

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
KEWADIN CASINO AND CONVENTION CENTER  
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN  
August 5, 2025

This meeting was opened at 5:01 p.m. by Chairman Austin Lowes.

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

Absent: Lana Causley-Smith

**Without objection, excuse Director Causley-Smith.**

**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 Payment, to approve the 7/15/25 Regular Meeting Minutes.**

**Motion carries with Director Hampton abstaining.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Sorenson, to approve Resolution 2025-168, Natural Resources Division – GLRI 1836 Treaty Waters Commercial Sampling Program 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 GLRI 1836 Treaty Waters Commercial Sampling Program with Federal BIA Revenue monies of \$12,163.18. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-169, Natural Resources Division – GLRI Adaptive Management 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 GLRI Adaptive Management with Federal BIA Revenue monies of \$18,655.75. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-170, Natural Resources Division – Wild Rice Coordination Establishment of FY 2025 Budgets.**

**Moved by Director Payment, supported by Director McKechnie, to sever and to assign two separate Resolution numbers to the two separate budgets/requests.**

**Roll Call Vote: Motion to sever carries with Directors' LaPlaunt, Gravelle, McKechnie, Barbeau, Lee, McRorie, Payment, McKerchie, Sorenson, Hampton supporting; Director Borowicz opposing.**

**Without objection, vote via consensus.**

**No objection.**

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 Wild Rice Coordination with Federal BIA Revenue monies of \$104,521.76. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-171, Natural Resources Division – Waverly Environmental Grant Establishment of FY 2025 Budgets.**

**Without objection, vote via consensus.**

**No objection.**

BE IT FURTHER 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 Waverly Environmental Grant with Other Revenue monies of \$36,102.26. No effect on Tribal Support.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Payment, to approve Resolution 2025-172, Transportation Department Regional Tribal Transit Program Operations Manual.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the MOA between the Tribe and Mackinac County.

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

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-173, Transportation Department Vehicle Purchase for Rides to Wellness.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors approves the selection of O'Connor's Chrysler; and authorizes the Transportation Department to administer and facilitate the purchase of vehicles for the R2W Program.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorize the Tribal Chairman or designee, to negotiate, execute and amend any documents resulting therefrom on a contract between the Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and O'Connor's Chrysler, to purchase four vehicles to implement a coordinated and regional transit system, and authorizes expenditures of \$212,180. from the FTA, Tribal Transit Program Fund, cost center 13021.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Gravelle, to approve Resolution 2025-174, ACFS – Lodge of Hope (LOH) Authorization to Accept Bid and Enter into a Contract with Upper Peninsula Carpet Mart.**

**Moved by Director Hampton, supported by Director McKechnie, to amend to replace Sailor Creek with Upper Peninsula Carpet Mart in the last resolved.**

**Motion to amend carries unanimously.**

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 Upper Peninsula Carpet Mart to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-175, ACFS – Lodge of Hope (LOH) Authorization to Accept Bid and Enter into a Contract with Sailor Creek Contracting.**

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 Sailor Creek Contracting to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-176, Revising Tribal Code Chapter 11 Membership Ordinance.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends Chapter 11 Membership Ordinance as follows:

11.103 Special Needs/Enrollment Committee.

(1) There shall be established a Special Needs/Enrollment Committee, which shall be composed of the Tribal Registrar as ex-officio, seven (7) members appointed by the Board of Directors, and the Enrollment Staff acting as Recording Secretary. There shall be an effort to have at least one representative from each of the Tribes five (5) Units and at least one representative from outside the five (5) Units. If it is not possible to secure representation from each unit and/or from outside the five (5) Units then the Committee will be established with qualified individuals as necessary pursuant to current policy and procedure.

The Tribal Registrar shall be a member of the Tribe, appointed by the Board of Directors. All other Committee persons shall be Tribal members. The members of the Special Needs/Enrollment Committee may be removed by the Board of Directors for good cause.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the above changes shall be effective immediately.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Payment, to approve Resolution 2025-177, Amending By-laws of the Enrollment Committee.**

**Moved by Director Payment, supported by Director McKechnie, to amend the name of the Special Needs Enrollment Committee to Enrollment Committee.**

**Motion to amend carries unanimously.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby approves the amendments to the Special Needs Enrollment Committee Bylaws as presented and attached.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends the name of the Special Needs Enrollment Committee to the Enrollment Committee and hereby authorizes the necessary changes to the Committee Bylaws and Chapter 11 to be in conformity with this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the above changes shall be effective immediately.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-178, Appropriating Opioid Settlement Funds to Tribal Court.**

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians appropriates \$500,000 of the Opioid Settlement Funds to the Tribal Court (cc #385) for use in its continued operation of Gwaiak Miicon, Domestic Violence Court and employment of a Specialty Court Coordinator.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Chief Financial Officer, or his designee to execute any and all documents as may be necessary to carry out the terms and intent of this Resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-179, Award Rhyno Electric Utility Service Upgrade Contract.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors hereby desires to approve the electrical utility service upgrade contract with Rhyno Electric for the electrical upgrades for the Sault Tribe Sugar Island Pow Wow Grounds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the contract with Rhyno Electric for the total sum of \$130,000.00 not to exceed \$150,000.00; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and approves the Tribal Chairman, or his designee, to execute any and all documents including as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the terms, conditions and intent of the resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Payment, to approve Resolution 2025-180, Interim Appointment for Natural Resources Division.**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby approves the appointment of Danielle Fegan as the Interim Natural Resources Director for a period not to exceed six months with compensation pursuant to the Tribe's Interim Appointment Policy.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-181, Amending Resolution 2025-166 – Authorization to Enter into a Contract with M&D General Contractor.**

**Without objection, amend the Title to read 2025-166 instead of 2025-1677.**

**No objection.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves awarding the General Interior contract to M&D General Contractor up to \$2,182,496, which \$682,496 is out of the Sawyer Village account balance and \$1,500,000 from the STHA note, to complete this project. Final acceptance of the proposal and execution of the contract will be contingent on the final approval of the STHA Note.

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 M&D General Contractor to fulfill the intent of this Resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-182, LATCF Fund Appropriation to Sault Tribe EDC for Sawyer Village Housing Project.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby rescinds Resolution 2024-408 in its entirety, and authorizes the reallocation of the \$400,000 originally approved therein to support the Sawyer Village General Contractor Project #25-045.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the allocation of \$18,311.42 from the Tribe's unallocated LATCF funds to further support the same project.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the combined LATCF amount of \$418,311.42 will be used to support and subsidize the revised contract award amount for Project #25-045, and that the Chairman of the Tribe, or their designee, is authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-183, Amending EDC – Sawyer Village Internal Financing.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors rescinds Resolution 2025-159 in its entirety, and authorizes Sawyer Village to enter into a Ten-year note with the STHA in the amount of \$1,700,000, at the annual interest rate of 5%.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the execution of this resolution and the associated financing agreement shall be contingent upon formal approval and acceptance of the \$1,700,000 note by the STHA Commission. No funding shall be valid or binding until such approval is secured.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Government CFO and the CEO of Enterprise Operations, in conjunction with the authorized representative of the STHA, to execute any loan documents necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors authorizes the Government CFO and the CEO of Enterprise Operations to execute any necessary budget modifications administratively to implement this financing agreement.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-184, Adopting Tribal Code Chapter 93: Sault Tribe Enterprise Authority Charter.**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby adopts Tribal Code Chapter 93: Sault Tribe Enterprise Authority Charter to take effect immediately.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, all resolutions involving non-gaming businesses shall be approved by the Enterprise Authority.

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

**Without objection, 10-minute recess.**

**No objection.**

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-185, Rescinding Resolution 2022-353.**

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby rescinds Resolution 2022-353.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-186, Amending Chapter 44: Enterprise Authority.**

**Without objection, amend the first paragraph to read Chapter 44 instead of Chapter 14.**

**No objection.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends Tribal Code Chapter 44: Waiver of Tribal Immunities and Jurisdiction in Commercial Transactions as follows:

Replace all mentions of Economic Development Commission with Enterprise Authority.

Replace all mentions of Chapter 40 with Chapter 93.

Replace all mentions of Economic Development Commission Charter with Sault Tribe Enterprise Authority Charter.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director LaPlaunt, to approve Resolution 2025-187, Amending Chapter 14: Enterprise Authority.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends Tribal Code Chapter 14: Rules of Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance Act as follows:

Replace all mentions of Economic Development Commission with Enterprise Authority.

Replace all mentions of Chapter 40 with Chapter 93.

Replace all mentions of Economic Development Commission Charter with Sault Tribe Enterprise Authority Charter.

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

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Resolution 2025-188, Amending Chapter 14: Special Meetings KGA and EA.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends Tribal Code Chapter 14: Rules of Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance Act as follows:

14.106 Agenda.

(1) Notice of Meetings. The administrative secretary of the Board of Directors shall give all Board members written notice of all Regular Meetings at least five (5) calendar days in advance of such meetings. The administrative secretary shall give all Board members written notice of all Special Meetings at least five (5) calendar days in advance of such meetings. The administrative secretary shall give all Board members written notice of all Board Workshops at least five (5) calendar days in advance of such Workshop. Special Meetings of the Gaming Authority or the Enterprise Authority shall be able to be called with at least twenty-four (24) hours' notices to all members serving on the authority or during any duly called meeting of the Board of Directors.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Hampton, to approve Resolution 2025-189, Amending Chapter 94: Operation of Authority.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby amends Tribal Code Chapter 94: Gaming Authority Charter as follows:

94.109 Operation of Authority.

(1) The Authority shall conduct its business in accordance with Tribal Code Chapter 14: Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

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

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McRorie, to approve Resolution 2025-190, Amending 2025-167 Negotiate and Hire General Counsel Candidate.**

**Without objection, add Interim in front of HR Director.**

**No objection.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians hereby authorizes the Interim HR Director to negotiate an offer and hire the General Counsel with the newly negotiated conditions within the parameters discussed at the workshop.

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

**Moved by Director McKechnie, supported by Director Borowicz, to approve a Resolution, Out of State Tribal Board and Chairperson Travel.**

**Moved by Director Payment, supported by Director McRorie, to refer to a workshop within 60 days.**

**Roll Call Vote: Motion to refer to a workshop carries with Directors' Gravelle, Hampton, McRorie, Lee, LaPlaunt, Payment, McKerchie supporting; Directors' Sorenson, Borowicz, Barbeau, McKechnie opposing.**

**Without objection, handle all committee appointments together.**

**No objection.**

**Moved by Director LaPlaunt, supported by Director McKechnie, to approve Vicki Carr-Walden's reappointment to the Unit 5 – Munising Elder Subcommittee with a term expiring in August 2029; Patricia Causley's resignation on the Unit 2 – Hessel Elder Subcommittee declaring this seat vacant; Viola Neadow's resignation on the Unit 4 – Manistique Elder Subcommittee declaring this seat vacant.**

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**Without objection, meeting adjourned.**

**No objection.**

Adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Date: 8/19/25

Secretary:   
Kimberly Hampton

Others Present: Ashlee Mielke, Danielle Walcher, Bill Connolly, Ryan Mills. Jessica Dumback, Joseph Street, Damien Hopper, Clarence Hudak, Josh Elliot, Robert Marchand, Jen Clerc (Z), Brandi MacArthur, Wendy Hoffman, Megan Miller, Juanita Bye, Michael Larson, Traci Swan, Chuck Palmer, Dan Doyle, Andrew Lane, Helen Wilkins.