

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
KEWEENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
September 17, 2025

The regular meeting of the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners was held on September 17, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., at the Courthouse in Eagle River, MI and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was posted on the door of the Courthouse and on the Website.

Commissioner's present: Bob DeMarois, Randy Eckloff, Mike LaMotte, Del Rajala and Don Piche

Motion by DeMarois supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion by Rajala supported by LaMotte and unanimously carried to approve the August 20, 2025 regular monthly meeting minutes as written.

The following reports were available: Sheriff, Treasurer, Mine Inspector & Maintenance.

Time was allowed for public comment.

During the Committee Meeting Reports, many commissioners commented about agencies waiting for the State budget to be decided as there could be cuts.

Motion by DeMarois supported by Eckloff to pay the approved and audited bills in the following amounts: General Fund=\$229,223.75, Construction Codes Fund=\$1,228.79, 911 Fund=\$17,563.27, Child Care Fund=\$5,231.21, Houghton County MCF Fund=\$1,317.72, Veteran's Affairs=\$1,809.94, FRF Fund=\$4,745.00. Board polled. Ayes: Eckloff, DeMarois, LaMotte, Rajala, Piche. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to table health insurance until October.

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to approve Commissioners Rajala and Eckloff to begin negotiations with the deputies belonging to POAM (Police Officer Association of Michigan).

Motion by Rajala supported by DeMarois and unanimously carried to allow Eckloff to go to the UPACC Fall Conference in Harris, MI on October 16th and 17th.

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to appoint Dr Petio Kotov as the Chief Medical Examiner in Keweenaw County effective right away replacing Dr Michael McAllister who is working out of the area.

Motion by Rajala supported by LaMotte and unanimously carried to approve the agreement between the Great Lakes Recovery Centers and Keweenaw County regarding Employee Assistance Programs. The agreement is from 10/1/25 through 9/30/26 and some of the benefits include counseling, coaching, personal development, Talkspace, self-help resources, wellness benefits and legal benefits.

Motion by Rajala supported by LaMotte and unanimously carried to wait on specs from Mark Aho and Ron Ekdahl regarding a new generator but to add to the project by relocating the new generator to a new place on a cement slab.

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to adopt the following resolution opposing House of Representatives' FY26 Budget Cuts to County Revenue Sharing:

WHEREAS, counties are mandated by the State of Michigan to provide essential public services including courts, jails, elections, public health, public safety and human services; and

WHEREAS, unlike cities, villages and townships, counties do not receive constitutionally guaranteed revenue sharing and instead rely solely on statutory revenue sharing, leaving counties uniquely vulnerable to annual state budget decisions; and WHEREAS, the House of Representatives' version of the Fiscal Year 2026 state budget proposes a \$34.9 million reduction in county statutory revenue sharing, wiping out the long-overdue progress made in FY25 to restore revenue sharing to sustainable levels; and

WHEREAS, the House plan, if enacted, would leave counties with just over \$256 million in statutory revenue sharing statewide, while constitutional revenue sharing for cities, villages and townships (CVTs) is set to reach \$1.1 billion, and when combined with statutory revenue sharing, CVTs would get \$1.4 billion; and

WHEREAS, the House plan shifts \$40 million into restricted sheriff funding with strings attached, requiring counties to maintain higher law enforcement funding levels, even as flexible revenue sharing is reduced, thereby further straining already-limited general funds; and

WHEREAS, public safety dollars directed exclusively to sheriffs are not equivalent to revenue sharing, since they cannot be used to support the wide range of mandated services counties must provide; and

WHEREAS, the Senate budget proposal provides just over \$320 million in county statutory revenue sharing, an increase of \$29.1 million over FY25, and includes \$60 million for public safety that can be allocated at the discretion of county boards of commissioners rather than bypassing them; and
WHEREAS, the Senate approach respects county governance, strengthens general fund flexibility, and better equips counties to meet their broad statutory responsibilities.
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners strongly urges the Michigan Legislature and governor to reject the House revenue sharing cuts and support the Senate’s proposal to increase county revenue sharing and provide flexible funding for public safety needs; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, House Speaker Matt Hall and Chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. **(#25-5)**

Time was allowed for public comment.

There being no further business, motion by Rajala to adjourn at 6:44 P.M. Meeting adjourned.

Donald Piche, Chairman

Julie A. Carlson, Clerk

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