



MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 – 4:00pm
Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers
15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Commissioners Present: Peter Clissold, Mark Shackleton, Tracy Benson, Alex Beebe-Giudice, Dave Mills: in person attendance. Siri Anderson virtual attendance.

Commissioners Absent: none. There is (1) commissioner vacancy.

Others Present: Jeff Brand, Linda Jurek, minute taker Maggie Barnard

1. Call to Order

President Clissold called the January 20, 2026 EDA Regular Meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Clissold asked if there are any additions or revisions to the agenda as presented. No additions or revisions.

Motion to approve agenda as presented (Mills/Shackleton)

Vote Roll Call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Beebe-Giudice, Mills, Clissold, all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0)

3. Annual Meeting

- a. **2026-01 RESOLUTION APPOINTING OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE 2026 CALENDAR YEAR** (Pages 1-3)

Annual appointment of officers and committee assignments.

Election of 2026 Officers

President: Clissold nomination by Mills with second by Shackleton

Vice-President: Beebe-Giudice nomination by Mills with second by Clissold

Secretary: Anderson nomination by Clissold with second by Mills

Treasurer: Shackleton nomination by Mills with second by Anderson

Assistant Treasurer: Mills nomination by Benson with second by Anderson

2026 Committee Assignments

Finance – Chair: Shackleton, members: Mills and Clissold

Personnel – Chair: Benson, members Mills and Beebe-Giudice

Grant Review – Chair: Beebe-Giudice members Shackleton and Anderson, alternates: Clissold and Benson

Design Review – Chair: Shackleton, members Clissold and Beebe-Giudice

Taconite Harbor – Chair: Benson, members Mills and Anderson

Golf Course – Chair: Clissold, member Shackleton and Anderson

Motion to approve RESOLUTION 2026-01 (Mills/Benson)

Vote Roll Call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Beebe-Giudice, Mills, Clissold, all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0)

4. Public Comments

Clissold opened the public comments and requested any members of the public who wish to address the commissioners to come forward and state their name and speak. No comments.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. December 16, 2025 EDA Regular Meeting (Pages 4-8)

Motion to approve the December 16, 2025 EDA Regular meeting minutes (Mills/Benson)

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 – 4:00pm
Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers
15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Vote Roll Call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Beebe-Giudice, Mills, Clissold, all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0)

6. Review of Financials

- a. Balance Sheet EDA, as of December 31, 2025 ([Pages 9-12](#))
Shackleton said the year-end actuals came in very close to budget. No questions.
President and members accept and forward to audit.
- b. Bill Approval Status EDA, December Payments 2025 ([Page 13](#))
Motion to approve the December 2025 EDA payments (Mills/Benson)
Vote Roll Call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Beebe-Giudice, Mills, Clissold, all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0)
- c. Balance Sheet Superior National Golf Course, as of December 31, 2025 ([Pages 14-18](#))
Shackleton said the year-end income was 1.7% less than last year and the cash situation is tight with this decline in revenue. He said the sale closing could happen in March but more likely it could be May. There are unencumbered funds available from the EDA if needed to transfer to the golf course. At current operation levels he thinks they may need at least \$100,000 to get to closing costs. \$126,000 is available. The buyer expects operations as usual. Further discussion on finances in the committee update.
President and members accept and forward to audit.
- d. 2025 Business Development Fund Grant Report, information only ([Page 19](#))

7. New Business

- a. **2026-02 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ENGAGEMENT OF REDPATH AND COMPANY FOR 2025 FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES** ([Pages 20-32](#))
Shackleton said their fee is \$25,500, about a 5% increase. Shackleton did have a conversation with them over performance and annual increase amount. He is considering putting it out for a bid to compare costs next year. Mills said the County also uses Redpath and 4.7% seems to be the norm. It was noted that audit services are not easy to contract with some not accepting new business.
Motion to approve RESOLUTION 2026-02 (Mills/Shackleton)
Vote Roll Call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Beebe-Giudice, Mills, Clissold, all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0)
- b. **2026-03 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2026 CONSULTING AGREEMENT WITH NORTHLAND FOUNDATION AND CONTRACTING OF LOCAL BUSINESS CONSULTANT** ([Pages 33-37](#))
Clissold noted the long standing relationship with Northland on this position and that they fund 600 hours annually. The personnel committee spoke with the consultant candidate, Rachelle Christianson, to describe the EDA role. Clissold visited the office space and it is ready for new hire. A Memo Of Understanding will be prepared prior to Rachelle starting.
Motion to approve RESOLUTION 2026-03 (Anderson/Benson)
Vote Roll call: Anderson, Benson, Shackleton, Mills, Beebe-Giudice Clissold all ayes. Vote: Passed (6/0).
- c. Conflict of Interest Policy Draft, discussion ([38-45](#))
NSDC consultant Bajda has been working on this to fine tune the language and not make substantive changes. Benson supports the process of acknowledging a conflict noting that a member could leave the

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 – 4:00pm

Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers

15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

room and go to the nearby City Hall office. Discussion on whether a member should vacate the room or if they can remain and sit quietly. Beebe-Giudice had concern for the execution of this policy during the grant review process. At what point does a member excuse themselves from reviewing applications? He would like clarification on the process, at what point is an alternate brought in such as in a case where there are multiple applicant conflicts. Clissold and Benson volunteered to be alternates in recusal cases. Mills noted that on page 42 the last paragraph does address Benson's concern. Beebe-Giudice asked how much detail is required in expressing a conflict. It was agreed that it should be a reasonable detail such as ownership of business or familial relationship. Legal counsel can be accessed if needed if members cannot decide or agree that a conflict exists. No decision is required today; discussion points will be added to the document as needed.

d. St. Catherine University Business Development Program Analysis ([Pages 46-56](#))

Dr. Lacy Chu joined the meeting virtually with Siri Anderson.

Anderson presented a Power Point on screen and a copy is submitted with the minutes. We only received 10 out of 65 responses but still can draw conclusions. Commissioners praised the excellent work and results. Shackleton suggested this study be done every year, Anderson agreed. Beebe-Giudice said we have the power to require grant recipients to participate in this survey, we need to add it to the grant application.

8. Committee/Commissioner Reports

a. Taconite Harbor Subcommittee – Strategic Plan Update

Clissold stated there have been four meetings that have essentially been information downloads. Stantec emailed a survey to inquire about individual visions. Next meetings will be visioning exercises. The next meeting is a week from Wednesday. He noted that the meetings start and end precisely on time and engagement has been excellent. We are in good shape with the status of the contract with Stantec. Benson noted she has heard there is anticipation from community members on zoning and general input.

b. Golf Course Committee – Sale Update

Clissold said the next extension deadline is the end of January. Due diligence is being satisfied and the purchase agreement is in the negotiation process, he thinks it will be finalized by end of January 2026. A public notice meeting will then happen and the EDA will vote on the sale. The Nelson family has the first right of refusal for 90 days and then we expect a closing 60 days later. There is a meeting Thursday January 22nd to discuss the public facing pieces with a goal of scheduling this with the February 17 EDA Regular meeting so no special meeting needs to be added. The irrigation and septic expense estimates are a range of \$140,000 to \$200,000 for septic upgrade and installation and \$155,000 for irrigation project. We need to hold 50% of these estimates in escrow. Proceeds from sale should cover these expenses. If the closing can be September 1st then we would have a golf season of revenue on hand.

c. Grant Review Committee Update

Beebe-Giudice: no new updates.

d. HR Committee Update



MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 – 4:00pm

Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers

15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Benson said the biggest update is the SBDC new hire which was discussed earlier. The EDA Executive Director applicant closing is Friday, January 23, 2026. Benson has not personally reviewed any applicants to date. Regarding the vacant commissioner position, there may be a Lutsen resident interested, that is the only applicant to date.

e. Expanded business consulting services discussion, Commissioner Benson

Discussion on requesting the new Executive Director to focus on being a comprehensive resource to the business community. Beebe-Giudice said that currently there is no single central source to assist business inquiries and a complete inventory of resources is the goal. Board members will work on organizing this idea to provide structure and direction to the new Executive Director.

Anderson said the St. Catherine University economic study students are interested in continuing to work with the EDA, we could consider an unpaid intern to help facilitate gathering business resources.

f. CC Food Access Council and Northwoods Food Project, Commissioner Benson

Benson said she attended an online meeting with the Great Lakes Economic Development Council organization. They spoke about a local food program out of eastern Ontario that utilizes greenhouse food production for the local community. This group provides produce for their local Costco. She thinks a similar type of development is worth looking at here as Economic Development and she is bringing it here for consideration. Mills supports this idea especially for the established local Cook County farmers and CSA producers.

9. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 5:43 p.m. (Anderson/Mills) Motion passed unanimously on consent.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Respectfully submitted by minute taker Maggie Barnard.