

CUPPAD REGIONAL COMMISSION

Quarterly Meeting

Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2025

12:30pm ET

Delta County Boardroom, Escanaba, MI

Zoom and call options

MEMBERS PRESENT

Thyra Karlstrom, Marquette County Member at Large*
Kelly Livermore, Alger County Board*
John Malnar, Delta County Board*
Jill Beaudou, Hannahville Indian Community*
Kathy Vermaat, Marquette County Planning Commission
Peter Kleiman, Menominee County Townships*
Mike Perilloux, Schoolcraft County Cities*
Pam Johnson, Alger County Planning Commission
Dean Seaberg, Alger County Member at Large
Lisa Howard, Alger County Townships (via Zoom)
Amy Berglund, Delta County Planning Commission
Christine Williams, Delta County Member at Large*
Theresa Chenier, Delta County Townships
Joeseeph Walker, Delta County Cities
Dana LaLonde, Marquette County Board (via Zoom)
Zak Aubert, Menominee County Board
John Starzynski, Menominee County Cities
Emily Leach, Marquette County Board

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kathy Reynolds, Alger County Cities
Jordan Stanchina, Dickinson County Cities
Kristin Thornton, Marquette County Townships
Nate Heffron, Marquette County Cities
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Donald Park, Menominee County Planning Commission
Carol Welch, Menominee County Villages
Connie Westrich, Menominee County Member at Large
Dan Rushford, Alger County Villages
Jeff LeFevre, Delta County Villages
Craig Reiter, Schoolcraft County Board
Randy Gorecki, Bark River Township
Amber Butterfield, Dickinson County Planning Commission
Denny Olson, Dickinson County Townships*

*Denotes Executive Committee Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Dotty LaJoye, Executive Director, CUPPAD
Ryan Soucy, Senior Community Planner, CUPPAD
Ryan Carrig, Community Planner, CUPPAD
Jessica Walter, Associate Planner, CUPPAD
Mike Tripp, GIS Coordinator, CUPPAD
Rachel Johns, Administrative Assistant, CUPPAD
Michelle Viau, CFO, UP Michigan Works!

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:30pm by Thyra Karlstrom. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken; a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN BY P. KLEIMAN, SUPPORTED BY J. MALNAR; MOTION CARRIED.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

A. Berglund and D. Seaberg noted misspellings of their last names and asked for those to be corrected. T. Karlstrom requested 'MEMBER ABSENT' be included. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH AFOREMENTIONED EDITS OF THE FEBRUARY 28, 2025, REGIONAL COMMISSION MEETING BY P. KLEIMAN, SUPPORTED BY M. PERILLOUX; MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2025, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING BY J. MALNAR, SUPPORTED BY D. SEABERG; MOTION CARRIED.

TREASURERS REPORT

Jill presented the Treasurer's Report, highlighting the check register that was included with the materials. The register provides the majority of the details regarding the checks written without having to receive all of that information in the meeting packets. Moving forward the cash balance will appear at the bottom of the document to help with tracking throughout the year. Jill inquired whether the anticipated funding from the MSHDA and City of Ishpeming contracts would be collected as expected. Dotty explained reimbursement from MSHDA requires filling out an FSR and providing staff hours. In response to the City of Ishpeming, Ryan Soucy explained that the grant in question is a two-year program that experienced delays due to changes in city administration. He confirmed that CUPPAD is now able to begin billing against the grant, if desired.

Zak Aubert reported that Menominee County has approved a Master Plan contract in the amount of \$25,000. He asked when this contract would be reflected in the Grant Balances worksheet. Dotty provided clarification on how and when new contracts are incorporated into the worksheet.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE TREASURER'S REPORT BY Z. AUBERT, SUPPORTED BY K. LIVERMORE; MOTION CARRIED.

Accounts Payable Review

Review was included as part of the Treasurer's Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

D. LaJoye presented a comprehensive update on recent disruptions and uncertainties surrounding federal and state transportation and infrastructure funding. In February, temporary legal review requirements at the Federal Highway Administration delayed certain Rural Task Force projects just as construction bids were being released, though the order was rescinded shortly thereafter. Additionally, as of January 22, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) removed the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool from its website, impacting the ability of communities to verify their disadvantaged status—critical for competitiveness in federal grant programs. Several Upper Peninsula communities, including Ishpeming, Marquette, KI Sawyer, and Escanaba, had previously qualified under this status, resulting in significant funding advantages. However, some census tracts, like those in Ishpeming, have reportedly lost this status, potentially jeopardizing future eligibility. The \$1.75M RAISE grant application in collaboration with the Marquette County Road Commission had to be substantially revised days before submission due to the rollback of equity and environmental justice requirements. Menominee County's \$3.5M award for County Road 388 and a \$21.3M RAISE grant for a freight terminal are also now in question, with reports of stalled communications with USDOT. Further, Senator Peters' office advised that congressional-directed spending requests should prioritize hard infrastructure over community-based initiatives. The Mitten Grant, originally set to fund \$870,000 in digital navigator support over four years, remains in limbo in the western region despite apparent statewide rollout. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) also advised against using terms like "equity," "inclusion," or "climate change" in grant documentation due to increased scrutiny, offering review support for regional documents. Meanwhile, the status of the \$70,000 annual EDA Partnership Planning Grant, which supports flexible assistance to local governments, is under review by the Department of Jobs. Concerns were raised over the long-standing funding freeze and the broader chilling effect these changes may have on access to federal opportunities—particularly for historically underserved communities. Notably, while many grant programs have faced cutbacks or procedural barriers, Community Development Block Grants remain unexpectedly unaffected, though administrative capacity for managing them may be diminished due to federal staffing reductions.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT BY C. WILLIAMS, SUPPORTED BY K. VERMAAT; MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

D. LaJoye provided a list of CUPPAD Commissioners appointed for the term spanning February 2025 through 2027, with an asterisk (*) indicating those serving on the Executive Committee.

Election of Officers

Dotty opened nominations for the election of the Chairperson of the CUPPAD Regional Commission and Executive Committee.

P. Kleiman nominated T. Karlstrom for the CUPPAD Regional Commission and Executive Committee Chairperson. There being no further nominations; the nomination was accepted.

Chairperson T. Karlstrom called for nominations for Vice Chair to the CUPPAD Regional Commission and Executive Committee. P. Kleiman nominated J. Malnar. There being no further nominations, the nomination was accepted.

Chairperson T. Karlstrom called for nominations for Treasurer to the CUPPAD Regional Commission and Executive Committee. P. Kleiman nominated J. Beaudou. There being no further nominations; the nomination was accepted.

Chairperson T. Karlstrom called for nominations for Secretary to the CUPPAD Regional Commission and Executive Committee. J. Malnar nominated P. Kleiman. There being no further nominations, the nomination was accepted.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE SLATE OF OFFICERS BY Z. AUBERT, SUPPORTED BY A. BERGLUND; MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS

An update on the steps taken to provide security to employee personal information after the security breach was provided. The breach affected two staff members. Staff affected were given the opportunity to purchase LifeLock software for full reimbursement.

D. Lajoie explained the verification form has been sent out twice as directed by Attorney Wendy Marcotte. Forms were distributed for filling out by Commissioners who haven't already done so.

PRESENTATION

Ryan Soucy gave a comprehensive presentation providing statistics on housing regionwide.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Z. Aubert confirmed the Menominee County Road Commission will receive their grant money.

P. Kleiman followed up that all county road projects are hinging on whether or not the county will receive funds from two large grants.

C. Williams reported Delta County is currently working with Jessica on the 5-Year Recreation Plan. The community is actively engaging in the survey, which is great, as the board members are eager to hear their input.

A. Berglund reported the Delta County Master Plan request for proposals were due today.

J. Malnar commented Delta County is looking to hire an Administrator and Controller after the Airport Manager position was offered to Ashleigh Young.

M. Perilloux mentioned Schoolcraft County shares the burden of finding a new medical examiner. Residents in Manistique are getting new water meters. After 25 years the original units have reached their expectancy.

D. LaLonde commented the hiring of a new Marquette County Administrator will be on the agenda for their next meeting agenda. After two offers were made and declined, it's time to consider and discuss what the next steps should be.

K. Livermore commented on the Alger County Clerk being awarded the 'Sunlight Award' for outstanding elections ethics.

T. Karlstrom commented that Marquette County had a contractor walkthrough for recreation focused projects at KI Sawyer.

Next Meetings

Executive Committee meeting- March 20, 2025, at 2:00PM

Quarterly Regional Commission meeting- July 25, 2025, at 12:30PM- Lunch served at noon.

Adjournment

**MOTION BY Z. AUBERT, SUPPORT BY K. VERMAAT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 2:11 PM;
MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes by Rachel Johns