the County also needs to pay enough to attract employees, mentioning the wage scale and labor contracts. Commissioner Lieurance wanted to make sure that the non-union personnel we not forgotten and need to be brought up to match the union; and to try and maintain long standing experienced personnel.

Chairman Comments

No additional comments were offered.

Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, accept and approve the Finance, Claims and Accounts Committee Meeting minutes. On a voice vote, the motion CARRIED.

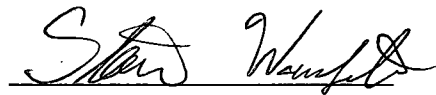
COMMISSIONER REPORT ON MEETINGS AS BOARD REPRESENTATIVES AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Lieurance mentioned he went to the prison liaison meeting and they are looking for help. He also mentioned the bitcoin situation in Dafer will be interesting on how it will turn out. Commissioner Knepper talked about the housing issue in the City, and he would like to see all the vacant houses in the City be operational again. Commissioner Shackleton stated the EUPTA Board in 2020 was totally dysfunctional and the Commission recalled the member and took him off the board. The Board now functions in a professional manner. The County Board appoints members to boards not to do what they tell them, but to do the best job they could do

using their own judgment. Commissioner Traynor stated Pickford Township is going to get a new cell tower northeast of the golf course. Chairman Martin said the County's resolution regarding the Neebish Island Ferry was sent to Lansing and is hoping the money will be coming from Lansing or Washington, D.C. He believes the EUPTA director will use the money as directed. Chairman Martin also stated the County Board selects the best people they can for the board member appointments. He also mentioned the opioid problem is real and the THC in marijuana has been doubling every decade. Chairman Martin also mentioned the County Commission previously passed a resolution not to have medical marijuana in the county, but the city and townships are the ones who can allow it.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Shackleton, supported by Commissioner Traynor, to adjourn, accordingly. On a voice vote, the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 5:22 P.M.


Steven Woodgate, Clerk

James Martin, Chairman