

NEGAUNEE-ISHPEMING WATER AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
July 16, 2025
WATER TREATMENT PLANT

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Negaunee-Ishpeming Water Authority was held on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 and was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by John Jackson.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Bertucci, Paul Gravedoni, John Jackson, Kristen Mariuzza and Tony McGrath

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Kristy Basolo, Plan B Publishing
Jake Forchini, NIWA plant manager

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, adding “Possible Change of Meeting Time” under New Business. James Bertucci seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Kristen Mariuzza made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2025 meeting as presented. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

James Bertucci made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes of the June 26, 2025 meeting as presented. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

CLAIMS & ACCOUNTS:

James Bertucci made a motion to approve the claims & accounts as presented and to pay the bills. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

MANAGER’S REPORT:

Jake Forchini said Frayling replaced all the lights in the processing area of the plant with LEDs, which has made a big difference. He noted the plant just got back onto two separate systems after running as one due to Ishpeming’s tank maintenance. Jake said Ishpeming won’t have to drain the tank for an inspection for three years, and Negaunee should be good for a couple of years as well.

Regarding water rates, Negaunee is using less than expected and Ishpeming is higher because they’re doing a lot of pipe work and fixing leaks.

Jake said the team is working on the permanganate feeder. Jeff Talsma is going to look at the system and see if a chemical dial can be added to the non-hackable screen so the staff doesn't have to do it manually.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to accept the manager's report as presented and place it on file. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Teal Lake Well Project Update—Jake Forchini said he talked to Ryan Morgan at GEI today. NIWA is in a holding pattern to figure out the details with EGLE for permitting, as EGLE now wants permits before bids go out and they want to see 72-hour pump tests. GEI is confident they will have the topside work draft to go out for bids soon. The board discussed that this project is not going to get done this year, and whether it is worth going out for bids at this point in the season. Right now the delay is with communication and mechanical work from Talsma Controls.

Tony McGrath asked about the Michigan Agriculture grant and whether or not there is a time limit on it. Jake said there is not. The board talked about the state of the wells, and that NIWA is struggling to hold good water quality with the current wells online that are unfavorable.

Jake said there is no delay on the well itself, just the topside work. He noted the well is staked, and work should start in August. The City of Ishpeming is prepping site now.

Kristen Mariuzza asked about having a bid packet ready for the next meeting, as she is wondering if locking in prices for next year is possible. The board discussed this option. NIWA is still waiting on easements from the City of Ishpeming as they cannot get a hold of the attorney. That part is not as time sensitive, however.

Jake said there is no action needed; he just wanted to update the board.

- 2nd Quarter Financial Reports & Board Compensation—James Bertucci made a motion to accept the 2nd Quarter financial report. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- Health Contribution Act Exemption Renewal—Jake Forchini reminded the board this has to be done every July. Tony McGrath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-01 and to have the board chairman sign it. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

- Meeting time—Paul Gravedoni brought up that he would like to discuss changing the meeting time to earlier in the day. Kristen Mariuzza said she would need to reschedule work meetings, as she is booked out. Kristy Basolo said she is not available earlier in the day due to her work schedule. The board said they can consider an alternate time in the future.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 2026 Budget Draft—Tony McGrath made a motion to remove the 2026 Draft Budget from the table. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Jake Forchini gave another budget option, in addition to past drafts, which would divert the 20-cent increase out of surcharge. It would not go to the special projects fund, but to the operational budget. NIWA would be delaying the increase by one year. He offered two options in the written report. The board discussed that if they go with second option, rates will raise again next year. It was noted that the cities are expecting the \$1.25 surcharge.

The board discussed how to balance the budget with the least impact to the costs passed on to the city, and they talked about flow rates, and how winter affects things, which is a best guess.

Jake said there is a webinar coming up about the \$100,000 grant to explain what the restrictions are for all grantees.

Kristen Mariuzza made a motion to go with 2026 Budget Option #1, a \$1.25 surcharge and 20-cent increase to the metered sales. James Bertucci seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to adjourn at 4:43 p.m. James Bertucci seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Prepared by Kristy Basolo, recording secretary

Approved and respectfully submitted by James Bertucci Secretary/Treasurer