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

The regular meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County was held on Tuesday, October 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 Ron Frailing, Chuck Battan, Jim Cihak and Dan Germic. Also, present: Superintendent Brad Toivonen, Finance Director Michelle Johnson, HR-PR Admin. Emily Bieghler, Construction Foreman Dylon LaMay, Mastodon Twp. Trustee Dave Smith, County Commissioner Ean Bruette, Brian Schiavo-GEI, Brian DeBernardi, McCoy Construction and Attorney Mark Tousignant. Members of the public present: Ronjo and Patti Leonoff, and Butch Dowgwillo.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA
None.

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED
Moved by Commissioner Frailing, supported by Germic, to approve the minutes of September 30, 2026, audit and regular meetings. Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

DISBURSEMENTS TO BE APPROVED

a.	Payrolls of:	$161,620.21
b.	Prepaid Claims of:	$ 90,534.77
c.	Account Payables of:	$381,909.50
d.	Total:	$634,064.48

Moved by Commissioner Battan, supported by Cihak, to approve the Audit Committee Report dated September 30th , 2026, covering the above disbursements. Roll call vote: Germic, Frailing, Cihak, Battan, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT
A moment of silence was held in observation of the death of a 24-year-old Eaton County Road Commission that was killed in Lansing last while performing flagging operations.

Supt. Toivonen reviewed his report:

Building/Inventory:
Our crew is in the process of hauling sand for Iron River and should be done this week. Crystal Falls is complete. Received the first of the salt deliveries to Oss yesterday, but we won't see consistent hauling yet as the docks are trying to make sure everyone has some to start the season. Crystal Falls will receive 3800 tons in total for this delivery, Iron River 1400 tons and Amasa 500 tons. Follow up work with UPEA this week to get the contract ready, hoping for advertising in early December and a January or February project letting. The Fair board and Rodeo board will both be invited to the pre-con meeting to ensure good communication.

Primary Roads:
Phases 8 through 10 (2027-2028) of CR 424 have been scoped for engineers' estimates. Hagerman Lake PH 2 is complete, except for the paint and centerline grooving. PH3 has been scoped for next year. Gravel work was just done on the south end of Ponozzo Rd. and west Gibbs. Because of the high price of fuel right now, we will not be doing any more gravel hauls for the time being. PASER ratings were completed on the East side of the county October 6th. No news on the obligation of funds for the FH-16 FLAP grant but no problems are anticipated.

Local Roads:
The gravel jobs on Little Finland and Forsberg Rd in Bates Township have been completed. Brule River Rd., Stambaugh, is expected to begin soon.

Equipment:
#296 is getting close to completion in Baraga. The 2027 Western Star chassis should be built by the end of November, and we will be receiving the underbody around the same time. The wing that was ordered last spring for #296 will tentatively be here sometime in the spring of 2027. With the 400+ day lead times on Monroe wings, we will be looking into other manufacturers, as well as possibly ordering two more now to have them by the time we need them. The final payment for the leased graders is this year, with the buyout payment due at the end of next year. Considering purchasing them instead of turning them in. Also looking at purchasing messenger boards next year to help get on site road closure information out to the public. Brian DeBernardi will be getting a quote on a grader reclaimer, expected to cost $80,000-$100,000.

Employment:
All seasonal and night patrol positions have been filled for the winter.

Bridges:
The Superior Region bridge selections were held on September 25th. Both of the FH-16 N & S bridges were approved for rehabilitation, as well as the removal of Resort Dr. bridge. Pending approval by the statewide committee, these three bridges will be slated for 2029 construction. RFP's will probably be done in 2027.
A new estimate needs to be obtained for the Wild Rivers culvert crossing project as the current one is from 2023. This is a reimbursable project; therefore, we would have to front all the expenses. Looking to get this done in 2027.
The Pentoga Rd. bridge was not historically purchased. Next step is the drone flyover for historical preservation. There are still a couple of soil borings that will be done in the next few weeks.

2026 Flooding:
Completed repairs and emergency costs of approximately $200,000 have been submitted for approval. Deer Lk. Rd-Camp Cr., Deer Lk. Rd.-Fribleys Cr., and Parks Farm Rd.-Parks Cr would need upgrades to large culverts in accordance with EGLE codes and standards. Simarily, Snuff Country, Maki, Park City and Bradley Rd. are required to be upgraded to bridges. These seven large projects have been submitted with an estimated cost of $8.2 million dollars. The road commission would be responsible for 25% of the cost. The FEMA engineer has identified some additional remediation that could be done and we will be looking at that this week.

General/Misc:
Emily and Michelle, with HEOP's Jason Guiliani and Tyler Koski, held a Touch a Truck at the Forest Park School on October 7th. The focus was winter safety, but they also talked about how the road commission trucks work to keep the roads clear. It was well received and a lot of fun.
The Administrator position at MCRCSIP is changing hands and they are currently looking to fill the position.
The 3rd annual Western U.P. Roadeo safety training and road course was held at Oss garage on October 1st, with nearly 40 attendees from 4-5 road commissions.
The local regional SAM meeting took place at the office on September 22nd, including a presentation from Joe Phillips from the National Weather Service.

Fiber Optic- Brian Schiavo, GEI, provided an update to the Board restoration frustrations. EGLE got involved with the plastics being left behind on sites, notifying Highline that fines would be issued with each occurrence. Site cleanup in that regard has greatly improved. Highline has more crews coming; they hope to get all approved permits complete by Thanksgiving. Winter work will likely not be allowed this year.

Drain Commission-The survey loop/ benchmark is 90% complete. The surveyor is looking at comparisons between his findings and the original benchmarks recorded at the county.

Chairman Schmidt inquired about bringing in trainers to teach the new operators' things like running excavators and loaders.

DELEGATIONS
Mastodon Twp. Trustee Dave Smith asked who paid for the crosswalk paint at Stager Lake (ICRC does, using non-motorized funds), what work was done in Mastodon Twp. and relayed complaints about the patches on 424. These patches are temporary as the road is being completely repaved next year. We will be looking at smoothing them out this week.

County Commissioner Bruette shared that the Parks & Rec Committee received 87 completed surveys and will be scheduling a meeting in the coming month. He also witnessed serious work zone safety concerns on the US-2 on the MDOT project. MDOT should be notified if anyone witnesses issues within their projects. Cooks Run proposals were tabled for a future meeting once some issues have been addressed with them both.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
None.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Butch Dowgwillo, Sunset Lake resident, requested information as to how the lake level maintenance and drain commission duties work on Sunset Lake.

OLD BUSINESS
None.

NEW BUSINESS

PURCHASE OF RENTAL EXCAVATOR
Superintendent Toivonen presented the quote received for the used excavator and explained the budget changes that could be used to fund it. Despite numerous attempts, we have been unable to sell grader #416. McCoy would give a $135,000 trade-in allowance on top of the rental discounts off the price of the excavator.
Motion by Commissioner Battan, support from Frailing to trade in grader #416 for $135,000 and purchase the 2025 John Deere used excavator from McCoy for $130,860.
Roll call vote: Ayes-Cihak, Germic, Fraling, Battan, Schmidt. Nays-None. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION-APPRECIATION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE-DEAN STOLBERG
Finance Director Johnson presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Dean Alex Stolberg has been employed by the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County for 31 years and 6 months, and,

WHEREAS, Dean Alex Stolberg has faithfully and diligently performed the many job duties assigned to him during the course of his employment with the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County, and,

WHEREAS, Dean Alex Stolberg has retired effective October 31, 2026,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County recognize and thank Dean Alex Stolberg for his many accomplishments and years of service, and congratulate him on his retirement and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission respectfully urges Michigan's congressional delegation to support legislation recognizing the critical public safety role of municipally operated snow removal equipment and the need for reliable winter maintenance operations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dean Alex Stolberg be presented with a gift of money and a copy of this resolution and, that a copy of this resolution shall be made a permanent record of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Iron County.

Resolution to be signed by the Board Chair and Clerk of the Board.

STANLEY LAKE DR.
Superintendent Toivonen and Attorney Tousignant updated the Board on the status of the Stanley Lake ROW encroachment issue.
Motion by Commissioner Cihak, support by Germic, to proceed with the legal process on the matter of the ROW encroachment on Stanley Lake Dr.

Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

IDLEWILD BRIDGE-TITLE SHEET
Superintendent Toivonen provided the title sheet for the Idlewild Bridge plans to the Board for signature.

CRA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
Moved by Commissioner Germic, support by Frailing, to approve the 2027 CRA Legislative Priorities as presented.
Voice vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Frailing, support by Germic to not support a proposal to add a countywide millages to the CRA Legislative Priorities.
Roll call vote: Ayes-Battan, Germic, Cihak, Frailing. Nays-Schmidt. Motion carried.

ATTORNEYS REPORT
None.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS
None.

At 10:37 a.m. with no further business to come before the Board, it was motioned by Germic, supported by Battan, to adjourn.

Ernie Schmidt, Chairman

Michelle Johnson, Clerk of the Board