

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

Monday, March 20, 2023  
4:15 PM (EDT)  
Parkview Lodge and Grill, Twin Lakes (Toivola), MI

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

**Call to Order:** Joe Bonovetz, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:15 PM (EDT)

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

**Member Roll Call:** The following commissioners responded to roll call done by Hyttinen.  
Patti Peretto, Bill Menge, Tom Tikkanen, Robert Nousiainen, Joe Bonovetz.

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

**Approval of Minutes - (January 16, 2023, Executive Committee):** Moved by Tikkanen, supported by Menge to approve the minutes as presented and place on file. Motion carried.

**Approval of Bills Paid:** Moved by Peretto, supported by Tikkanen to approve the bills paid as presented from January 1, 2023 – February 28, 2023, totaling \$74,585.63. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Menge, Tikkanen, Nousiainen, Bonovetz. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

**Public Appearances:** None

**ELPC wilderness proposal: Consider resolution of opposition:** Wuorenmaa informed the committee about the concerns about access to resources for forestry and possible mining. Bonovetz feels a resolution would be important to adopt a resolution opposing this issue. Moved by Peretto, supported by Nousiainen to recommend the resolution of opposition to the Full Commission and send to the governor's office and to our local legislators. Motion carried.

**Senator McBroom proposed "Dark Stores" legislation: Consider resolution of support:** Bonovetz informed the committee this issue was attempted to be dealt with a few years ago with Escanaba and Marquette. Houghton now has this issue with Walmart. Tikkanen stated the City of Houghton is leading the charge and Senator McBroom is in the early stages of introducing a couple bills to try to close the loophole. Tikkanen also stated there were already two agreements between Walmart and the City of Houghton. Moved by Menge,

supported by Tikkanen to recommend this resolution in support of the Dark Stores legislation Bills 19 & 20 to the Full Commission. This resolution should also be sent to the governor's office, our local legislators, Jen Hill, and Invest U.P. Motion carried.

**Proposed new apportionment of WUPPDR commissioners:** Wuorenmaa stated there have been open positions on the commission for quite some time and was reviewing if it would make sense to reduce the number of apportioned positions to better match who would actually be appointed to the Commission. Bonovetz does not feel the positions should be limited. Moved by Nousiainen, supported by Peretto, to table this matter to the Full Commission. Motion carried.

**Consider sponsorship of Michigan Economic Development Association Annual Meeting:** Wuorenmaa explained this is an Economic Developers Association that has annual meetings that rotate throughout Michigan, and this year's would be in Marquette. He attended this meeting several years ago and thought it was a great event. WUPPDR was asked to be a sponsor for \$600. Wuorenmaa informed the committee that registration alone for this meeting is \$400-500. Motion by Tikkanen, supported by Nousiainen to table this item to the Full Commission. Motion carried.

**Signature cards:** Hyttinen informed the committee about the need to revise our bank signature cards due to some of the signatories no longer being officers. Moved by Nousiainen, supported by Peretto to update signors on all bank accounts at Superior National Bank. The signors are now: Jerald Wuorenmaa, MaryEllen Hyttinen, Steve Rouser, Tom Tikkanen, and William Menge. Motion carried.

**Other Business:** Hyttinen again reminded the committee the importance of RSVPs of meeting and meal attendance.

**Adjourn:** Moved by Menge, supported by Tikkanen that the meeting adjourn at 4:50 PM (EDT). Motion carried.

  
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William Menge, Secretary