

**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission
Executive Committee Meeting**

EUPRPDC Office; 2345 Meridian; Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Attendance

Allison Watkins
Kelly Freeman

Dean Reid

Jeff Holt

Mike Patrick

Staff

Jeff Hagan Kim Wilcox

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by M. Patrick.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. It was noted that noted that all members were present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted following a motion by K. Freeman with support by D. Reid.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment addressed at this meeting.

FINANCIAL UPDATE & PROGRAM REPORT

CEO J. Hagan provided a review of the financial report along with a general overview of current program updates. Overall, there are no areas of concern with the Financial Report as presented. J. Holt moved to approve the Financial Update/Program Report as presented. K. Freeman supported. The motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

K. Freeman—Yes	M. Patrick—Yes	J. Holt—Yes	A. Watkins—Yes	D. Reid--Yes
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NEW BUSINESS

Health Insurance Benefit Proposal

CEO Hagan indicated that the renewal rate of the current Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan has increased by 16.62%. Upon discussing possible options with the VAST insurance representatives, it was recommended that a change in the Blue Cross health insurance plan from the BCBSM PPO plan to the BCBSM Blue Care Network (BCN) plan could be considered which would be more cost effective yet still be a comparable, high-quality plan. There is an

approximate 19% savings with the BCN plan. The BCN plan requires that services and providers are located in Michigan. As there is currently one employee living out of state working remotely who would not be covered under BCN, there are two options to consider: (1) to create a division in the existing BCBSM PPO plan or (2) to offer the remote employee the payment-in-lieu of health benefits to purchase an individual health insurance plan. Due to the time constraint of open enrollment for new policies, it is recommended that it the first option be the preferred option for the remote employee for one year to allow that employee more time to research future health insurance options.

Following a brief discussion, J. Holt moved to approve the recommended proposed change of the BCBSM PPO health insurance plan to the BCBSM BCN plan. D. Reid supported. The motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

A. Watkins—Yes	J. Holt—Yes	K. Freeman—Yes	M. Patrick—Yes	D. Reid—Yes
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After approval of the change to the BCBSM BCN plan, K. Freeman moved to keep the BCBSM PPO division open for the remote employee working out of the state for the next calendar year to allow time for the employee to research possible individual health insurance options. A. Watkins supported. Motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

J. Holt—Yes	K. Freeman—Yes	M. Patrick—Yes	D. Reid—Yes	A. Watkins—Yes
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Resolution: Next Cycle Grant

Members reviewed the resolution for the Next Cycle Consumer Battery Grant. This grant in partnership with Michigan EGLE, RRS, and Next Cycle totals \$60,000 with no local match for at least three years to coordinate community engagement and assist in facilitating regional meetings. The resolution designates CEO J. Hagan as the authorized signatory and grant recipient of this grant. D. Reid moved to approve the Next Cycle Consumer Battery Grant Resolution. A. Watkins supported. The motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

M. Patrick—Yes	D. Reid—Yes	A. Watkins—Yes	J. Holt—Yes	K. Freeman--Yes
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DNR SPARK Grant Contract

Earlier this month, CEO Hagan emailed the Executive Committee for approval of the DNR SPARK Partner Agreement as the DNR needed approval prior to the next scheduled meeting. The total grant amount is \$35,905 with a flexible scope of work to assist SPARK Grant awardees. As committee members approved this contract via email, it is recommended that physical approval also be provided. J. Holt moved to ratify approval of the DNR SPARK grant. K. Freeman supported. Motion passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

D. Reid—Yes	A. Watkins—Yes	J. Holt—Yes	K. Freeman—Yes	M. Patrick--Yes
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MEMBER UPDATES

Dean Reid: Mentioned that MEA is assisting Bois Blanc Island with updating property located in Cheboygan for their ferry system. This is a unique situation as the land is not located in Mackinac County yet affects Mackinac County community members. It was suggested that Bois Blanc Township may wish to contact EUPTA to discuss possible interest in ferry operation services for Bois Blanc Island.

Allison Watkins: Indicated that grant funding has been received to provide repairs to railroad crossings in Newberry and should be starting next week. She also described a meeting with Michigan legislators regarding the recently signed Clean Energy Bill. This is a concern, especially in townships without Solar/Wind Ordinances in place, as local control could be in jeopardy with the Clean Energy Bill.

OLD BUSINESS

CEO Hagan indicated that the EUPRPDC office lease is in effect until January. After meeting with the City Manager, it was determined that the City will be writing only six-month leases for tenants of the SmartZone. There does not appear to be a rate increase at this time. It was noted that a longer lease would be preferred as six months is not a lot of time if new office space needs to be procured. As the current lease was a three-year lease, members suggested that a resolution be written requesting the City to consider at least a one-year lease.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m. following a motion by K. Freeman and support by D. Reid.