

GOGEBIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
January 27, 2021
County Courthouse
Bessemer, MI 49911
5:00 p.m.

Personnel @ 4pm
Claims@ 4:30

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (January 13, 2021 meeting minutes)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNTY BOARD ON AGENDA ITEMS
(5-minute limit)

COMMITTEE SUMMARY REPORTS:

1. Finance, Budgeting & Auditing Committee, 12/22/2020

APPEARANCES:

1. Darla Lenz - USFS, Forest Supervisor
(Re: Background and changes to Resource Advisory Committee)

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners (Re: Resolution 8-2021)
2. Lisa Hewitt - Gogebic County Treasurer (RE: Credit Card request)

TRIAL BALANCE/CASH BALANCE:

GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE CONTROL:

CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS:

OTHER MATTERS:

PUBLIC COMMENT (5-minute limit)

ADJOURNMENT

GOGEBIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021
County Courthouse
Bessemer, MI 49911
5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Lorenson
Following the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call was taken.

ROLL CALL:

Present: (6) Bonovetz, Byrns, Laabs, Siirila
Orlich, Lorenson

Absent: (0) Peterson

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (December 22, 2020 meeting minutes and
January 4, 2021 Re-organizational meeting minutes)

A motion was made by Bonovetz, supported by Siirila, and carried by
unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of both meetings as
presented.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Chairman Lorenson to approve the agenda to
reflect proper MCL 15.268E language addition for the items in
closed session. Motion made by Siirila, supported by Orlich as
amended. A verbal unanimous vote followed.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNTY BOARD ON AGENDA ITEMS
(5-minute limit)

None appeared

APPEARANCES:

1. **Paul Anderson (Re: Declaration and Notice regarding
easement for the Bessemer to Ramsay portion of the Iron
Belle Trail)**

A motion was made by Bonovetz, supported by Byrns to approve and
authorize for signature.

Roll call:

YES: (6) Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Bonovetz, Orlich, Lorenson
No (0)

Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. **Governor Gretchen Whitmer's Office (Re: Thank you received
for restated-resolution regarding Enbridge Line 5)**

A Motion was made by Lorenson, supported by Siirila, and carried by
unanimous voice vote to receive the communication and place it on
file.

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CLOSED SESSION:

1. **CLOSED SESSION** to discuss settlement strategy regarding litigation. G-18-190-CK Gogebic County v Houghton County, et al

A motion was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns to go into closed session.

Roll Call:

YES: (6) Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Bonovetz, Orlich, Lorenson
NO: (0)

Motion carried.

A Motion was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns to go back into open session.

Roll Call:

YES: (6) Byrns, Bonovetz, Orlich, Siirila, Laabs, Lorenson
NO: (0)

Motion carried.

A motion to pursue continued litigation was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns.

Roll Call: YES: (6) Bonovetz, Orlich, Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Lorenson
NO: (0)

Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION:

1. **CLOSED SESSION** to discuss settlement strategy regarding case G-20-152-CZ Marcovic v Gogebic County & Gogebic County Treasurer

A motion was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns to go into closed session to discuss settlement regarding litigation.

Roll Call:

YES: (6) Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Bonovetz, Orlich, Lorenson
NO: (0)

Motion carried.

Chairman Lorenson asked for a motion to go back into open session. **The motion** was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns.

Roll Call:

YES: (6) Byrns, Bonovetz, Orlich, Siirila, Laabs, Lorenson
No: (0)

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Siirila, supported by Byrns to settle litigation on the matter.

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Roll Call:

YES: (6) Bonovetz, Orlich, Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Lorenson

No: (0)

Motion carried.

OTHER MATTERS:

Chairman Lorenson announced several Agency and Standing committee appointments

ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

The administrator let the board know that the MI-Works MEDC grant was approved and submitted for payment. She also let them know that the Northcare Network payment had been received and the emergency relief for veterans (FY20 CVSF) has been extended until 4/20/21

PUBLIC COMMENT (5-minute limit)

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Laabs, supported by Siirila, and carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn to the call of the Chair. The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

James A. Lorenson, Chairman

Ramona L. Collins, Clerk

COMMITTEE MEETINGS SUMMARY REPORT

1. Finance, Budgeting & Auditing Committee, 12/22/20

No Recommendations

A meeting of the Gogebic County Finance, Budgeting & Auditing Committee was held on Tuesday, December 22, 2020, at 1:00 P.M., Courthouse, Bessemer, Michigan.

Present: Peterson, Siirila, Laabs, Byrns, Orlich, Lorenson, Bonovetz

Absent: None

Also Present: Juliane Giackino, Administrator; Gerry Pelissero, Clerk/Register; Lisa Hewitt, Treasurer; Heidi DeRosso, Emergency Management/911 Coordinator; Ramona Collins, Clerk/Register Elect

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

Chair Peterson stated that this was Mr. Pelissero's last meeting as Clerk/Register.

Claims and accounts was the main item on the agenda.

A motion by Mr. Bonovetz, supported by Mr. Laabs to approve the claims as presented along with the prepaids.

The Clerk/Register indicated that the credit card bills have come in on time and the department heads signed off on the expenditures.

A short discussion ensued.

Vote on the motion: Yeas 7, Nays 0, Absent 0. Motion carried.

Under "Other Matters", Commissioner Lorenson questioned the County Board approving credit card bills for other entities.

A lengthy discussion ensued.

The discussion then circled back around to the airport getting their own credit card but using the County's EIN number.

Commissioner Bonovetz stated that the Airport Manager would be coming to a County Board meeting to explain the need for their own credit card.

Numerous questions were asked of the Treasurer on this process.

Also, under "Other Matters", the Clerk indicated that since there was time remaining at this meeting, questioned the members if they wished to review the Fair quarterly report and the Michigan State Extension University report.

Discussion took place on the Airport report and the lengthy list of projects and purchases that were being considered at the Airport, including budgets and fund balances.

The Administrator requested a clarification on the quarterly report process as it pertained to when the Board wished to receive it, at which meeting, they wish to receive it, and in which format.

Commissioner Lorenson stated that he didn't have any specific format either verbally or in writing was acceptable. The quarterly report should be made at the last meeting of the quarter and at the Board meeting.

The Administrator thanked Commissioner Lorenson for clarification.

The Administrator stated that she had Fair Board minutes pertaining to the vacancy on the Fair Board. They have since received two applications. The Fair Board was recommending the reappointment of Ms. Crystal Suzik.

A short discussion ensued. On the County board agenda were two vacancies on other Boards that would have applications requested as well . It was decided that the Fair Board recommendation would be referred to the Personnel and Negotiations Committee along with the other two vacancies.

There were no further "Other Matters".

There were no "Public Comments".

A motion by Mr. Bonovetz, supported by Mr. Lorenson to adjourn at 1:35 P.M. Motion carried.

George Peterson III
Finance, Budgeting & Auditing Committee

Ramona Collins

From: Lenz, Darla -FS <darla.lenz@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 7, 2021 9:27 AM
To: Ramona Collins
Subject: topic for January 27 Gogebic County board meeting

Hi Gerry, I am the new Ottawa Forest Supervisor and spoke with Dan Siirila last month about presenting information to the board about background and changes to the FS Gogebic County Resource Advisory Committee. He recommended I present at a board meeting. Can I please be added to the agenda for the January 27 meeting? I will have some background materials and will likely need about 10 minutes to introduce myself, present and then take questions, if that sounds ok. When would I need to get you materials? Thanks for your help!



Darla Lenz
Forest Supervisor

Forest Service
Ottawa National Forest

p: 218-556-5564
c: 218-556-5564
darla.lenz@usda.gov

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www.fs.fed.us



Caring for the land and serving
people

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Topic: Secure Rural Schools, Title II Projects, and Resource Advisory Committees

Date: January 6, 2021

Contact: Darla Lenz, Forest Supervisor

Phone: 218-556-5564

Email: darla.lenz@usda.gov

Contact: Lisa Klaus, PAO

Phone: 414-208-6547

Email: lisa.klaus@usda.gov

Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (SRS):

The Secure Rural Schools program provides critical funding for schools, roads, and other municipal services to more than 700 counties across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. A portion of Forest Service funds generated through multi-use activities, such as grazing, timber production, and special use permits, are distributed to eligible counties to help maintain local roads and schools. After decades of declining agency revenues, Congress passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (SRS) to help stabilize the funds available to rural counties. Payments are divided into three distinct categories, or Titles: Title I for roads and schools, Title II for projects on Federal lands, and Title III for county projects.

The SRS Act gives counties the option between two payment methods. The payment options are (1) a modified 25 percent seven year rolling average payment of receipts from national forest lands or (2) a share of the State payment as calculated under the SRS Act.

Counties electing to receive a share of the SRS State payment and receive over \$100,000 must allocate between 80 to 85 percent of the total funds to Title I (roads and schools). The remaining 15 to 20 percent must be set aside for projects under Title II and/or Title III or be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

Ontonagon County elected to receive a share of the State payment. At that time, they also elected to set aside 15% of their payment to Title II projects. These funds are held in reserve by the Forest Service for approved projects.

Title II: Projects on Federal Land:

Counties electing to set aside funds for Title II projects work with the Forest Service to establish Resource Advisory Committees (RACs) that recommend how Title II funds should be spent. Title II funds may be used for the purpose of making additional investments and creating additional employment opportunities through, projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure, implementing stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems, and restoring and improving land health and water quality. Projects shall have broad-based support with objectives that may include, but are not limited to:

- Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration;
- Soil productivity improvement;
- Improvements in forest ecosystem health;
- Watershed restoration and maintenance;
- Restoration, maintenance and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat;
- Control of noxious and exotic weeds; and reestablishment of native species.

At least 50 percent of all Title II funds must be used for projects that are primarily dedicated to road maintenance, decommissioning, or obliteration; or restoration of streams and watersheds. Funds that are not spent or obligated are transferred to the U.S. Treasury.



Resource Advisory Committees:

The SRS Act authorizes the use of RACs as a mechanism for local community collaboration with federal land managers in recommending Title II projects. The geographic boundaries of the RACs are determined locally by Forest Service officials in consultation with county and tribal officials and other stakeholders. The RACs are formed to ensure efficient and effective advice to Forest Supervisors and District Rangers responsible for approving and implementing the projects. Each RAC is assigned a Designated Federal Official to serve as the Forest Service point of contact.

The RAC’s duties include reviewing proposed forest management projects in accordance with the SRS Act and making recommendations to the Forest Service and providing opportunities for interested parties to participate in the project development process. RAC duties also include monitoring of project progress and making recommendations for appropriate changes to projects being monitored.

It is the Forest Service’s responsibility to ensure that RACs are balanced and diverse with equal representation from industry, environmental groups, elected officials and local people as outlined in the SRS Act. RAC composition should consist of:

Category A	Category B	Category C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups • Developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities; • Energy and mineral development interests; or commercial or recreational fishing interests • Commercial timber industry • Federal grazing or other land use permittee or represent nonindustrial private forest land owners, within the area for which the RAC is organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally recognized environmental organizations • Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations • Dispersed recreational activities • Archaeological and historical interests • Nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State elected official or their designee • County or local elected official • American Indian tribes within or adjacent to committee area • School officials or teachers • Represent the affected public at large.

Previous Projects and Funds

In the past, the Gogebic and Ontonagon RACs have approved a wide range of projects. Projects were submitted by the County, Forest Service employees, local citizens, partners, NGO's and other groups.

- Between 2008 and 2011, Gogebic County received nearly \$400,000 in Title II funds
- Ontonagon County received just over \$310,000 in Title II funds during the same period.
- Gogebic County approved \$132,175 worth of Title II projects between 2014 and 2015.
- Ontonagon County approved nearly \$100,000 worth of Title II projects between 2014 and 2015.
- All prior year projects have been implemented.

Table II. Title II projects previously recommended/implemented with prior year funds (FY 2008 thru FY 2015)

Gogebic Resource Advisory Committee	Ontonagon Resource Advisory Committee
Agonikak Trail (\$90,000)	Forest Highway 16 Improvements (\$250,000)
Invasive Plans in Sylvania (\$48,000)	Courtney Lake Trail Maintenance (\$5,000)
Gogebic County Invasive Plants (\$17,000)	Boat Landing Rehab (\$20,000)
Langford Lake Invasive (\$20,000)	Closing of Unauthorized OHV Trails (\$2,735)
Harris Creek Hunter Walking Trails (\$15,000)	Ontonagon County Invasive Plants (\$10,054)
Boat Landing Rehabilitation (\$15,000)	Aquatic Invasive Species Signage (\$4,200)
Barberry Eradication (\$5,000)	Norwich Mine Historic Trail Interpretation/Resource Protection (\$10,500)
Narrows Creek Restoration (\$25,000)	Norwich Mine Historic Trail Access (\$2,000)
Sylvania Lake and Marion Lake Campgrounds Road Maintenance (\$15,000)	Snowmobile Access Resource Protection (\$1,675)
Portable Boat Washer (\$10,000)	Interior Cemetery Rehab (\$2,600)
Signed & Mapped OHV Routes (\$4,000)	Pioneer Trailhead Improvement (\$3,500)
Rehab Maintenance of BRH Road (\$130,000)	Pioneer Trailhead Relocation (\$13,500)
EWM Control in Duck Lake (\$6,000)	Bergland Ski Trail Improvements (\$37,000)
Assessment/Management of EWM on Crooked/Duck Lakes (\$7,000)	Norwich Interpretive Trail Parking (\$2,000)
Gogebic Invasives Eradication Workshops (\$8,000)	Pioneer Multi-Use Trail Remediation and Stabilization (\$33,000)
Gogebic County Garlic Mustard	Ontonagon River Access Remediation (\$7,421)
BRH Pavilion Renovation (\$10,000)	
LVD Invasive Species Project (\$17,771)	
Henry Lake Dock Replacement (\$35,734)	

Current Status of Ottawa RACs:

The Ottawa National Forest has two chartered RACs: The Ontonagon RAC and the Gogebic RAC. Currently, each RAC is absent all members, as all appointments of designated individuals have expired. In the past, the desire was to maintain separate RACs for each of the Counties receiving Title II funds. The need to continue that separation has diminished and there is no longer a business need for two RACs.

Resource Advisory Committee members are designated by the Secretary of the USDA after a thorough vetting. To ensure high-quality and qualified members are selected, the Forest Service requests that more than one application be submitted for each representative within each category. Traditionally, the Ottawa National Forest has had difficulty in recruiting volunteers for our RACs. Many of our past RAC members were already serving on other committees, working groups, and/or non-profit organizations. By combining RACs, it is believed we could more successfully recruit for members as we would not need as many volunteers. This would also increase efficiencies in the management and operations of the Committee.

If we are unable to nominate and designate the total number of candidates needed for a RAC, Title II funds would be returned to Treasury. By combining RACs the opportunity to review, recommend and implement projects is increased as it would be easier to find the required number of volunteers to serve. With an approved and fully



United States Department of Agriculture

staffed RAC, Title II funds would remain within the western Upper Peninsula, allowing for completion of projects that benefit the natural resources and the communities that rely on them.

Title II funds are held in reserve by the Forest Service and can be tracked by County. The deciding official can advise the RAC to provide project funding recommendations within a county proportionate to their Title II if that is important to counties.

Shortly, the USDA Forest Service will be reviewing and renewing the national RAC charter. By combining RACs now, we would be able to include this change in the current charter review and update. If not done now, we would have to wait to combine RACs until the next time the charter is updated.

Additional Resources:

Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act:

<https://fsoutreach.gdcii.com/?id=AF8866ED3BD74650A6973022A5EF7E08>

Secure Rural Schools Resource Advisory Committee Charter:

https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd676706.pdf

Secure Rural School Payments to Counties:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/states/secure-rural-schools/payments-to-counties>



Forest Service



Resolution 8-2021

Date: January 20, 2021

Pandemic Resolution

WHEREAS, The Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on January 20, 2021 and reviewed request to approve and distribute as specified this Pandemic Resolution.

WHEREAS, we live in a time of pandemic;

WHEREAS, we are now entering into the second year of the global pandemic which has impacted every Grand Traverse County citizen in a myriad of ways;

WHEREAS, the threat from the virus, though serious, has resulted in a thwarting of personal freedoms without sufficient regard for ongoing and potentially irreparable economic, emotional, educational and other societal impacts;

WHEREAS, the orders by the MDHHS lack legislative support of the democratically elected representatives, having been initiated unilaterally and unconstitutionally by the Governor of Michigan,

WHEREAS, the orders by the MDHHS have disallowed any degree of personal accountability, eroded constitutional rights of citizens and have placed undue burden and restrictions on local businesses and local employees;

WHEREAS, The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has issued orders without providing funding or sufficient guidance for the enforcement of such orders;

WHEREAS, the right and responsibility of individuals to self-determine what is best for their own health, liberty and pursuit of happiness is necessary and ensured by our Constitution, which we have taken an oath to defend and uphold;

THEREFORE, The Grand Traverse County Commission does not support the expenditure of any county funds for the purpose of arrest and prosecution of any person accused of violating MDHHS emergency orders regarding COVID-19, and encourages the Grand Traverse County

Sheriffs Department and The Grand Traverse County Prosecutors Office to make this the lowest priority;

FURTHER, we call upon the citizens of Grand Traverse County to act responsibly with regards to others while determining for themselves what is best for themselves, for their own families and loved ones and how to contend with the ongoing risks associated with the COVID-19 virus;

FURTHER, we call upon local businesses to use their own good judgement to operate in a manner which minimizes risk to patrons while protecting the health and welfare of their business, care for their employees, and the community;

FURTHER, **The Grand Traverse County Commission** directs this resolution to be sent to all 83 Michigan counties, the State of Michigan House, The State of Michigan Senate, and the Office of Governor Gretchen Whitmer.



LISA HEWITT
County Treasurer

Gogebic County Treasurer's Office

200 North Moore Street, Bessemer, Michigan 49911

Telephone: (906) 663-4517

Fax Number: (906) 663-4660

PATTY BORSETH

Chief Deputy

CARRIE BULL

Deputy

January 20, 2021

Gogebic County Board of Commissioners
Gogebic County Courthouse
200 N. Moore St.
Bessemer, MI 49911

RE: Card Request - County Clerk-Register of Deeds

Gentlemen:

Ramona Collins, County Clerk-Register of Deeds has requested a credit card in her name. The limit on the credit card will be \$2,000 upon approval from the Board.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hewitt, Treasurer
Gogebic County