



Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

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MINUTES

OF THE

NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

January 16, 2025
University Center
Gaylord, MI

1. Call to Order

The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) Board of Directors meeting was called to order by R. Pallarito, Board President, at 10:00 a.m., a quorum was declared.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present

In Person: Terry Small, Dan Ludlow, John Wallace, Michelle LaRose, Jackie Bondar, Dana Wingo, Bob Brietzke, Jessica Topp, Lindsey Meisner, Ted Fines, Kelli Stockwell, Travis Hewitt, Danny Mitchell, Scott McLennan, and Rob Pallarito.

Virtual: Travis Hewitt, Dan Ludlow, and Jeff Lawson

Staff Present: Doug Baum, Theresa Huff, and Chelsea Goodwin.

3. Approval of Agenda

S. McLennan moved, seconded by J. Bondar, to approve the agenda as presented with additions. Yes all, motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

R. Pallarito presented the Minutes of the December 19, 2024, meeting. J. Wallace moved, seconded by T. Small, to approve both the minutes as presented. Yes all, motion carried.

5. Financial Report

C. Goodwin noted the financial reports are from the new BS&A software so you can see there are in a new format, simpler and straight forward. She briefly reviewed the Revenues and Expenditures for the period ended 12/31/24 as provided. Nothing unusual, in good shape so far. K. Stockwell moved to approve and receive and file the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the period 10/1/23-9/30/24 as presented, seconded by J. Bondar. Yes all, motion carried.

6. President's Report

A. Regional Project Review – December 2024: R. Pallarito stated there is/are (0) Federal Grant project; (0) State projects, (0) other projects and (0) public notice projects for regional review.

B. Other: None.

7. **Director's/Staff Report**

D. Baum briefly reviewed his "Directors Report" handout that was provided to the board. Said it looks a little different this time due to the recent meetings and holidays. For those who are new, he provided a little background on NEMCOG. NEMCOG is involved in many areas, transportation, master plans, recreation plans, economic development, etc. For economic development, we cover 11 counties.

8. **Committee Report's**

- A. Finance Committee: None.
- B. Executive Committee: None.
- C. Other: None.

9. **Previous Business**

- A. June 2025 Board Meeting Date: Meeting was scheduled for June 19, 2025, however, that is the Juneteenth holiday and NEMCOG observes it. The board agreed to move the meeting to the following Thursday, June 26th, at 10:00 a.m.
- B. Other: None.

11. **New Business:** none.

12. **County/Member Updates**

Alcona Co.: Everyone was reelected, no one new. The Senior Citizens Center is going well, it's going to be big. It's impressive.

Alpena Co.: Have a balanced budget for the first time in years. Ollies and Aldi's are new and open. Big Lots is closing. Hoping City and contractors can come together on housing. The County replaced one officer; Charter Township has to have police. Looking to get back one or two officers.

City of Alpena: DPI property, renewal of Zoning Ordinance; past to be rezoned as a waterfront district. Culligan Plaza - plan to add bathrooms and a park; hoping to get approved this year. Have 2 new council members. Water/sewer litigation is not over yet. 2018-2024 still working on. Escrows were \$3.5 million.

City of Gaylord: Working on Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance with D. Cline. They're nearing completion and is going well. The City is creating its own Brownfield Authority to help with housing.

City of Onaway: Used ARPA funds for playground equipment. Have a new Database, nonprofit at the library for grants. Training on grant writing and can be used by anyone in County.

City of Rogers City:

Cheboygan Co. No offer on the papermill.

Michigan Works!: They help job searchers, help employers to find employees. Also help pay for training for high demand jobs. Offer on the job training programs to move employers training up. Have a Barrier Removal program that assists with car repairs, tires, and work clothing which is a big ask. They cover 8 counties.

Montmorency Co.: Their Board has 3 new commissioners. Personal goal is to improve communications.

Oscoda Co.: All officers and directors in the new building now. Can't hold anyone overnight until February. VA is looking for a VSO Director. Thanks to NEMCOG, they received the passport grant.

Otsego Co.: Hayes Township required a meeting with the DNR to discuss solar project, are waiting to hear back. There was a motion to put together a resolution for panels and battery storage. Rob Weaver, Neil Drzewiecki and Christi Sortor are new Commissioners and the new Board Chair is Brett McVannel.

Presque Isle Co.: New to the Board.

Region 7 Health Care Coalition: Interviews for Amandas position will take place early February. L. Meisner applied for it. Working on deliverables for state deadline. The State won't let them be a hub site for pediatrics. Work with the State, hospitals, EMS, and Emergency Managers to ensure preparedness for mass casualties, terrorism, and coordinate between hospitals all the way up to the state. Can stage events; but usually act as a liaison and coordinate, the middleman so to speak.

State Legislature: Had some Representatives Walk out, slowing things down. Didn't have a quorum, so things were suspended until the new session in January. The big priority is Tip Tax and PTO (paid time off). The Minimum wage increase and tips going away. Small businesses don't know how they'll survive. Paid time off, it's hard to get and keep employees. Now time off without notice; it's causing business to consider closing. Next big thing is the budget. Will be an interesting couple of months ahead. The House cancelled for this week. When there is a balanced government, there is better discussion with a wider perspective.

D. Baum noted that we usually have a guest speaker, however, we don't have one this time. If you'd like a tour, let us know and we can make arrangements.

C. Goodwin stated the new Nemcog.org website is live.

13. Public Comment: none.

14. Adjournment/Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 20, 2025, at the Kirtland University Center in Gaylord. T. Small moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by R. Pallarito. Yes all, motion carried, meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.