

The purpose of Intergovernmental Council is to promote communication, understanding, and cooperation among the Townships, County and City for the good of our community.

Alpena County Intergovernmental Council Minutes

6:30 p.m.
Time

January 12, 2023
Date

Alpena Community College, CTR 106
Location

665 Johnson Street, Alpena, MI 49707
Address

1) **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Purpose Statement/Roll Calls - 7:00 p.m. (5 minutes)**

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Tim Kuehnlein

Entities Present: City of Alpena, County of Alpena & Townships of Alpena, Green, Ossineke, Sanborn, Wellington, Wilson

2) **Public Comments – 6:35 p.m. (Three minutes per person, statements only) (5 minutes)**
None.

3) **Review of Minutes – 6:40 p.m. (5 minutes)**

Corrections/Additions:

- i. Comment at the October 6, 2022 meeting regarding the fire department being fully staffed was made by Laura Ellery-Somers, not Norm Poli.
- ii. Corrected minutes approved by consensus.

4) **Governmental Entity Reports – 6:45 p.m. (10 minutes each – 30 minutes total)**

Reports should include successes and challenges relative to each entity since the last IGC meeting and with respect to intergovernmental concerns relative to roads, air/water quality, communications, recycling, public safety, recreation, etc.

- a. City (Matt Waligora) – 6:45 p.m.
- b. County (Mary Catherine Hannah) – 6:55 p.m.
- c. Townships (comments from each township) - 7:05 p.m.

Brief Summary of Comments (List Main Topics):

- a. **City:** Mayor Waligora reported the City council is looking into some revisions to the marijuana ordinance, including curbside service. They voted recently against adding fluoride to the water. The City has two new chiefs, Chief Hamp at City PD and Chief Edmonds at City FD.

City Manager Rachel Smolinski announced the public survey regarding the renovations at Culligan Plaza received approximately 1,800 responses. City Council will finalize the design in February; they will allow public comment. The skate park, which was closed for safety issues, will reopen in the spring. The housing taskforce meets next on February 14. The Northeast Michigan Materials Management Authority is approximately 75% funded at this point towards their \$5.4 million goal. Their organizational meeting

will be held January 19.

- b. County:** County Administrator Mary Catherine Hannah stated the County has four new commissioners on the board with one seat to be appointed later this month. The County adopted a Capital Improvement Plan at the end of the year. They are hoping the Long Lake boat launch project will happen this year. A new tenant will be occupying the former DHHS building. The County is engaging in a facility use study about not only the conditions but also about how the buildings are used and interface with the public. The airport runway project is full-steam ahead. The new recycling facility has received \$2.7 million from the federal government.

c. Townships:

Charter Township of Alpena: Supervisor Nathan Skibbe stated the Township has started working with Huron Pines and would like to bring the City and County in as partners. Master and recreation plans will be updated this year.

Green Township: Tammy Bates announced they recently completed solar energy and wireless ordinance amendments along with wind energy. A review of the entire zoning ordinance book is underway as are some improvements to the township hall.

Wilson Township: Kim Elkie reported Wilson is performing a cover-to-cover review of all zoning ordinances.

Road Commission: Gerald MacArthur stated the Road Commission is hoping to spark interest in a bypass road and plans to re-introduce some ideas for infrastructure changes. The IGC was viewed as a good starting point for communication.

5) **Break:** 7:00 p.m.

6) **Priority Topic Discussion/Presentation** - 7:20 p.m. (30 minutes)

Topic: Broadband

Speaker(s): Nico Tucker, NEMCOG; Ethan Clark, PFN; Marilyn Passmore, Charter Spectrum Communications; Ruthann Largent, PIE&G

Noteworthy Comments: Nico Tucker outlined the website

<https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData> for citizens to check on internet availability. You can notify the government via this site that you have requested service and been denied, which will prompt the government to update their files. Additional funds will not be made available if the government believes everyone has been served, so notifications are critical.

NEMCOG will be holding public information sessions to collect input from Michigan residents on how to best prioritize the funds the State will receive for broadband.

Ethan Clark explained that Peninsula Fiber Network (PFN) is a fiber optic network provider based in Marquette. Most Michigan Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs, or 911 centers) utilize PFN's network. PFN is working on projects in the Alpena area to expand their network. Lewiston and other underserved areas are being looked at for future expansions.

Marilyn Passmore outlined Charter Spectrum's investment of \$5 billion in addition to \$1.2 billion they were awarded on a national level from the federal government. They are currently expanding in 33 counties across Michigan. She explained the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), which will distribute up to \$20.4 billion over 10 years to bring broadband and voice to unserved homes and small businesses.

Ruthanne Largent explained that PIE&G's goal is to run fiber to all current electric customers. Alpena County will be included in phase 3 which is estimated for Q2 in 2024; they are currently in phase 1. Their total project cost is \$134 million with \$11.2 million over 10 years from RDOF. They are looking for additional funding but are not waiting for awards to move forward.

- 7) **Priority Topic Discussion and Action Propositions** - 8:25 p.m. (20 minutes)
Noteworthy Comments: None
Non-Binding Resolution(s): None
- 8) **Planning Session** - 8:00 p.m. (15 minutes)
Additional Consensus Topic Suggestions for Upcoming Meetings: Roads & Fiber Optics
Vote for Topic of Upcoming Meeting: Roads & Fiber Optics
Liaison for Organizing Speaker(s): To Be Determined
- 9) **Subsequent Meeting Date, Sponsor & Location**
Date of Next Meeting: June 1, 2023
Location (circle): Township of Alpena
- 10) **Adjournment** – 9:00 p.m.
Time: 8:09 p.m. **Facilitator:** Ann Diamond.

Recording Secretary

Name (print): Kim Elkie

Phone: (989) 354-9821

Signature: *Kim Elkie*

Date: January 19, 2023

Entity Representing: Alpena County