

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ALPENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Full Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 27, 2026 – 1:00 p.m.
Howard Male Conference Room/Zoom Room**

CALL TO ORDER

The Alpena County Board of Commissioners met, and the meeting was called to order by Chairman John Kozlowski in the County Annex Building, Howard Male Conference Room, Alpena, Michigan and via Zoom on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

PRAYER

Prayer was offered by Jeremy Baldwin representing the Alpena Area Ministerial Association.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Kozlowski called for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

Roll was called with the following Commissioners present: Bill LaHaie, District #1; Dan Ludlow, District #2; Lucille Bray, District #3; Bill Peterson, District #4; Brenda Fournier, District #5; Todd Britton, District #6; Travis Konarzewski, District #7; and John Kozlowski, District #8.

AGENDA

Moved by Commissioner Fournier and supported by Commissioner Britton to adopt the agenda with removal of both the Policy on Line Item Transfers and Policy on Protests and Petitions on County Property, and the addition of discussion on an invoice dealing with an insurance claim. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Yvonne Johnson of Alpena Township expressed her concerns regarding efforts to create a policy or ordinance that would restrict collection of signatures on county owned property. On January 12th she filed petition language to recall three of the Alpena school board members. She asks that the board wait on any type of policy or ordinance until after the November 2026 election to avoid the appearance of trying to influence the existing recall petition and trampling on First Amendment rights to protect the board members.

Barb Beamish of Alpena also expressed her concerns for the proposed ordinance and reminded the board that they must abide by the United States Constitution and she feels this is a way to infringe upon the First Amendment rights.

Michelle Bailey, Executive Director of Sunrise Mission, reported they are running at maximum capacity at the shelter, and they are completely out of parking areas. The City of Alpena was able to offer them some parking space located across the river, and Michelle is asking to be allowed to use the parking lot at the Annex Building for their guests to have parking overnight and be able to safely access their cars back and forth to work.

Diane Mason-Lacross shared her concerns about the warming shelter only being open from 8 o'clock at night to 8 o'clock in the morning. It is too cold to make people find somewhere to go at 8 o'clock in the morning. There are volunteers who are willing to stay there and work.

Chairman Kozlowski, County Clerk Keri Bertrand, and County Administrator Jesse Osmer clarified that the county was approached last fall regarding petitioning and signatures and has nothing to do with interfering with the current school board recall. Clerk Bertrand stated no one is allowed to campaign to collect signatures on publicly owned properties, but with an ordinance the county would be giving permission to collect signatures just not inside the building.

BILLS TO PAY

Chairman Kozlowski presented the bills to be paid.

	SUBMITTED:	APPROVED:
General Fund & Other Funds	\$462,336.95	\$462,336.95

Moved by Commissioner LaHaie and supported by Commissioner Britton to pay all bills as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chairman Kozlowski presented the Consent Calendar with minutes for approval.

A) Finance Ways & Means Committee Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2026

B) Courts & Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes – January 16, 2026

ACTION ITEM CPSC#1: The Committee recommends approval of the reimbursement request from the City of Alpena for drug box and drug kit restocking fees incurred from June 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$9,255.00 and reimbursement for disposable EMS supplies incurred during the same timeframe in the amount of \$21,360.35 per the Ambulance Service Agreement as presented.

ACTION ITEM CPSC#2: The Committee recommends approval to authorize the Treasurer to disperse the quarterly First Responder Call payments from First Responder Calls line item 210-651-803.001 and appropriate on a quarterly basis in 2026 as presented.

• City of Alpena	\$50,000.00
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• Charter Township of Alpena	\$39,000.00
• Green Township	\$6,000.00
• Hubbard Lake Township	\$3,000.00
• Long Rapids Township	\$4,000.00
• Maple Ridge Township	\$3,000.00
• Sanborn Township	\$6,000.00
• <u>Wilson Township</u>	<u>\$6,000.00</u>
Total Amount	\$117,000.00

C) Facilities, Capital & Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes – January 21, 2026

Moved by Commissioner LaHaie and supported by Commissioner Bray to approve the Consent Calendar which includes actions as listed above and filing of all reports. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

911 BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

Central Dispatch Director Kim Elkie presented a budget adjustment request due to receiving a duplicate payment from Verizon in September 2024 in the amount of \$4,398. The payment duplicated an identical amount received in August 2024.

Moved by Commissioner Bray and supported by Commissioner Peterson to approve the 911 budget adjustment request as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM #3: Recommendation to approve the requested budget adjustment in the amount of \$4,398 from 911's Fund Balance (261-000-390), with the increase to the 911 budget line item 261-325-999.001 Refund of Overpayment for this reimbursement transaction as presented.

LIBRARY BOARD UPDATE

Library Director Tina Markowski provided an update on upcoming programs the library will be having and encouraged everyone to come to the library to check out the programs.

Library Board member Julie Byrnes reported the library is fully staffed at the required levels. They are currently in the process of reviewing and updating policies and have made a presentation showing people how to access the meeting packets and minutes. Brian Mortimer will be doing evaluations on the director and staff, and he will also be helping them with their strategic plan. Julie discussed repairs and updates for the facility and reported they will be having a full audit performed.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL OR AD HOC COMMITTEES

Facilities, Capital & Strategic Planning Committee Update – Chair Britton reported the committee received the airport update, maintenance update, received and filed the recycling reports, and discussed the rink management contract.

Courts & Public Safety Committee Update – Chair Bray reported Central Dispatch had their kickoff with the new dispatch console and the project should be finished by the end of March. The Central Dispatch Director has started her 911 training, and the new Emergency Manager toured Amrize and will begin taking emergency management courses. There will be more discussion on courthouse security at the next meeting.

Personnel Committee Update – Meeting was cancelled.

MRF PROJECT – LETTER OF INTENT

Northeast Michigan Materials Management Authority Executive Director Bailey Barr presented a letter of intent that needs to be signed by Chairman Kozlowski to release the funds from USDA for the recycling project for the new building.

Moved by Commissioner LaHaie and supported by Commissioner Britton to approve the Chairman of the Board to sign NMMMA's letter of intent to release the funds from USDA for the recycling project for the new building as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

NMMMA PRESENTATION

Executive Director Bailey provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the facility. They are hoping to be operational by late 2026, early 2027.

ALPENA EMERGENCY WARMING SHELTER UPDATE

County Administrator Jesse Osmer reported 9 men, and 3 women have used the warming shelter so far and January 5th had the most with 5 individuals. On the day with severe cold weather the shelter had extended its hours due to the soup kitchen losing heat to make sure people had a warm place to stay. Judge Lacross and Christina Kihn are creating an amendment they will be presenting for consideration allowing extended hours. Administrator Osmer reported they were also able to secure insurance. Discussion was made to allow the shelter to stay open through March 31st.

Moved by Commissioner Peterson and supported by Commissioner Ludlow to approve an extension for the warming shelter at the fairgrounds to stay open through March 31, 2026, as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM #5: Recommendation to extend the agreement for warming shelter at the fairgrounds Merchant's Building to remain open through March 31, 2026, as presented.

THUNDER BAY ELECTRIC INVOICE

Administrator Osmer reported a couple months ago our fibers were cut out on M-32 due to a third party. Thunder Bay Electric conducted the work to fix the issue in the amount of \$15,190.99. Due to the books closing in February, for a quick turnaround, the county would pay the invoice and be reimbursed by the insurance company within one week, short of \$1,000 for the deductible. Discussion was made about why the county would have to owe the deductible. Administrator Osmer will get more information from the insurance company and bring the information back to the Finance, Ways & Means Committee meeting in February.

NMMMA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Chairman Kozlowski presented an annual business membership form from the Northeast Michigan Materials Management Authority in the amount of \$100 allowing use of the facility.

Moved by Commissioner LaHaie and supported by Commissioner Konarzewski to approve payment of the annual business membership for NMMMA as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM #6: Recommendation to approve payment of the annual business membership to the Northeast Michigan Materials Management Authority in the amount of \$100 as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Yvonne Johnson thanked the board for the extension of the warming shelter and for the clarification around the petition gathering.

Barb Beamish reported that Michigan cities generally allow protests and petition gatherings on public property as these activities are protected by the First Amendment in the traditional public forums, such as sidewalks, parks, and areas surrounding government buildings. If that is still going to be allowed, she is good.

CLOSED SESSION

The board went into closed session for discussion on union contracts and other contracts at 1:56 p.m. and opened session at 3:28 p.m. Roll call was taken. All members were present.

ALPENA RINK MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

Moved by Commissioner Konarzewski and supported by Commissioner Peterson to approve the agreement with Alpena Rink Management as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM #7: Recommendation to approve the Property Lease Agreement with Alpena Rink Management, LLC for managing Northern Lights Arena beginning April 28, 2026, for a term of three (3) years and may be renewed for a three (3) year extension as presented.

TPOAM UNION CONTRACT

ACTION ITEM #8: Recommendation to approve signing the LOU for the updates/changes to the TPOAM contract effective January 27, 2026, as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Peterson and supported by Commissioner Ludlow to approve signing the LoU for the updates/changes to the TPOAM contract as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

CHIEF DEPUTIES

ACTION ITEM #9: Recommendation to approve Option 1 adjustments to the pay scale for the Chief Deputy Clerk and Chief Deputy Treasurer and allow the County Treasurer and County Clerk to make the necessary adjustments to execute the changes as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Britton and supported by Commissioner Ludlow to approve Option 1 adjustments to the pay scale for the Chief Deputy Clerk and Chief Deputy Treasurer and allow the County Treasurer and County Clerk to make the necessary adjustments to execute the changes as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: Commissioner Fournier. Motion carried.

SHERIFF AND UNDERSHERIFF WAGES

ACTION ITEM #10: Recommendation to approve a salary increase of 12% for the Sheriff and 12% for the Undersheriff effective February 1, 2026, as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Peterson and supported by Commissioner Ludlow to approve a salary increase of 12% for the Sheriff and 12% for the Undersheriff as presented. Roll call vote was taken: AYES: Commissioners LaHaie, Ludlow, Bray, Peterson, Fournier, Britton, Konarzewski, and Kozlowski. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Commissioner Britton and supported by Commissioner Bray to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

John Kozlowski, Chairman of the Board

Keri Bertrand, County Clerk