

Regular Meeting Minutes

Iron County Board of Commissioners

June 16, 2026

The regular meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. in the Road Commission office at 800 W. Franklin Street, Iron River, Michigan.

Chairman Schmidt led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting.

Present for the roll call were Chairman Ernie Schmidt and Chuck Battan, Jim Cihak, Dan Germic, and Ron Frailing. Also, present: Superintendent Brad Toivonen, Finance Director Michelle Johnson, HR-PR Administrator Emily Bieghler, Shop Foreman Duane Porier, County Commissioner Ean Bruette, Dave Graff, City of Crystal Falls Electrical Supervisor, Attorney Mark Tousignant, and Brian Schiavo, GEI. Members of the public present: Patti Leonoff and Ethan Amerson.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED

Moved by Commissioner Cihak, supported by Frailing, to approve the minutes of May 19, 2026, audit and regular meetings, with the addition of Commissioner Frailing to the audit committee minutes and a correction of Mike Smith to Dave Smith in the regular meeting minutes, under delegations.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

DISBURSEMENTS TO BE APPROVED

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| a. Payrolls of: | \$157,461.70 |
| b. Prepaid Claims of: | \$124,609.58 |
| c. Account Payables of: | \$221,462.22 |
| d. Total: | \$503,533.50 |

Moved by Commissioner Cihak, supported by Germic, to approve the Audit Committee Report dated May 31st, 2026, covering the above disbursements.

Roll call vote: Cihak, Germic, Frailing, Battan Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

Supt. Toivonen reviewed his report:

Building/Inventory:

Sand hauling bids were due and no bids were received.

Duane met with Joe Goriesky regarding putting generators in the shops capable of running the fuel tanks. We would start with Oss first, since they lose power more frequently.

Primary Roads:

Channing Rd. Overlay-both sections are complete, with the shouldering being done last week.

Homer Rd. (2029)-conversations with Enbridge are ongoing to get a cost share to make it an all season route.

Approximately \$42,000 worth of pavement markings have been completed across the county.

FHWA 2023 Spring Flood/ ER-MDOT does not allow for a transfer of funds from one project to another; overall savings on the six projects cannot be applied for additional work on one-Warner Mine Rd.

Local Roads:

The Little Finland and Forsberg Rd's gravel projects should begin in August or September. Rogers Ave. was completed last week. Tentatively attending the Hematite Twp. meeting in July to discuss the 2027 US 141 culvert replacements, and the possibility of close to \$600,000 worth of work and paving being done on the proposed detour. We are planning to do some culvert-replacements on the detour route this summer while doing some of the spring flood repairs.

Equipment:

The stainless-steel boxes are in and are being picked up from Green Bay today. An emissions exemption request letter was submitted by Rob Laitinen, Chippewa CRC, to Jack Bergman. It has since been turned into the PLOW Storms Act, requesting that road commission plow equipment be exempted from EPA regulations, similar to the military. This would allow reprogramming of the trucks to prevent engine shutdown when emission problems occur. This currently creates a lot of truck down time in the winter. The Act has been submitted to the Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Environment Legislative Hearing. Mike Phillips will be on site July 14th to hold a training session for pre-trip inspections. The John Deere grader that is for sale has been listed on the CRA website and a few other sites; no interest yet. We will start advertising for the sales of the CAT graders soon, so there will be a smoother transition once the lease on the second one is up. The new JD's have been delivered to McCoy.

Bridges:

The Idlewild Bridge project is moving along according to plan. Should be ready for letting this fall, but we are aiming for January/February 2027. A meeting to discuss the historical aspects of the Pentoga Rd. bridge is being held at the end of July.

2026 Flooding:

Ayres completed the scour critical bridge inspections at the end of May and did not find any new issues. The Maki Rd. bridge was able to be opened but needs to be observed as there was more scour evident than at the previous inspection. Governor Whitmer submitted the request for a Federal Emergency Declaration June 5th; it will be 60-90 days before we find out whether or not it was granted.

General/Misc:

A summary of the U.P. Road Builders' summer meeting was presented by Supt. Toivonen.

Trimedia was out to Urban Ave. to do sampling; only three of the wells were able to be located. Samples were submitted for testing. There is a chance we may need to redrill some of the destroyed wells for further sampling.

Fiber Optic- Brian Schiavo reported that recent restoration has been slow and not yet done at all in some places. Additionally, some of the crews were doing sloppy work. He emailed Highline, informing them that if improvements aren't made, further work will be slowed down. Permits are continuing to be submitted and are being approved by location.

Drain Commission-Monuments have been placed for the survey loop and the surveyor has begun shooting elevations at Sunset Lake. Still having beaver issues at Fortune Lake.

DELEGATIONS

County Commissioner Ean Bruette reported that the County is looking to partner with the Friends of Cooks Run and Forest Park School in stewardship of Cooks Run. Additionally, there are no plans to do any logging.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Equipment Committee: Commissioner Battan spoke to the McCoy rep at the Road Builders Conference last week about a reclaimer he had found for Ontonagon CRC. He requested more information and anticipated it costing around \$80,000. We could look at going to Ontonagon to see the one they have in action.

Parks and Recreation: Commissioner Germic reported that the Committee Officers were elected.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

CRYSTAL FALLS CITY-ELECTRICAL DEPT.

Dave Graff, Crystal Falls City Electrical Supervisor, presented a plan to move the overhead power lines over the Oss garage pit to underground, just outside of it.

Motion by Commissioner Battan, support from Germic, to authorize Supt. Brad Toivonen to work with the City of Crystal Falls electrical department in the relocation of the powerline.
Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

HAGERMAN LAKE RD. PH2 CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS TESTING PROPOSAL

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support from Cihak, to accept the proposal for construction materials testing on Hagerman Lake Rd. from Coleman Engineering in the amount of \$12,025.
Roll call vote: Ayes-Battan, Germic, Cihak, Frailing, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

BLADE BIDS

Roland Machinery submitted the low bid and was the recommendation of the Superintendent.
Motion by Commissioner Battan, support from Frailing, to award the bid to Roland Machinery, as submitted.
Roll call vote: Ayes-Cihak, Germic, Frailing, Battan, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

ADDITION OF TWO HEOP POSITIONS

Supt. Toivonen explained the Board has currently approved having eight HEOP positions at each garage and would like to increase it to nine. Interviews are scheduled for next week, and we have had more qualified applicants this month than we have in a very long time. This increase would allow us to potentially hire four operators at this time.

Motion by Commissioner Battan, support by Frailing, to approve increasing the number of heavy equipment operators to nine for each garage.
Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

POLICY NO. 23, AMENDMENT NO. 2

Finance Director Johnson summarized the second amendment to Policy 23, Road Abandonments, which was updated using guidelines and templates provided by MCRCSIP; it was previously supplied to the Policy Committee.

Motion by Commissioner Germic, support from Cihak, to approve Amendment No. 2, Policy No. 23.
Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

2026 BUDGET AMENDMENT #1

The amendments were presented by Finance Director Johnson.

Motion by Commissioner Cihak, support by Germic, to accept the amendments as presented.
Roll call vote: Ayes- Frailing, Battan, Germic, Cihak, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

USED PURCHASE: 2008 SWENSON V-BOX SPREADER

Motion by Commissioner Battan, support by Cihak, to approve the purchase of the used spreader from Wisconsin Surplus in the amount of \$13,530.
Roll call vote: Ayes- Germic, Battan, Frailing, Cihak, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: MDOT OVERHEAD CALCULATION FY2027

Following discussion, the following resolution was read by Finance Director Johnson and is included below.

Commissioner Frailing offered the following resolution which was supported by Commissioner Cihak and duly adopted:

WHEREAS, the BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF IRON, STATE OF MICHIGAN, elects the second option under Section 15.K of the MDOT Contract for overhead billing for FY 2027.

WHEREAS, the second option calculates the rate based on the Board's most recent Act 51 report data and the format provided in Appendix D of the MDOT contract.

WHEREAS, the calculated overhead rate under this option will not exceed 11% and the rate may be increased by one-half percent (1/2%) for small road tools.

WHEREAS, the Board's computation will be validated by MDOT and differences will be resolved by the Contract Administrator and the Region Engineer.

WHEREAS, this rate once determined and agreed to is a flat rate and not subject to review.

WHEREAS, written acceptance of the rate will be sent to the Board by the Region Engineer no later than September 30 of each fiscal year.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF IRON, STATE OF MICHIGAN hereby authorizes the change in the overhead election.

On a roll call vote: Ayes- Germic, Battan, Cihak, Frailing, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

UPDATE ON INVESTMENTS

Finance Director Johnson provided the Board with status of the MERS Defined Benefit Plan, OPEB, MERS Retiree Trust, as of end of year 2025 and the CD's and interest earned as of May 2026. She requested authorization to open a new 12-month CD, for \$250,000 with Multibank Securities as 4.05%.

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support by Battan, to authorize a new \$250,000 CD through Multibank Securities.

Roll call vote: Ayes- Germic, Cihak, Battan, Frailing Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

CRASIF-BOARD OF TRUSTEES BALLOT

Motion by Commissioner Germic, support by Cihak, to cast the vote for Tom Doty, Mackinac CRC.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

MCRCSIP-BOARD OF DIRECTORS BALLOT

Motion by Commissioner Germic, support by Cihak, to cast the vote for Brett Laughlin, Ottawa CRC.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL

2025 Act 51 report was submitted to Treasury 5-18-26. 5572's for Retirement and OPEB reporting were submitted to Treasury 5-21-26.

ATTORNEYS REPORT

Attorney Tousignant reported that he had worked with Brad on an issue with ownership questions on Osterlund Rd., referencing back to when it was relocated years ago.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

At 10:14 a.m. with no further business to come before the Board, it was motioned by Germic, supported by Cihak, to adjourn.

Ernie Schmidt, Chairman

Michelle Johnson, Clerk of the Board