



Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

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**MINUTES  
OF THE  
NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING  
January 21, 2021**

**Video-conference: Go-To-Meeting**

**Call to Order**

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

**Roll Call**

Board Members

Present: Dan Gauthier, Dave Karschnick, John Wallace, Kyle Yoder, Rob Pallarito, Carl Altman, Scott McLennan, Marisue Moreau, Robert Heilman, Mark Becmer, Danny Mitchell, Dave Post, Doug Baum and Norm Brecheisen

Staff Present: Diane Rekowski, Denise Cline, Theresa Huff and Karen Cole

Guest: Tom Stephenson

**Approval of Minutes**

R. Heilman presented the Minutes of the December 17, 2020 meeting. C. Altman moved, seconded by J. Wallace to approve the minutes as presented. Yes all, motion carried.

**Financial Report**

K. Cole reviewed the December 31, 2020 financial statements. C. Altman moved, seconded by D. Karschnick to receive and file the December 31, 2020 Financial Report as presented. Yes all, motion carried.

**Presentation**

NEMCOG Region Broadband Update: Tom Stephenson, Connect MI

T. Stephenson updated the Board on Broadband expansion in the region. Significant Federal and State funding is in the process of being awarded to Utility Cooperatives and ISP's serving the region. Connect MI has been awarded funding from MEDC to assist with deployment in the region. T. Stephenson is currently working in Cheboygan, Crawford, Oscoda and Montmorency counties. Announcements of awards will likely be in March.

**President's Report**

**Regional Project Review:** R. Heilman stated there is (1) Federal Grant project for regional review; (0) other projects for regional review and (0) public notices. J. Wallace moved, seconded by D. Mitchell to approve the project as presented. Yes all, motion carried.

**MI Association of Regions (MAR):** D. Rekowski updated the Board on the statewide association's recent meeting. MAR will be submitting an EGLE grant proposal for statewide implementation of Level One of the Integrated Asset Management program.

There will be Munetrix Training with Bob Kittle directly following the board meeting on February 18, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. T. Huff will send out email to get RSVPs. Your RSVP will allow B. Kittle to provide more info. specific information to those attending.

### **Director's Report**

#### **Administration**

- All staff working remotely. D. Rekowski is on medical leave however continuing with emails and limited work. T. Huff is going in once a week to complete administrative work. All has been going smoothly. Holding weekly staff meetings via videoconference.
- Assessing the need for smaller, less expensive office space.
- Secured labor attorney to review NEMCOG Policies.
- A Munetrix Budget and Finance Training with Bob Kittle will be held directly following the board meeting on February 18, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

#### **Projects**

- Hired PT staff under the EDA - COVID grant to assist Target Alpena and Otsego County Economic Alliance. Contracted with Northern Lakes Economic Alliance for Cheboygan County. Have a shared staff agreement with the City of Grayling for staff time with their economic development staff to assist NEMCOG staff with community development efforts in Oscoda, Alcona, and Crawford and Montmorency counties.
- Alcona County EDA grant was approved.
- JLUS grant: Councils have been meeting regarding implementation items. N. Tucker is working on the update of the Grayling Area Transportation Study.
- MEDC Survival grants are out this week. Great need for the funding. Target Alpena and Otsego County Economic Alliance are administering the grants. Both have done an excellent job on handling the grant programs and disseminating the grant funds in an expedited manner.
- The Northeast MI Local Foods Logistic Study is going well. Modifications had to be made to obtain provider input. Explorer Solutions, the Consultant is on task and providing valuable information.
- EGLE: Assisting EGLE with organization of Electronic Waste events to be held spring thru fall throughout the region. The events will be funded either through Hewlett Packard or the regional grant.
- Finance Committee will be meeting before the next board meeting. C. Altman nominated D. Karschnick to fill the vacancy left by D. Peterson. D. Karschnick accepted.
- Received an additional 120 boxes of nonmotorized transportation maps and any assistance in delivery to convenience stores, etc. would be appreciated.
- County Hazard Mitigation Plans: In holding for FEMA review.

### **Committee Reports**

RPI: No report.

Finance Committee: Will be meeting prior to the next board meeting.

### **Previous Business**

None

### **New Business**

None

### **County Updates**

Alpena Co.: Alpena County employees are able to setup appointments to receive vaccines this Saturday. Area restaurants are looking forward to opening February 1, 2021. There is a new Commissioner, Don Gilmet. Kevin Osbourne was re-elected to the Board and the Vice Chair is Marty Thomson. Bagley Street is closing February 8<sup>th</sup> so people will have to seek alternate routes.

Cheboygan Co.: The board was all re-elected. Officers and commissioners are the same.

City of Alpena: The Alpena Fire Dept. is operating out of US23 N. on a temporary basis. The City received good news on a lawsuit. The Hospital making good progress. Still cancelling events due to COVID restrictions.

Livingston Twp.: The office is closed for roof replacement. The Otsego County Road Commission has a new Chairman.

MI Works!: Glad to hear about Broadband expansion, will contact T. Stephenson for job training opportunities. Funding for job training is available and reaching out to colleges on this. Starting to look at Spring Career Fairs – they will likely be held outside. MI Career Exploration Events – exploring virtual options but feel the event is best in person.

Oscoda Co.: Voters passed a ½ mil for the Gypsy Moth program and are working on it. Also, the County has been working on an Online Reservation System for the camp grounds.

Otsego Co.: 2 new board members; R. Pallarito was elected as Board Vice President. Justice Complex project millage has been delayed due to COVID but will be on the May ballot. The costs have increased to build the complex since the original estimate was developed and have made revisions to reduce costs.

Presque Isle County: New lawsuit, against the courts. C. Altman was re-appointed as the County Chair. Discussed the Baraga County's manifesto and the Resolution drafted to send to the Governor.

Region 7 Health Coalition: Working on budget. Equipment is going out. Coordinating with Health Depts. and hospitals holding vaccine clinics. NIMS Training on 1/25 at 1:00 p.m. for 4 hours via Zoom, no cost. Go to their website to register.

Rogers City: 1 week from this Friday, Team Rogers City meeting, hosting Denise Cline/NEMCOG as guest speaker via Zoom, explaining benefits of US23 Heritage Route.

Village of Mackinaw City: No snow, but windy.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m. by R. Heilman. The next meeting will be February 18, 2021. T. Huff will be contacting everyone regarding meeting attendance and Munetrix training.