

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
KEWADIN CASINOS CONVENTION CENTER
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN
June 17, 2025

This meeting was opened at 5:04 p.m. by Chairman Austin Lowes.

Present: Isaac McKechnie, Larry Barbeau, Tyler LaPlaunt (Z), Kimberle Gravelle, Lana Causley-Smith, Bridgett Sorenson, Kimberly Hampton, Shawn Borowicz, Rob McRorie, Kimberly Lee, Michael McKerchie, Austin Lowes

Absent: Aaron Payment

Without objection, excuse Director Payment.

Directors' Sorenson and Borowicz objected.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to excuse Director Payment.

Motion carries unanimously.

Without objection, add Interim Governmental HR Director and Interim Senior Attorney under New Business.

No objection.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve the agenda as read.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve the 6/3/25 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Motion carries with Director Gravelle abstaining.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Gravelle, to approve Resolution 2025-123, Governmental – State Small Business Credit Initiative Establishment of FY 2025 Budget.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the establishment of a FY 2025 budget for State Small Business Credit Initiative with Federal Department of Treasury Revenue monies of \$144,093.15. No effect on Tribal Support.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Sorenson, to approve Resolution 2025-124, Continuing Funding Authority – Health Division for FY 2025 Schedule B Budgets October Through September, January Through December.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves continuing funding for the attached cost center list for fiscal year 2025, at their 2024 spending levels, for a period not to exceed August 31, 2025.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Gravelle, to approve Resolution 2025-125, FY 2026 Budget Document 001 – Schedule A Budgets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the FY 2026 Budget Document 001 totaling \$18,773,079, of which \$60,905 comes from Tribal Support.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Without objection, remove Resolution, Continuing Funding Authority for Fiscal Year 2026 April to March, June to May, and July to June from Agenda – not needed.

No objection.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-126, Michigan Indian Elders Association Tribal Elder Delegate Appointments.

Moved by Director Hampton, supported by Director McRorie, to amend to add Delegate 1 as John Causley Jr, Delegate 2 as Tim Derwin and Alternate as Dell Powers.

Motion carries with Director Causley-Smith abstaining.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby appoints the following representatives to represent the Elders of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians for a two-year period, expiring in June 2027, and will exercise the duties of the delegates and alternate as outlined in the MIEA bylaws:

Delegate:

1. John Causley Jr.
2. Tim Derwin

Alternate:

1. Dell Powers

Motion carries with Director Causley-Smith abstaining.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Causley-Smith, to approve Resolution 2025-127, Appointment of Richard Corbiere, JR. Reserve Community Member Appellate Judge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby appoints Richard Corbiere, Jr., to serve as a Reserve Community Member Appellate Judge for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Court of Appeals, for a term of four (4) years from the date hereof.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-128, Re-Appointment of Elisabeth Dietz as Elder Appellate Judge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby re-appoints Elisabeth Dietz as Elder Judge for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Court of Appeals, for a subsequent term of four (4) years from the date hereof.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-129, Recruitment and Retention of Tribal Court Clerks.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes and approves the Court Clerk and Deputy Clerk positions shall be budgeted and hired up to the maximum rate of the positions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chief Judge or Court Administrator to execute any and all documents as may be necessary to ensure that existing Clerk positions are budgeted at the max-range and to request wage reviews to ensure internal equity for the position within the terms and conditions of the intent of this Resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the use of available BIA CARES Act and/or BIA ARPA funding to facilitate the recruitment and retention of Clerk positions.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McKerchie, to approve Resolution 2025-130, Sault Tribe Incorporated Charter Board Appointment Approval.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, pursuant to Article VI, section 6.6 of the Sault Tribe Corporate Charter, hereby appoints the following individual to the Corporate Board of Directors of Sault Tribe Incorporated to serve a three-year term as specified below:

Mark Johnson - for a term expiring June 30, 2028

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director Causley-Smith, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Resolution 2025-131, Sault Tribe Incorporated Charter Board Appointment Approval.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, pursuant to Article VI, section 6.6 of the Sault Tribe Corporate Charter, hereby appoints the following individual to the Corporate Board of Directors of Sault Tribe Incorporated to serve a three-year term as specified below:

Leroy Frazier - for a term expiring June 30, 2028

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Sorenson, to approve Resolution 2025-132, Acceptance of Bid for the Installation of a New Elevator and Modernization of the Existing Elevator at Sault Tribe Health.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby approves the recommended contractor.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chairperson of the Tribe or his designee to negotiate, amend and execute the agreement with the selected contractor on behalf of the Tribe.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-133, Authorization to Enter into a Contract with Mandel Electric INC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves awarding the Electrical Work contract to Mandel Electrical Inc. up to \$96,543 out of LATCF and \$35,757 out of Sawyer Village account balance to complete this project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee to execute any and all documents as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the terms, conditions, intent, and administration of this Resolution, including but not limited to the ability and authority to implement any budgetary changes administratively without the need for formal Board of Directors budget modifications.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee, to enter into and execute the contract and any supporting documents with Mandel Electrical Inc. to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Barbeau, to approve Resolution 2025-134, Authorization to Enter into a Contract with Nicolet Shores Plumbing INC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves awarding the Plumbing contract to Nicolet Shores Plumbing Inc. up to \$521,000 out of Sawyer Village account balance to complete this project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee to execute any and all documents as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the terms, conditions, intent, and administration of this Resolution, including but not limited to the ability and authority to implement any budgetary changes administratively without the need for formal Board of Directors budget modifications.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee, to enter into and execute the contract and any supporting documents with Nicolet Shores Plumbing Inc. to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries with Directors' Barbeau, McKerchie, Sorenson, LaPlaunt, Hampton, McKechnie, Lee, Borowicz, Causley-Smith approving; Directors' McRorie, Gravelle opposing.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Barbeau, to approve Resolution 2025-135, Authorization to Enter into a Contract with Sikora Sheet Metal INC.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves awarding the Furnace Replacement contract to Sikora Sheet Metal Inc. up to \$139,797 out of Sawyer Village account balance to complete this project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee to execute any and all documents as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the terms, conditions, intent, and administration of this Resolution, including but not limited to the ability and authority to implement any budgetary changes administratively without the need for formal Board of Directors budget modifications.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee, to enter into and execute the contract and any supporting documents with Sikora Sheet Metal Inc. to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-136, Residential Land Lease – Cancellation Diane Van Valkenburgh.

Without objection, waive reading.

No objection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes its Tribal Chairman and Tribal Treasurer to execute this Residential Land Lease cancellation, with land being described as:

A parcel of land located in the Southeast ¼ of the Southwest ¼ of Section 20, Town 47 North, Range 1 East, Soo Township, Chippewa County, Michigan being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the South 1/4 corner of Section 20, Town 47 North, Range I East; thence North 88° 23' 23" West, along the South line of the Southwest ¼ of said Section 20, a distance of 1267 .98 feet to the Easterly right-of-way of Seymour Road; thence North 2° 04' 04" East, along said Easterly right-of-way, 995.86 feet to the Point of Beginning of the herein described parcel; thence continuing North 2° 04' 04" East, along said Easterly right-of-way, 150.00 feet; thence South 87° 55' 56" East. 290.40 feet; thence South 2° 04' 04" West, 150.00 feet; thence North 87° 55' 56" West. 290.40 feet to the Point of Beginning. Containing 1.00 acres of land more or less.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tribal staff is directed to prepare the appropriate Residential Land Lease cancellation documents for BIA approval.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby requests the BIA to cancel Residential Land Lease No. 469-23-00023-20, along with any modifications or assignments pursuant to applicable law and regulations.

Motion carries with Director Lee abstaining.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-137, Residential Land Lease – Brenda Brownlee.

Without objection, waive reading.

No objection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Tribal Chairman and the Treasurer to execute a Residential Land lease for the land located at Kincheloe, Michigan, to Brenda Brownlee, single woman, the land being described as:

Cedar Grove Estates No. 3. Part of Sec. 29 & The S. 1/2 Sec. 20, T 45 N, RIW, Kinross Township, Chippewa County, Michigan Lots 914 & 915

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tribal staff is directed to prepare the appropriate Residential Land Lease documents for BIA approval.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Residential Land Lease is in furtherance of a Housing program operated in the promotion of the public purpose, and the negotiated rental amount has been determined to be in the best interest of the Tribe and its people, and valuation in accordance with 25 CFR 162.320 is hereby waived.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-138, Residential Land Lease – Cassandra Franklin.

Without objection, waive reading for this Resolution, Hartens and Jenerou.

No objection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Tribal Chairman and the Tribal Treasurer to execute a Residential Land lease for the land located at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, to Cassandra Franklin, single woman, the land being described as:

A parcel of land located in the Southeast ¼ of the Southwest ¼ of Section 20, Town 47 North, Range 1 East, Soo Township, Chippewa County, Michigan being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the South ¼ corner of Section 20, Town 47 North, Range 1 East; thence North 88° 23' 23" West, along the South line of the Southwest ¼ of said Section 20, a distance of 1267.98 feet to the Easterly right-of-way of Seymour Road; thence North 2° 04' 04" East, along said Easterly right-of-way, 995.86 feet to the Point of Beginning of the herein described parcel; thence continuing North 2° 04' 04" East, along said Easterly right-of-way, 150.00 feet; thence South 87° 55' 56" East, 290.40 feet; thence South 2° 04' 04" West, 150.00 feet; thence North 87° 55' 56" West, 290.40 feet to the Point of Beginning.

Containing 1.00 acres of land more or less.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tribal staff is directed to prepare the appropriate Residential Land Lease documents for BIA approval.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Residential Land Lease is in furtherance of a Housing program operated in the promotion of the public purpose, and the negotiated rental amount has been determined to be in the best interest of the Tribe and its people, and valuation in accordance with 25 CFR 162.320 is hereby waived.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-139, Residential Land Lease – Wendie Mae Harten & David William Harten.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Tribal Chairman and the Treasurer to execute a Residential Land lease for the land located at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, to Wendie Mae Harten and David William Harten, husband and wife, the land being described as:

A parcel of land located in the Southeast ¼ of Section 29, Town 47 North, Range 1 East, Soo Township, Chippewa County, Michigan being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the West ¼ corner of Section 29, Town 47 North, Range 1 East; thence South 87°41'17" East, along the South line of the Northwest ¼ of said Section 29, a distance of 1319.99 feet to the Southwest corner of the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of said Section 29; thence North 1°46'50" East, along the West line of the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of said Section 29, a distance of 373.91 feet to the Centerline of Polaris Drive; thence South 88°09'52" East, along said Centerline, 714.43 feet; thence South 1°50'08" West, 33.00 feet to the Southerly right-of-way of Polaris Drive and the Point of the Beginning of the herein described parcel; thence continuing south 1°50'08" West, 150.00 feet; thence North 88°09'52" West, 290.40 feet to the Easterly right-of-way of Polaris Drive; thence North 1°50'08" East along said Easterly right-of-way, 120 feet; thence 47.12 feet along a curve with its center to the East having a radius of 30.00 feet, a chord of 42.43 feet, and a chord bearing of North 46°50'08" East to the Southerly right-of-way of Polaris Drive; thence South 88°09'52" East, along said Southerly right-of-way, 260.40 feet to the Point of the Beginning. Containing 1.00 acres of land more or less.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tribal staff is directed to prepare the appropriate Residential Land Lease documents for BIA approval.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Residential Land Lease is in furtherance of a Housing program operated in the promotion of the public purpose, and the negotiated rental amount has been determined to be in the best interest of the Tribe and its people, and valuation in accordance with 25 CFR 162.320 is hereby waived.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-140, Residential Land Lease – Jace Jenerou.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Tribal Chairman and the Treasurer to execute a Residential Land lease for the land located at Kincheloe, Michigan, to Jace Jenerou, single man, the land being described as:

Township of Kinross, County of Chippewa, State of Michigan

Sec. 29, T 45 N, R 1 W (.34 acres),

Lots 616 and 617 Cedar Grove Estates III

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tribal staff is directed to prepare the appropriate Residential Land Lease documents for BIA approval.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Residential Land Lease is in furtherance of a Housing program operated in the promotion of the public purpose, and the negotiated rental amount has been determined to be in the best interest of the Tribe and its people, and valuation in accordance with 25 CFR 162.320 is hereby waived.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Causley-Smith, to approve Resolution 2025-141, Naming of the Guest House.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby designates The Guest House located at 2049 Ashmun Street to be named “The Guest House – Nbwaachwegamigong”.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Causley-Smith, to approve Resolution 2025-142, Naming of the 7 Seas Building.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby designates 7 Seas located at 351 Portage to be named “Portage Place – Onigamigong”.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director Borowicz, supported by Director Sorenson, to approve Resolution 2025-143, Recovery of Funds and Enforcement of Contract/Agreement.

Without objection, go into closed.

No objection.

Without objection, reconvene into open.

No objection.

Moved by Director Lee, supported by Director McRorie, to Table.

Motion to Table fails with Directors’ Lee, LaPlaunt, McKechnie, McRorie supporting; Directors’ Sorenson, Borowicz, Barbeau, Hampton, McKerchie, Gravelle, Causley-Smith opposing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the General Counsel, or their designee, to execute a contract with outside counsel to take whatever action necessary, including, but not limited to,

commencing legal action, against the contracted party, and any individual or entity who benefited from the violations of the May 10, 2022 Agreement, to recover all funds expended under the contract including restitution, compensatory damages, legal fees, and any other losses incurred by the Tribe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the outside special counsel to send a letter to the contracted party, and any individual or entity who benefited from the violations of the May 10, 2022 Agreement, demanding payment in full within 30 days.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes outside special counsel to file any necessary litigation in the Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa Tribal Court for breach of the May 10, 2022 Agreement if repayment is not made in full within 30 days.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, outside special counsel is further authorized and directed to pursue all available remedies, including liens, garnishments, and protective orders, and to execute and deliver any agreements, certificates, documents, or instruments necessary to effectuate the forgoing on behalf of the Tribe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if outside special counsel finds anything that could constitute criminal conduct in the violation of the May 10, 2022 Agreement, they are authorized to refer that to the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency to conduct a criminal investigation.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all litigation expenses related to this action shall be drawn from the existing Tribal Legal Department budget and shall be included as part of the damages and legal costs sought to be recovered in any action initiated under this resolution.

Roll Call Vote: Motion carries with Directors' Gravelle, Hampton, McKerchie, Borowicz, Causley-Smith, Barbeau, Sorenson approving; Director McRorie opposing; Directors' Lee, McKechnie, LaPlaunt abstaining.

Moved by Director McRorie, supported by Director Gravelle, to authorize interim CEO and Mike Day of Tribal HUB to negotiate an offer and hire the CIO with negotiated conditions within the parameters discussed.

Motion carries with Directors' McKechnie, Causley-Smith, Sorenson opposing.

Moved by Director McRorie, supported by Director McKechnie, to send the latest draft of the Separation of Powers to the BIA for an informal technical review.

Moved by Director Causley-Smith, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to amend to direct the legal department to draft code language necessary to effectuate statutory separation of powers in line with a 2-branch government.

Chairman Lowes ruled the motion out of order pending legal recommendation.

Moved by Director Gravelle, supported by Director Causley-Smith, to Table.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to Table carries with Directors' Borowicz, Causley-Smith, Hampton, McKerchie, Gravelle, Barbeau, Sorenson approving; Directors' McKechnie, McRorie, LaPlaunt, Lee opposing.

Moved by Director McRorie, supported by Director Barbeau, to direct legal to work with the chair's office to draft a letter of support for the Lake Superior Academy in opposition of the mining project.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to appoint Joshua Elliot as Acting Senior Attorney not to exceed a period of six months with compensation pursuant to the Tribe's Interim Appointment Policy.

Motion carries unanimously.

Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to appoint Diane Sliger as Interim Governmental HR Director not to exceed a period of six months with compensation pursuant to the Tribe's Interim Appointment Policy.

Moved by Director Lee to amend to make it a three-month appointment.

Motion to amend dies due to lack of support.

Roll Call Vote: Motion fails with Directors' Gravelle, LaPlaunt, McKechnie, McRorie supporting; Directors' McKerchie, Borowicz, Sorenson, Causley-Smith, Lee, Hampton, Barbeau opposing.

Without objection, meeting adjourned.

No objection.

Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Date: 7/1/25

Secretary: 
Kimberly Hampton

Others Present: Lona Stewart, Ashlee Mielke, Bill Connolly, Ryan Mills, Jessica Dumbach, Joseph Street, Damien Hopper, Emilie Bigelow, Kenedy Hagan, Claire Leighton, Delaney Cushman, Hayden Pepich, David Daley, Aimee Spring, Stephanie Sprecker, Chief Robert Marchand, Dan Doyle, Clarence Hudak, Officer Gardener, Jen Clerc, Katie Peabody, Traci Swan, Judge Charles Palmer, Rod Blanchard, Joel Lumsden, Helen Wilkins