

**WUPPDR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Western U.P. Planning and Development Region

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

4:15 PM (ET)

Via Zoom Audio/Videoconference

NAME	Present, voting	Present, non-voting	Absent
Robert Nousiainen, Chair, Ontonagon County	X		
Joe Bonovetz, 1 <sup>st</sup> V.C., Gogebic County			X
Patti Peretto, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Iron County	X		
Bill Rolof, Treasurer, Baraga County			X
James Vivian, Jr., Secretary, Keweenaw County			X
Del Rajala, Alternate, Keweenaw County			X
Tom Tikkanen, Member, Houghton County	X		
Marlene Broemer, Alternate, Ontonagon County			X
MaryEllen Hyttinen, Office Manager, WUPPDR		X	
Jerald Wuorenmaa, Executive Director, WUPPDR		X	
Lisa McKenzie, Assistant Planner, WUPPDR		X	

**Call to Order:** Robert Nousiainen, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:44 PM (ET)

**Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was spoken.

**Roll Call of Members:** The following commissioners responded to roll call done by Hyttinen.  
Patti Peretto, Tom Tikkanen, Robert Nousiainen.

**Approval of Agenda:** Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes - (March 21, 2022, Executive Committee):** Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Bills Paid:** Moved by Tikkanen, supported by Peretto to approve the bills paid as presented from March 1, 2022 – May 31, 2022, totaling \$140,950.70. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Tikkanen, Nousiainen. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

**Public Appearances:** Bob LaFave (Full Commission member) was present

**Director's Report:**

**Materials Management County Engagement Grant** - grant agreement is now in place and WUPPDR staff would be meeting on Friday to coordinate. Grant end date is now mid December 2022.

**EDA CARES Grant** – this grant ends at the end of June 2022.

Wuorenmaa explained the Housing Strategy contained 4 to 5 big regional strategies & programs to propose for housing development, including to form a community housing development center seeded within WUPPDR. Funding for this would be hard to find. McKenzie explained more on the process and requirements necessary to development these programs.

Six Recreation Plans had been started.

**Amendment to MERS DB Adoption Agreement:** Wuorenmaa explained the last amendment mostly pertained to one part-time permanent employee, Steve Rouser. This employee had several months below the current threshold to earn service credit. MERS would like for this employee to either earn credit every month or be removed from the program. Wuorenmaa would like to keep this employee in the program and revise the current service credit requirement from 96 hours to 80 hours. MERS had noted occasional months without service credit, such as during an unpaid vacation, could be explained in writing. Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the MERS monthly service credit to 80 hours a month. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Tikkanen, Nousiainen. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

**Quarterly Budget Amendment:** Wuorenmaa stated there are not really any significant changes within the budget except for some adjustments between fiscal year funds. Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the budget amendment. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Tikkanen, Nousiainen. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

**Personnel Policy amendments:**

- a. Restrictions on Political Activity – Wuorenmaa mentioned he would like to run for office on his township board and requested an amendment to the personnel policy to incorporate a 2012 amendment to the Hatch Act that allows employees to run for partisan office unless they are 100% paid by federal funds. Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve employee political activity involvement. Motion carried.
- b. Travel: mileage reimbursement rate – Wuorenmaa noted that the IRS mileage reimbursement rate would be increasing to 62.5 cents/mile effective July 1 but that WUPPDR’s reimbursement is currently based on the Michigan state reimbursement rate, which may or may not be increased. He requested an amendment to the personnel policy that would base mileage reimbursement on the IRS federal travel rates instead of the state rate. Moved by Tikkanen, supported by Peretto to adopt the IRS mileage rate effective July 1, 2022. Motion carried.
- c. Holidays: Juneteenth National – The committee discussed potential addition of Juneteenth as a WUPPDR holiday and decided to table this item to the next Full Commission meeting.


**ELPC Ottawa NF Wilderness proposal update:** Wuorenmaa explained concerns Commissioner Jeff Ratcliffe had raised regarding the proposal for new Ottawa National Forest wilderness areas by ELPC. The committee decided to table this item to the next Full Commission meeting.

**July 25 Property Redevelopment Workshop:** Wuorenmaa notified the committee of the upcoming workshop in Bergland on July 25.

**Annual meeting / Chiantello update / Guest Speaker:** Hyttinen updated the committee to the location of the annual meeting which will be held at Alice’s Italian Supper Club in Iron River. The menu had been selected. Nomination forms had been sent out to the county’s commissioners for Chiantello candidates. Tom Stephenson from Connect Michigan would be the guest speaker presenting on broadband.

**Other Business:** Wuorenmaa inquired whether the committee would like to add an additional Full Commission meeting due to the cancellation of the June 28 Full Commission meeting and the Bylaws requirement of four Full Commission meetings per year. August 15 was approved to schedule the make-up meeting for the Full Commission. Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the addition. Motion carried.

**Adjourn:** Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen that the meeting adjourn at 5:18 PM (ET). Motion carried.

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