

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
KEWEENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING
JUNE 1, 2026

The public hearing of the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners was held on June 1, 2026, at 6:00 pm, at the Courthouse in Eagle River, MI and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The public hearing was scheduled to hear public comment on the proposed Articles of Incorporation for the Keweenaw Heartlands Recreational & Natural Resources Authority.

The meeting was posted on the door of the Courthouse and on the website. The proposed Articles of Incorporation were published in the Daily Mining Gazette on May 26, 2026 along with the notice for the public hearing and special meeting. The Articles have been on the Keweenaw County website since April 20, 2026 and were also available at the Board of Commissioners April 15, 2026 regular meeting.

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

The public hearing began.

The following people spoke in favor of approving the Articles of Incorporation:

Ryan LaPorte-President of the Keweenaw Snowmobile Club-Excited about this and thankful to all who made this possible

B Lauer-Executive Director of Keweenaw Land Trust-Amazing plan and project, this is one of the last large steps

Adam Yeoman-Executive Director of Copper Harbor Trails Club-Excited about this and this is a major driver of tourism

Mike McMahan-Keweenaw ATV Club-Grew up in Copper Harbor area, nice to see this stay open to the public to be able to hunt and fish and to keep the trails open without gates

Curt Pennala-Keweenaw County Sheriff-There was a lot of public input and many hours put into this process

Eckloff came to the public hearing at 6:05 pm

Richard Marsh-Calumet Keweenaw Sportsmen Club-Was concerned about public access, been actively involved with Community Advisory Committee, this project brought many organizations together and all worked well together

Paul Campbell-Heartlands Advisory Committee for the Keweenaw Historical Society

John Kern-County resident-Happy to see this moving forward, a few questions regarding what happens with this new Board when TNC still owns the land, Debt and bonding questions, Who is responsible for any debt if the entity dissolves in the future

Charlie Eshbach-Advocate for Keweenaw Nature Association-has been trying to preserve the Keweenaw for the last 60 years, to say people are happy is an understatement

Josh Pfeiffelman-Forester for Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (requested for the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District to be added as an additional agency under Article 9, Section 6), Said there was a communication breakdown, but he wants to be involved, Congratulated all involved, Cool concept

Wyndeth Davis-Retired Director of Keweenaw National Historical Park-Nice to see preservation of land of the way the people of the Keweenaw are used to using the land

Sam Raymond-served on Community Advisory Committee as Grant Township representative-Praised TNC's leadership, Great to see all the clubs and municipalities coming together, This will benefit others far beyond the Keweenaw

Rich Probst-Eagle Harbor Township Supervisor-Echoes what everyone else has said and Rich has been in the process since the beginning

Eric Hermanson-Keweenaw County Treasurer-Also echoes all that everyone said, There have been a lot of concerns but it comes down to the right five people on the new Board, Encourage people to run

Robin Meneguzzo-Executive Director of Keweenaw Community Foundation-Has been working on this project since Feb/March 2022, 4 years of public meetings, many voices around the table that came to an understanding of the four core principles, Grateful for the community and those around the table

Kelly Ryan-Community Advisory Committee-Resident of Calumet Village, property owner in Keweenaw County, Been on Community Advisory Committee since the inception, This is a unique project that many communities would like to have the same opportunity, The subcommittees who advise the elected Board members are also very vital to the new entity

Julia Petersen-TNC and Master of Keweenaw Heartlands-Echoes others who thanked the Board for holding a public hearing and special meeting to hear feedback, The project is not done yet but if the articles pass tonight, that is another huge milestone

Motion by DeMarois, supported by Rajala to adjourn the public hearing at 6:36 pm. Public Hearing adjourned.

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SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 1, 2026

The special meeting was called to order as soon as the public hearing adjourned, which was at 6:36 pm. The special meeting was advertised with the Articles in the Daily Mining Gazette, and the notice was posted on the website as well as on the door of the Courthouse.

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

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to approve the special meeting agenda as written.

Motion by Rajala supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to add the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District to the list of agencies in the Articles in Incorporation, Article 9-ADVISORY COMMITTEES, Section 6 which is a list comprising the Government Advisory Committee.

Motion by DeMarois supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to approve the Articles of Incorporation for the Keweenaw Heartlands Recreational & Natural Resources Authority with the one addition as outlined in the motion above.

Time was allowed for public comment.

There being no further business, motion by Rajala to adjourn at 6:40 pm. Meeting adjourned.

Donald Piche, Chairman

Julie A. Carlson, County Clerk