

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MUNISING TRIBAL CENTER  
MUNISING, MICHIGAN  
September 16, 2025

This meeting was opened at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Austin Lowes.

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

Absent: None

**Without objection, waive the rules and add Authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Land Restoration Fund under Resolutions at the top.**

**No objection.**

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

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve the 9/2/25 Regular Meeting Minutes.**

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Resolution 2025-214, Authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Land Restoration Fund.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sault Tribe Board of Directors hereby approves the Memorandum of Understanding between the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and the Global Land Restoration Fund (GLRF) as presented, and authorizes the execution of said MOU on behalf of the Tribe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chairman to execute any and all documents, after legal department review, to carry out the intent of this resolution.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-215, Ishkode Project – Forest Service Participating Agreement FY 2025 Budget Modification.**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the FY 2025 budget modification to Ishkode Project – Forest Service Participating Agreement for an increase in Federal Department of Agriculture monies of \$9,182.79. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-216, Education – TED Grant Establishment of FY 2026 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 2026 budget for TED Grant with Federal BIA Revenue monies of \$131,005.93. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director Gravelle, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve a Resolution, Internal Services – Communication News FY 2025 Budget Modification.**

**Moved by Director Sorenson, supported by Director Borowicz, to Table.**

**Motion to Table carries with Directors' Lee, McKechnie, Hampton, Sorenson, LaPlaunt, Barbeau, Borowicz supporting; Directors' McRorie, Payment, Causley-Smith, McKerchie, Gravelle opposing.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Barbeau, to approve Resolution 2025-217, ACFS – Lodge of Hope (LOH) Authorization to Accept Bid and Enter into a Contract with Hillcrest Builders.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians authorizes the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee to execute any and all documents 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 Hillcrest Builders to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director Gravelle, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Resolution 2025-218, Rescind Resolution 2017-234 and Amend Property Acquisition Policy.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby rescinds resolution 2017-234.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves amending the attached Property Acquisition Policy.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-219, Approving MOA with USACE.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves entering into this MOA with USACE subject to the final approval of the Tribe's Legal Department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the Tribal Chairman or his designee to execute the MOA with USACE.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-220, Approving Opioid Settlement Funds for Lodge of Hope.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves \$935,658 to be allocated from the Opioid Settlement funds to help operate the Lodge of Hope and continue combating the homelessness and opioid use epidemics.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors and the Housing Authority previously allocated \$935,658 from the Tribe's federal housing funds to support the operation of the Lodge of Hope and hereby reallocates those housing funds toward Housing Activities to create more housing for the tribal members in need.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby approves the Housing Authority to modify their proposed federal housing plan to modify the housing activity that previously funded the Lodge of Hope to now fund additional housing projects.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-221, Acceptance – 2026 Indian Housing Plan.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Sault Tribe Board of Directors approves the 2026 Indian Housing Plan, Grant No. 55-IH-26-54680, as presented and does hereby request funding from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors and Sault Tribe Housing Commission does agree to follow the HUD approved Indian Housing Plan in order to provide housing opportunities.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Sault Tribe Housing Authority Director is authorized to submit the 2026 IHP in the HUD online GEMS System.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Sorenson, to approve Resolution 2025-222, Authorization to Enter into a Right-of-way Grant with Mackinac County for Utilities.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorize its Chairman and its Treasurer to negotiate and execute any document relating to the easement of RIGHT-OF-WAY GRANT for construct, test, maintain, inspect, alter, repair, replace, operates and remove pipes from both above and below ground for the transportation of utilities, including but not limited to; natural gas, water and sewer lines, electrical lines, fiber optic, intended to access the land for the following property with Mackinac County:

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION PARCEL NO: The North ½ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 1, Town 40 North Range 4 West, Moran Township, Mackinac County, State of Michigan.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-223, Authorization to Enter into a Right-of-way Grant with Mackinac County for Roads.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorize its Chairman and its Treasurer to negotiate and execute any document relating to the easement of RIGHT-OF-WAY GRANT for roads intended to access the land for the following property with Mackinac County:

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION PARCEL NO:** The North  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the Southeast  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 1, Town 40 North Range 4 West, Moran Township, Mackinac County, State of Michigan.  
**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director Gravelle, to approve Resolution 2025-224, Recruitment and Retention of Board Administrative Office Positions.**

**Without objection, waive the remainder of the reading.**

**No objection.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the Board Administrator position to be adjusted, based on HR Benchmarking standards, from Exempt Level 4 to Exempt Level 6 (E6) with corresponding compensation to be budgeted at the minimum of the E6 wage range.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the Board Administrator's Executive Assistant position to be retitled to Assistant Board Administrator and adjusted, based on HR Benchmarking standards, from Exempt Level 1 to Exempt Level 3 (E3) with corresponding compensation to be budgeted at the minimum of the E3 wage range.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the restructure of the Board Administration Office pursuant to this resolution to include job description updates, title change, and compensation changes as detailed in the attached RIS, including a one-time waiver of any conflicting HR policies in order to effectively and timely complete these position restructures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the team members currently in these positions shall not have to reapply for their positions and shall remain in their newly benchmarked and adjusted positions after said restructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the Tribe's CEO and CFO to execute any administrative budget modifications necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution, utilizing a combination of tribal support and indirect funding.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-225, Adoption of Key Employee, Authorities and Commissions, and Committees Organizational Charts.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby adopts the attached Key Employee Organizational Chart including appropriate Key Employee title changes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby adopts the attached Sault Tribe Authorities and Commissions Organizational Chart.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby adopts the attached Sault Tribe Committees Organizational Chart.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any previous action, or resolution, adopting any previous Tribal Organizational Chart is hereby rescinded and replaced with this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each Tribal Entity is required to update their organization charts within 60 days of the enactment of this resolution and bring back to the Board of Directors for review and approval prior to implementation.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-226, Tenth Amendment to List of Key Employees.**

**Moved by Director McRorie, supported by Director McKechnie, to amend to add the Housing Director to the Key Employee list.**

**Director Payment requested Roll Call Vote.**

**Moved by Director Causley-Smith, supported by Director Barbeau, to Table the amendment. Roll Call Vote: Motion to Table the amendment carries with Directors' Barbeau, McKerchie, Sorenson, Gravelle, Lee, Borowicz, Causley-Smith supporting; Directors' LaPlaunt, Hampton, McRorie, McKechnie, Payment opposing.**

**Chairman Lowes ruled the Table of the amendment in order.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sault Tribe Board of Directors hereby rescinds Resolution 2024-161 and adopts the following key employees of the tribal government:**

- a. General Counsel
- b. Chief Executive Officer
- c. Chief Financial Officer
- d. Chief Judge
- e. Chief Executive Officer – Health Services
- f. Chief Information Officer
- g. Board Administrator
- h. Executive Director – Gaming Commission

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution rescinds and supersedes all prior key employee resolutions and shall be the only key employee list of the Tribal government.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby acknowledges that the Kewadin Chief Executive Officer and the Kewadin Chief Financial Officer are key employees of the Kewadin Gaming Authority and that a Kewadin Gaming Authority resolution affirming those positions as key employees will be adopted by the Kewadin Gaming Authority within 60 days of enactment of this resolution.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby acknowledges that the Enterprise Chief Executive Officer is a key employee of the Enterprise Authority and that a Enterprise Authority resolution affirming that position as a key employee will be adopted by the Enterprise Authority within 60 days of enactment of this resolution.**

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be effective immediately.**

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-227, Amending Tribal Code Chapter 20 Great Lakes and St. Mary's River Treaty Fishing Regulations.**

**Without objection, waive the reading.**

**No objection.**

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to amend the first be it further resolved to add back in 20.102(4)(c) A fee of \$25.00 for a helper on a boat owned by a licensed commercial fisherman.**

**Motion to amend carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director Payment, supported by Director McRorie, to amend to separate the approval of the one size boat size vs. the lottery for the unused licenses.**

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby amends Tribal Code Chapter 20.102 as follows:

**20.102 Licensing of Commercial Treaty Fishing Activity.**

(1) No member of the Tribe shall engage in commercial fishing activity without first having obtained a license from the Tribe to do so, in accordance with this section. A tribal license shall be evidenced by a Treaty Fishing Identification Card authorized by the Chairman.

(2) Two types of licenses may be issued:

(a) A commercial license which entitles the holder to operate a fishing boat, to fish on his own behalf, and employ helpers; and

(b) A member, the ages of sixteen and seventeen, shall be eligible for a helper's license only with the written consent of a parent or guardian.

(3) Licenses shall be issued under the supervision of the Tribal Chairman in accordance with these rules and any subsequent enactments of the Tribal Board of Directors. They shall expire on December 31st of each year.

(4) The fees for the issuance of tribal commercial fishing licenses shall be as follows:

(a) A Captains License shall allow a tribal commercial fisher to fish any size vessel and use any and all allowed and applicable gear

(b) A fee schedule for Captains Licenses shall be as follows.

In 2026 through 2030. \$250.00.

In 2031 through 2040. \$300.00.

In 2041 and each year thereafter, \$350.00

(c) A fee of \$25.00 for a helper on a boat owned by a licensed commercial fisherman.

(d) No fee shall be charged for issuance of a helper's license if a licensed commercial fisherman surrenders the unexpired Treaty Fishing Identification Card of a former employee in lieu thereof.

(5) The age requirement for issuance of tribal commercial fishing licenses shall be as follows:

(a) A member eighteen year of age or older shall be eligible for a tribal fishing license if available.

(b) A member the ages of sixteen and seventeen shall be eligible for a helper's license only with the written consent of a parent or guardian

(c) A member, under the age of sixteen may fish with an immediate family member, who is a licensed fisherman, with the written consent of a parent or guardian.

(6) A commercial fishing license may identify two partners and co-operators of a licensed boat.

(7) Issuance of new commercial fishing licenses is closed unless opened by action of the Tribal Board of Directors except as provided in subsection (15) below.

(a) A license shall not be issued to a person who was unlicensed in the previous year.

(c) A licensee who leaves the area for purposes of military service may renew his license notwithstanding the provision of sub. (a), within one year of leaving the service.

(8) A tribal commercial fishing license may be passed on only to the natural son or daughter, spouse or husband as authorized by the Tribal Board of Directors.

(9) Any Sault Ste. Marie tribal license holder who fails to renew his tribal treaty fishing license for a period of one (1) year shall not thereafter be relicensed.

- (10) The provisions of sub. (7), (8) and (9) do not restrict issuance of helper's cards.
- (11) Licensing of tribal fishing enterprises may be authorized by the Tribal Board of Directors.
- (12) The Chairman with the consent of the Board of Directors may approve the transfer of a Commercial fishing license holder to an eligible Tribal member, upon recommendation of the Conservation Committee if:
  - (a) The license holder or his heirs has filed notice with the Conservation Committee of his intent to sell his fishing equipment.
  - (b) The license holder or his heirs has sold his fishing equipment to the transferee.
  - (c) If the license holder or his heirs have filed official notice of intent to sell his fishing equipment and a sale has not been finalized within 3 years from the date of notice, the license shall revert back to the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.
- (13) No tribal member shall captain in any capacity a commercial fishing vessel on behalf of anyone other than a Captain licensed pursuant to this Chapter except upon approval of the Committee.
- (14) No tribal member holding a small mesh permit issued pursuant to this Chapter shall work for, employ, fish for shares, or in any way conduct a joint commercial fishing operation with a Captain licensed pursuant to this Chapter or a captain fishing for another tribe pursuant to the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Fishing Regulations.
- (15) **Issuance of Lapsed Licenses**
  - (a) A Lapsed License shall mean any license that has reverted back to the Tribe for failure to pay the renewal license fee pursuant to 20.102(10).
  - (b) Licenses shall be issued under the supervision of the Tribal Chairman in accordance with the following requirements:
    - (i) available licenses will be issued through a lottery system as follows:
      1. Initial lottery for applicants that meet the preference in subsection (15)(e).
      2. Secondary lottery for all applicants if there are any available licenses after the initial lottery.
    - (ii) applications must be submitted to Tribal Law Enforcement.
    - (iii) when a license(s) becomes available Tribal Law Enforcement shall post a 60-day notice indicating the number of licenses available, any license restrictions pursuant to subsection (16)(d) and the deadline for applying for the lottery.
    - (iv) applicants must meet the minimum experience requirements of subsection (15)(c) for consideration in the lottery. Applicants that do not meet the minimum requirements will not be considered for the lottery.
    - (v) licenses may be made available incrementally based on input from law enforcement, natural resources, and the legal department in collaboration with the Conservation Committee.
  - (c) **Minimum Experience Requirements**
    - (i) Applicants must be able to demonstrate 1 year minimum of relevant fishing experience to be considered for any available license issued pursuant to this subsection.
  - (d) **Restrictions on License**
    - (i) Licenses issued pursuant to this subsection may be limited based on relevant data from Law Enforcement and Natural Resources, in collaboration with the Conservation Committee, including but not limited to, restrictions to certain management zones, restrictions in vessel, restriction on gear, or restrictions in duration.
    - (ii) Any restrictions that may be placed on licenses issued pursuant to this subsection shall be reviewed annually to determine if continuing restrictions are still necessary.

(iii) Licenses issued pursuant to this subsection are non-transferable for five years, except transfer to heirs pursuant to this Chapter.

(e) Preference

1. For consideration in the initial lottery the following preference shall apply:

Applicants with demonstrated gill net or trap net fishing experience;

(f) Application Fee

1. The Application Fee for the lottery pursuant to subsection 15(b) shall be the license fee in subsection 4(b) plus a \$100 non-refundable application fee.

(a) The additional \$100 non-refundable application fee will go toward the Tribe's fishing revenue to be allocated as necessary.

(b) Should an applicant not be awarded a license in the lottery, the application fee, minus the \$100 non-refundable fee shall be refunded to said applicant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that tribal administration is hereby directed to hold the lottery pursuant to the newly adopted amendments within 30 days of enactment of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legal Department is authorized to make any other code changes that may be necessary to be in conformance with the intent and purpose of this resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

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

**With objection, skip Resolution, Issuance of Commercial Captain License.**

**No objection.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-228, Amending 2025-213 Negotiate and Hire Government CEO Candidate.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Governmental Interim HR Director to negotiate an offer to hire the Governmental Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with the newly negotiated conditions within the parameters discussed at the workshop and as attached.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Tribal Administration to make any necessary administrative budget modifications necessary to carry out the intent of this Resolution and to hire the selected candidate.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director Payment, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Resolution 2025-229, Amending JKL Fiduciary Committee Bylaws.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the attached amended JKL Fiduciary Committee Bylaws.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Payment, to approve Resolution 2025-230, Directing Committees and Commissions to Adhere to Chapter 96: Open Meeting Ordinance.**

**Moved by Director McRorie to amend to remove Child Welfare from this.**

**Motion to amend dies due to lack of support.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby directs that the Tribal CEO, the Tribal Legal Department, and the various Tribal Committees and Commissions revise any Bylaw, Policy, Procedure or Tribal Code necessary to mandate adherence to Tribal Code Chapter 96.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that recommendations and revisions necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution shall be presented to the Board of Directors within 45 days of enactment of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any tribal committee or commission that either by rule of law or by the confidential nature of that committee or commissions' business cannot conduct their meetings pursuant to Tribal Code Chapter 96, shall supply to the Board of Directors an analysis and justification as to why they are unable to comply with the intent of this resolution within 45 days of enactment of this resolution.

**Roll Call Vote: Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to accept Marie Kinville's appointment to the Unit 5 Marquette Elder Subcommittee with a term expiring in December 2027.**

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Gravelle, to accept Scott LaVictor's appointment to the Enrollment Committee with a term expiring in September 2029.**

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Without objection, meeting adjourned.**

**No objection.**

Adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Date: 10/14/2025

Secretary: 

Kimberly Hampton

Others Present: Lona Stewart, Bill Connolly, Ryan Mills, Jessica Dumback (Z), Joseph Street, Damien Hopper, Clarence Hudak (Z), Dani Fegan, Eric Clark, Stephanie Sprecker (Z), Jennifer Dale-Burton (Z), Megan Miller (Z), Emma Donmyer (Z), Mariea Mongene (Z)