
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 24, 2026 – 6:00 P.M. – COMMISSIONERS ROOM 231, HENRY A. SKEWIS ANNEX, MARQUETTE, MI 49855.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH DEROCHA AT 6:00 P.M.

- Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call - Present: Comm. Alholm, Comm. LaLonde, Comm. Nordeen and Chairperson Derocha.

Absent & Excused: Comm. Adamini & Comm. Numinen

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to approve the Agenda with the following additions: 11a) Appointment to the Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport Board of Advisors and 14) Closed Session Language MCL 15.268(1)(e). Second by Comm. Numinen. Motion adopted. (4-0)

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

- Regular Meeting minutes held on March 3, 2026

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to approve the Regular Meetings held on March 3, 2026 as presented. Second by Comm. Nordeen. Motion adopted (4-0)

- Closed Session minutes held March 3, 2026

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to approve the Regular Meetings held on March 3, 2026 as presented. Second by Comm. LaLonde. Motion adopted (4-0)

4. PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND AWARDS:

- Gerald Messana Retirement Resolution

Commissioner Nordeen read the following Resolution into the record:

WHEREAS, Gerald "Jerry" Messana has served the citizens of Marquette County at the Health Department for twelve years, eleven of those as Health Officer. During his tenure, Jerry's leadership, professionalism and unwavering commitment to public health have made a lasting impact on our community, and

WHEREAS, Jerry's efforts in promoting health initiatives, responding to public health challenges, and guiding the community through both routine and extraordinary circumstances have set a high standard for others to follow. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jerry was praised for his excellent communication and collaboration as well as his ability to allocate scarce resources. Jerry was noted for being steadfast and hard-working in his efforts to ensure the safety of the public, and

WHEREAS, Jerry developed strong relationships with the Board of Health, staff, County administration, and the community. He was an effective leader and advocate for public health, and his contributions strengthened the Marquette County Health Department and set a high standard for others to follow, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Marquette County Board of Commissioners recognizes and sincerely thanks Jerry for twelve years of faithful service to the people of Marquette County, and wishes him and his wife Renee continued success and fulfillment in the years ahead.

*Chairperson Derocha stated Jerry did an amazing job and was a great leader!

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- John Gumaer raised questions regarding the resolution for ICE and DHS.
- Anna Ellis, Marquette City, stated her disappointment surrounding the ARPA fund allocations and that the funds be utilized throughout the County for Community Services.
- Nancy Uschold, Marquette, questioned the progress of the resolution for ICE & DHS.
- Donavon Young, Ishpeming, encouraged the progression of the resolution by the board regarding ICE & DHS.
- Lyn Durant, Marquette stated the Marquette Township Board had questions regarding what the County Board was doing with the ARPA Funds - such as Jail Details, Jail Window Replacement, Prosecutor 97,000, and RATI, Jensen House and Transit support.

- **Margaret Brumm**, Marquette, voiced her disappointment in Comm. Numinen being absent tonight. MAPS school election proposal urged voters to vote no. Urged the Commissioners to put the New Jail First when making decisions about funding projects.
- **Jesse Bell**, Marquette voiced concerns about the FBO and County Plan.
- **Eric Sibley**, Negaunee voiced concerns regarding Item 10f) Aviation Fuel Supply Agreement.
- **Fred Benzie** stated he submitted his application for Commissioner District 3 with an introduction and stated he will be out of the Country most of April for a pre-planned family trip.

6. REVIEW OF CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to approve Total Expenditures paid via check & EFT Transfers for the period of February 27, 2026 through March 12, 2026 were \$922,683.09; check payable to Alger-Delta Co-Op Electric for \$418.09; Biweekly payroll for the period ending February 28, 2026 was \$922,809.53. Second by Comm. Alholm. Motion adopted (4-0)

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to approve check #237776 in the amount of \$418.09 dated 3/13/2026 payable to Alger Delta Co-Op Electric. Second by Comm. Nordeen. Abstain: Comm. Alholm Adopted (3-0)

7. PUBLIC HEARING

8. PRIVILEGED COMMENT

9. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

a. CUPPMPC Meeting Notice

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to accept the informational item a for filing. Second by Comm. LaLonde. Motion adopted (4-0)

10. ACTION ITEMS

a. Resignation of Stephen Adamini, District 3 County Commissioner

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to accept Comm. Stephen Adamini's Resignation with deep regret. Second by Comm. Alholm. Motion adopted (4-0)

***Chairperson Derocha** stated that this is very difficult to see Steve go and he has been a true political leader, he was the 109th State Rep., County Civil Counsel and County Commissioner. Serving in many capacities throughout Marquette County on many boards. Steve always served with pride!

b. Sibley FOIA Appeal (no packet material)—Moved to Closed Session

c. MERS Plan Amendment

Kamila Fassbender, Finance Manager, was present to explain the following: In 2020, MERS announced that they were implementing several modifications to the way in which defined benefit and defined contribution plans are administered (specifically, Plan Eligibility clarification, Service Credit Qualification, Leaves of Absence and Definition of Compensation). In order to define these items, a plan amendment was required to be completed for each MERS division. Staff completed the amendment forms for all Marquette County divisions. Health Department and Medical Care Facility (MCF) completed their own forms, which their respective boards reviewed.

Upon an audit of MCF MERS plan, we were notified that their on call definition (or status) of their employee groups was not identified in the 2021 addendums. MCF reports this status correctly by not granting service when service credit qualification is not met, and still withholding/reporting employee contributions. In order to continue including this status, MERS requires us to do an amended adoption agreement, retroactive to 1/1/2021, to call out this classification as included. (Page 1, section II. B. Effective Date; and Page 3 section III. Plan Eligibility). This plan amendment does not include any benefit changes but rather defines existing parameters.

**Defined Benefit divisions: 04, 40, 42, 43 (MCMCF Divisions)*

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to approve Defined Benefit Plan Adoption Agreement Amendment for the following MERS Divisions: 04, 40, 42, 43. Second by Comm. Alholm. Motion adopted (4-0)

d. 2025 4th Quarter Budget Amendments

Kamila Fassbender, Finance Manager, was present to explain the following:

#41- GENERAL FUND - There are several minor adjustments in the General Fund as is common at year-end. This amendment does include adjustments to some personnel line items, primarily reallocation of budgeted personnel among various departments for employees that split their time to multiple cost centers. Inflationary increases noted in several supplies categories (copy costs, postage, supplies) and service contracts.

More adjustments that are significant listed below:

- **TAX AND PARCEL ADMINISTRATION**- Increases expenses for costs related to the processing notices and tax bills for other local governmental units. Tax Administration Fees revenues for the services provided offset these increases.
 - **COURTHOUSE COMPLEX** - per 7.15.25 board action, replacement of the Courthouse circulating pump, funded by Semco incentive grant, Community Energy grant, and facilities project/building repairs line item. Total project cost \$65,360.
 - **CIRCUIT /DISTRICT COURTS** - Correction to previous budget amendments to service contracts (Business Information Systems) due to actual costs being less than anticipated.
 - **PROBATE COURT**- Increases budget for Legal Fees, Software contracts (File bound capacity doubled), and Title IV-E expenses (a multi-year invoice presented in 2025), paid from Title IV-E reserves.
 - **REHABILITATION** - Increases in Health Services (\$70,000) and Detention-Out of County (\$75,000) budgets due to an increase in the number of inmates in custody, and the severity of medical and prescription needs of the inmates.
 - **HOMELAND SECURITY-STONEGARDEN**- Accounts for both expenses and offsetting grant revenue related to this program for the year (\$43,700).
 - **PLANNING**- Increases Professional & Contractual budget for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan consultant, offset by DNR grant revenue (\$20,000).
 - **MSHDA CHILL PROGRAM** - Increase in Rehab Costs budget due to increased production, offset by grant revenues (\$66,500)
 - **APPROPRIATIONS**- Increases budget for various 2% gaming contributions (\$56,900), revised Land Bank services agreement (\$10,000), offset by an increase in Transfer In from Land Bank, and an increase in Substance Abuse appropriations (\$1,407), offset by increased Convention/Tourism tax revenues.
- #42 FRIEND OF THE COURT**- Increase in Service Contracts- Software for document management system (\$10,000), and an increase in Professional/Contractual expenses (\$1,000), offset by Title IV-D cooperative reimbursement.
- #43- COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**- Increases expenses for Pre-Trial Services. Pre-Trial Assessment, and Administration offset by other programs.
- #44- REMONUMENTATION**- Increases use of fund equity to cover increases in expenses (\$1,025).
- #45- PUBLIC DEFENDER**- Increase in Prof/Contractual due to use of contract attorneys, offset by a decrease in personnel expenditures.
- #46 - CENTRAL DISPATCH** - Increases over time personnel expenditures, reduces increase to equity (\$1,000).
- #47- DHHS SOCIAL WELFARE**- Increases in memberships and travel expenditures, offset by use of equity (\$260).
- #48- VETERANS AFFAIRS** - Increases capital outlay for customer service, window improvements, reducing budgeted increase to equity (\$500).
- #49 PARKS**- Accounts for both expenses and offsetting grant revenue related to EGLE Environmental Justice grant for Little Trout Lake Park for the year (\$441,500).
- #50 – FORECLOSURE** - Reduces increase of fund equity to cover expenses associated with excess proceeds claims paid out in 2025 (\$293,000).
- #51- FORESTRY**- Reduces Prof/Contractual budget to cover expenses associated with reforestation costs (\$13,000).
- #52 –AIRPORT**- Increases personnel over time due to additional airport events in 2025 & building supplies, offset by increased parking permits revenues (\$16,000). In addition, accounts for multiple capital projects as approved by the Board in 2025 (HPMP agreement, hangar floor replacement, PFOS floor drain) (\$301,495), and those funded by Federal grants (\$2,045,000).

#53 –SEWER - Increase in personnel budget due to actual staff time allocation between Sewer & Water funds, and the implementation of GASB Statement No. 101 Compensated Absences, offset by additional investing income & use of reserves (\$43,700).

#54 WATER - Adjusts minor personnel expenses that have exceeded budget projections, offset by investing income higher than projected (\$500).

Board action: Comm. Alholm moved to adopt the Budget Amendments as presented by the County Finance Manager as stated above. Second by Comm. Nordeen. A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Comm. Alholm, Comm. LaLonde, Comm. Nordeen and Chairperson Derocha. Nays- None. Absent - Comm. Numinen. Motion adopted (5-0)

e. ARPA Allocation

Board action: Comm. Nordeen adjust certain allocations – Motion was not supported.

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to hold any decisions on the ARPA Allocations until the next Jail Committee meeting. Second by Comm. Alholm. Motion adopted (4-0)

f. Aviation Fuel Supply Agreement

Board action: Comm. LaLonde moved to table this item and move it to the Special Meeting to be held on Thursday, March 26, 2026. Second by Comm. Alholm. Motion adopted (4-0)

g. K.I. Sawyer water Dept. Drinking Water Project Payment Request

Duane DuRay, Administrator, was present to discuss the following: staff is requesting County Board approval for the fifth drawdown for \$36,092.75 from USDA loan funding. This request reflects Pay Application No. 12 submitted by Smith Construction, along with two invoices submitted by GEI Consultants. All submitted materials have been reviewed by staff for consistency with project scope, contractual requirements, and eligible project costs under the USDA funding provisions. If approved, the requested drawdown will cover the following project expenses:

- Smith Construction — Construction Costs: \$26,034.75
- GEI Consultants — Engineering Costs: \$10,058.00
 - Total Draw Request: \$36,092.75

Approval of this drawdown will reimburse documented project expenditures incurred to date and determined by staff to be consistent with project progress. This represents the fifth USDA loan draw request associated with the project. Additional draw requests are anticipated as construction activities continue toward project completion and will be submitted for review in accordance with established County approval processes.

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to approve the drawdown request as outlined above. Second by Comm. Alholm. A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Comm. Nordeen, Comm. Alholm, Comm. LaLonde and Chairperson Derocha. Nays: None. Absent - Comm. Numinen. Motion adopted (4-0)

h. Pathways Appointments (2) PATHWAYS (COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD)

The Pathways Board governs the operations of the Mental Health Program in Alger, Delta, Luce, and Marquette Counties. The composition of the board includes representatives of providers of mental health recipients or consumers of mental health services, agencies and occupations having a working involvement with mental health services, and the general public. It is a twelve-member body with up to six being public official members and the remainder being private citizens. A public official is defined as someone who works 20 hours or more per week for federal, state, or local government. Six of the appointments are made by the Marquette County Board, four made by the Delta County Board, one by the Alger County Board, and one by the Luce County Board to 3-year terms. *2 Vacancy for the Pathways Board - *Term ending 3/31/2029

Two applications received: *Glenn Wing & *Margaret Rayner

Board action: Comm. Alholm moved to re-appoint Glenn Wing & Margaret Rayner to the Pathways Board for a term ending 3/31/2029. Second by Comm. LaLonde. Motion adopted (4-0)

11. LATE ADDITIONS

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- **Randy Ritari, Marquette Township Clerk**, introduced himself to the Board and stated he has applied for the Vacancy of County Commissioner District 3.
- **William Sullivan, Marquette County Senior Assistant Public Defender**, introduced himself to the Board and stated he has applied for the Vacancy of County Commissioner District 3.
- **Margaret Brumm, Marquette**, spoke concerning the lack of medical care when in the custody of ICE; also supported a new jail in Marquette County.
- **Undersheriff Larson** voiced his concerns with the lack of funding for the purpose of a New Jail.
- **Jesse Bell, Marquette**, spoke to his concerns regarding Marquette County taking over control of the FBO.
- **Eric Sibley, Negaunee**, spoke to his concerns regarding Marquette County taking over control of the FBO.
- **Mathew Bloch, Airplane Owner & Flight Trainer**, stated fuel being a huge part of flying & these decisions made by the board impact many.

With no further public comment to come before the board, this portion of the meeting is closed.

13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, STAFF COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Chairperson Derocha** stated he understands the concerns regarding the FBO and New Jail.

14. CLOSED SESSION: MCL 15.268(1)(h) “consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.”

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to go into Closed Session MCL 15.268(1)(h) “consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.” Second by Comm. LaLonde. A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Comm. Nordeen, Comm. LaLonde, Comm. Alholm and Chairperson Derocha. Nays: None Absent: Comm. Adamini and Comm. Numinen.

*****A short recess to clear chambers*****

Commissioners came back into open session with the following:

Board action: Comm. Nordeen moved to direct Civil Counsel to grant the appeal of the Sibley FOIA under the parameters discussed in Closed Session. Second by Comm. LaLonde. Motion adopted (4-0)

15. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the County Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Linda K. Talsma
Marquette County Clerk

Joseph Derocha, Chairperson
Marquette County Board of Commissioners