

Regular Meeting Minutes

Iron County Board of Commissioners

January 13, 2026

The regular meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County was held on Tuesday, January 13, 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, Vice-Chairman Ron Frailing and Commissioners Chuck Battan, Jim Cihak and Dan Germic. Also, present: Superintendent/ Manager Brad Toivonen, Finance Director Michelle Johnson, HR-PR Administrator Emily Bieghler, Construction Foreman Dylan LaMay, Shop Foreman Duane Porier, Bates Twp. Supervisor Mike Stafford, Attorney Mark Tousignant, Brian Schiavo, GEI, and County Commissioner Ean Bruette. Members of the public present: Patti Leonoff. Mastodon Twp. Trustee Dave Smith arrived later in the meeting.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Battan requested the addition of 11. E- Truck Bids.

Motion by Commissioner Cihak, support by Germic, to accept the agenda with the requested addition.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED

Moved by Commissioner Battan, supported by Germic, to approve the minutes of December 9, 2025, audit and regular meetings, the special meeting held December 29, 2025, and the reorganizational meeting of January 5, 2026.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

DISBURSEMENTS TO BE APPROVED

a. Payrolls of:	\$289,772.42
b. Prepaid Claims of:	\$425,723.60
c. Account Payables of:	\$293,518.25
d. Total:	\$1,009,014.27

Moved by Commissioner Frailing, supported by Cihak, to approve the Audit Committee Report dated December 31st, 2025, covering the above disbursements.

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

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

Supt. Toivonen reviewed his report:

Today marks the five-year anniversary of the death of employee Larry Leonarduzzi.

Building/Inventory:

On 12/29/25, the board approved having Brock Van Oss provide a forest management plan for road commission owned properties. While it is thought the road commission owns 280 acres, further research needs to be done to determine what the County of Iron vs. the Iron County Road Commission has ownership of, and it may be beneficial to have a title abstract company perform the title work. Maybe the County would be interested in sharing the cost.

450 of the 500 tons of 12/29 salt order were delivered to the Iron River garage. Another order has since been requested through MDOT, but the docks are having difficulty keeping up with the demand after the storms we had. In researching the use of pre-wetting salt and pretreating roads, none of the U.P. counties pretreat roads and only two of the 15 pretreat. Of the two, one of them will be discontinuing usage.

Preliminary plans for the Iron River salt shed were received, but there are some items that need revision after

an initial review, such as location in relation to the fencing at the fair ground property and the 10' paved perimeter is missing from the drawings.

Primary Roads:

CR 424 PH 9/ Hagerman Lk. Rd. PH 3 (2027)- Applications for the MDOT Federal Aid exchanges for 2027 were submitted on January 6th. This is a 90% buyout program.

Homer Rd and Iron Lake Rd-Sunset Cr. EGLE permits have been sent out for public notice.

The 2025-2028 Transportation Asset Management Plan submitted in December was approved on January 7th.

Local Roads:

Bid documents for 2026 projects will be put together next week.

A couple more gates on county roads have come to light on two stub roads off East Camp Gibbs Rd. that will need to be addressed. Commissioner Frailing recommended that the road commission take them down, as recommended by MCRCSIP. Brad will do further investigation; because they are seasonal roads, they are not currently plowed and pulling them at this time would be difficult.

Fleet / Equipment:

Bids for a new pickup went into the paper and bid specs were sent out Jan. 12. Bids are due Jan 28th.

The two new John Deere graders are built; one is complete and the second is having the wing installed this week. We are hoping for delivery the week of January 26th.

Action Traffic has some nice portable traffic signals that Dylan had looked into; may do a lease purchase.

The GPS/ cameras in the trucks have recently caught a few close calls caused by the erratic driving by the public.

Employment Items:

One of the Crystal Falls HEOP's put in notice of retirement, tentatively November 2026. The Mechanic posting is live on Indeed and we have received several applications that we will begin to review this week.

Bridges:

The new Neighborhood Roads Funding includes \$100 million of the top to be added to the existing Local Bridge Program. Extra bridge selections were made, but none of our submissions were selected. The two FH-16 bridges will be submitted again in April, along with the Resort Drive-Fortune Lake bridge removal.

Misc:

A brief overview of the MCRCSIP presentation at the Great Lakes District meeting was provided, touching on ADA compliance of websites and an issue regarding the DNR and property mineral rights. We have also been advised to resume work on closing out the EGLE file for the Urban Ave property. Tri-media will honor their bid that was approved by the board last year.

Supt. Toivonen also shared information on the new road funding as we received it from CRA last week: The first \$1.2 B of corporate income tax collected goes into the State General Fund, then the next \$50M goes to MI Housing/ Community development, then finally the remainder (along with the wholesale marijuana tax) goes into the Neighborhood Roads Fund. However, there are "off the top" allocations that then occur, to which dollars flowing into the fund are allocated to first, and in the following order- \$100 million goes to the local bridge program, then \$40 million to the rail grade separation program, then \$100 million for the CTF/infrastructure projects authority. Only after these allocations are fully funded does the remaining revenue flow to MDOT (20%), counties (52%) and municipalities. Funds cannot be distributed until after it is collected.

Fiber Optic-Brian Schaivo explained to the Board that with the exception of the gas crossings on Oss and E/W Lake Emily, all pulling of fiber is shut down for the season. The crews will still be splicing as they are able.

Drain Commissioner:

County Commissioner Bruette will follow up with the budget to determine if the 2026 approved amount is the normal \$10,000 or if it was increased to \$20,000 to include the survey loop on Sunset Lake.

DELEGATIONS

Dave Smith, Mastodon Twp. Trustee, has some questions about funding, staffing and current road conditions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS**IRS MILEAGE RATE IS SET AT 72.5 CENTS PER MILE FOR 2026****GRAVEL BIDS**

The bid from Northern Crushing and Screening, for Oss Rd. pit, was the only bid received.

Moved by Commissioner Battan, support by Frailing, to accept the bid from Northern Crushing and Screening as submitted, for 2026.

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

INTERNATIONAL CHASSIS

An update was provided to the Board on progress made towards getting the International Chassis sent out to be completed. Average wait at various shops is 1 ½-2 years; Shop Foreman Porier will try to get a commitment from the Boyne Falls shop; otherwise, will look elsewhere as we need to get on the list and get it done.

USED MOWER-WEYER EQUIPMENT

The quote provided from Weyers Equipment for the 2022 Case MAXXUM 125 tractor/mower, was reviewed. After a trade in allowance of \$21,600 for our 2010 Case tractor, the cost of the 2022 tractor, machete boom, rotary head and quick hitch kit is \$147,400. The Equipment Committee recommended accepting the quoted price, with trade.

Moved by Commissioner Battan, supported by Germic, to approve the purchase of mower and attachments, including trade, for \$147,400.

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

TRUCK BIDS

Following discussion about the aged fleet of tandems the road commission has, as well as the long wait list for new trucks to be built and delivered, the Board requested Supt. Toivonen to solicit bids this year for new complete plow trucks and also look into the availability of newer used trucks that may possibly be for sale.

ATTORNEYS REPORT

None.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

At 10:22 a.m. with no further business to come before the Board, it was motioned by Cihak, supported by Frailing, to adjourn.

Ernie Schmidt, Chairman

Michelle Johnson, Clerk of the Board