

Regular Meeting Minutes Iron County Board of Commissioners August 13, 2026

The regular meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County was held on Thursday, August 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 and Commissioners Jim Chiak, Chuck Battan, Dan Germic and Ron Frailing. Also, present: Superintendent Brad Toivonen, Finance Director Michelle Johnson, HR-PR Admin. Emily Bieghler, Shop Foreman Duane Porier, Mastodon Twp. Clerk Karen Mallon, Bates Twp. Supervisor Mike Stafford, Brian Schiavo, GEI, County Commissioner Ean Bruette and Attorney Mark Tousignant. Members of the public present: Jeff Shepard and Ethan Amerson.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Supt. Toivonen requested an addition of NB g. 2027 summer help wage increase.

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support by Germic, to accept the agenda with the above addition.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED

Moved by Commissioner Battan, supported by Cihak, to approve the minutes of July 14, 2026, audit and regular meetings.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

DISBURSEMENTS TO BE APPROVED

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|----------------------------|--------------|
| a. Payrolls of: | \$174,901.41 |
| b. Prepaid Claims of: | \$95,054.89 |
| c. Account Payables of: | \$356,093.32 |
| d. Garage Bond Payment of: | \$112,143.75 |
| e. Total: | \$738,193.37 |

Moved by Commissioner Frailing, supported by Battan, to approve the Audit Committee Report dated July 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:

Amasa gravel crushing was completed on 7/24; Oss on 7/23. All invoices have been received. MDOT has approved fresh paint and fascia repairs on both the Amasa and Oss salt sheds. UPEA is addressing the comments on the plans for the IR salt shed, and will be advertising in mid-December for bids due in Jan. or Feb. We will probably be contracting out the site work as well. Sprinkler and fire extinguisher inspections have been completed at both garages.

Primary Roads:

Culverts are going in on CR 424, and there are 4 ½ left to install after today. The new traffic signals have been instrumental in this project, saving time, money and increasing employee safety. Hagerman Lake PH2 is set to start at the end of Aug., beginning of Sept. The remainder of the pavement markings, including those required at the railroad crossings, have begun. The GI meeting for the FLAP grant/ FH-16 project was held last week. The funds should be obligated at the federal level in Oct. 2026, with a January letting, and a construction completion target of October 2027.

Local Roads:

Three-year project lists requests were sent out to the Townships with a due date of October 1st. The 2026 gravel projects on Little Finland and Forsberg have a tentative start date of mid-September. Some research is being done to change the status of W. Lake Emily Rd. from a seasonal to regular road. The upgrading was done by the township in the early 2000's, but the road status was never changed to all season. An

abandonment petition is expected to be received from Joe Hoenig, for the very end Monyelle Ln., approx. 250 ft. The road goes right up to his house, then around his barn and he would like to gate his property off. As he owns all the property surrounding that last section of the road, a public hearing would not be required. The ROW description for Highview Dr. has been sent to the surveyor and once finalized we can move forward with a deed and adopting it into our road system.

Equipment:

The first invoices on the #296 truck build have been received. The scraper and underbody are on the chassis, and the dump box should be on soon. It is expected to be complete before winter. We should touch base with Western Star on when the 2027 chassis delivery can be expected. A two-week auction has begun on Wisconsin Surplus for our used equipment.

Employment:

We received a refund from CRASIF for safety and are passing some of it onto the crew. Wearable safety lights were purchased for the entire crew.

Bridges:

A GI meeting is scheduled for Idlewild bridge on September 2nd. After speaking with UPEA, accommodating boat passage during construction is not feasible. A meeting was held last week on the Pentoga Rd. bridge replacement. Because it is a historical bridge, it has to be offered for sale prior to the replacement. If purchased, the funds for dismantling it for relocation will also come out of the construction funding. Costs exceeding the approved contract amount are split 80/20; the 20% would have to be covered by the Township and ICRC. MDOT has restricted the Bates-Amasa bridge to 42/64/75 ton; signage will be updated.

2026 Flooding:

The FEMA recovery scope meeting was held on site July 23rd. A short-term contract was signed with ICF for consulting and guidance with the initial FEMA submissions of damages. Our consultant will be here today to go over paperwork and do some site visits. An RFP for a long-term consulting contract is in the works through CRA. Completed sites can be submitted together and should be reimbursed quickly once funding is obligated. The large projects-Parks Farm Rd, Snuff Country Rd., the Deer Lake Rd. crossings and the Bradley Rd. crossing-will all need up-sizing to the current codes and standards. This will take longer and will likely need extensions. There is also a possibility for mitigation grants.

General/Misc:

Brad and Michelle attended the MCRCSIP/CRASIF annual meeting in Mt. Pleasant and took away a lot of good information.

Finance Dir. Johnson informed the Board that as of the May 2026 collections distributed in July, \$91 million of the \$100 million NRF funds earmarked for the local bridge program had been collected. Once that \$100 million threshold has been met, the next \$40 million will go to local grade separation, followed by the next \$35 million to the comprehensive transportation fund, and then \$65 million into the infrastructure projects authority fund. Finally, money will then flow to the counties, cities and MDOT. This is unlikely to occur prior to October. Because the two lawsuits are still ongoing, any marijuana tax funds we do receive will likely not be spent until after they are concluded. The funds will have to be paid back to the State if the funding is reversed.

The signed memorandum of understanding has been sent to the City of Crystal Falls for the Oss Pit Electrical Department agreement.

Fiber Optic- There was some pavement damage that occurred on a road in the Brule Village that will require repair. An estimate was sent to Highline for our crews to complete the repair and we have already received payment.

Drain Commission-The board was put in at Sunset Lake on August 8th. The surveyor is hoping to have the survey loop completed in the next couple of weeks.

DELEGATIONS

Bates Twp. Supervisor Mike Stafford shared photos of the refreshed signage at Larson Park that had been completed by the work van and a few college kids. He has received complaints from residents on Bates-

Amasa Rd. that log trucks are speeding excessively and cutting corners on the road and asked about signage and asking the Sheriff's Dept. to patrol more out there.

Mastodon Twp. Clerk Karen Mallon asked about work done in the township over the last month and shared some washout areas of concern.

County Commissioner Bruette shared information on the status of the RFP for Cooks Run with Friends of Cooks Run and the school districts.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks and Recreation: Commissioner Frailing reported that the County is updating the rec plan and a survey should be available on the County website soon.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

JOE HOENIG-ROAD ABANDONMENT

Joe Hoenig was not present at the meeting.

MDOT ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE-RELATED CONDITIONS

Moved by Commissioner Cihak, support from Frailing, to sign and submit the annual MDOT certification of employee related conditions.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

AWARD BID-IRON RIVER OFFICE AIR CONDITIONING AND FURNACE REPLACEMENT

Supt. Toivonen presented the bids from three contractors for the replacement of the air conditioning and furnace at the Iron River business office.

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support from Cihak, to accept the recommendation of Supt. Toivonen and award the bid to Simbob Heating and Cooling, Crystal Falls: \$6,400 for the furnace replacement, \$6,800 for the air conditioning replacement and \$200 for duct work.

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

SALF OF CAT GRADER #418

Moved by Commissioner Battan, support from Frailing, to pay CAT the last lease payment of \$28,167.84 together with the buy out sale price of \$134,505, totaling \$162,672.84.

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

Motion by Commissioner Battan, with support from Cihak, to approve the sale to Baraga County Road Commission of (1) CAT grader for \$160,000 or (2) CAT graders for \$310,000.

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

TRI-MEDIA AGREEMENT REVISION-URBAN AVE

Supt. Toivonen explained that an addendum has been received from Tri-Media to redrill the three missing/destroyed monitoring wells, and do the necessary sampling, testing, surveying and reporting. This is necessary as we are out of compliance with EGLE.

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support by Germic, to approve Addendum #1 to Tri-Media Project #2025-028-EN, not to exceed \$32,475.

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

PA 202 OF 2017- RESOLUTION FOR WAIVER APPLICATION-OPEB

Finance Director Johnson reviewed the key points to OPEB waiver application. The resolution approving the

application was presented to the Board and is included below:

WHEREAS, the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County recognizes the requirements of Public Act 202 of 2017;

WHEREAS, the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County is committed to protecting the security of retirement benefits for its retirees and current employees;

WHEREAS, the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County has completed the Michigan Department of Treasury, Protecting Local Government Retirement and Benefit Act Application for Waiver, Retirement Health Benefit Systems and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Iron County Road Commissioners approves and submits the Application for Waiver.

This resolution is adopted in a motion by Commissioner Cihak, with support from Commissioner Germic. Roll call vote: Ayes-Battan, Germic Frailing, Cihak, Schmidt. Nays- None. Motion carried.

2027 SUMMER HELP WAGES

Motion by Commissioner Battan, support from Frailing, to increase the summer help wages to \$17.00/hr. starting in 2027.

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

ATTORNEYS REPORT

Attorney Tousignant updated the Board on a driveway issue on Pentoga that was able to be resolved by the property owners.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

At 10:45 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