IRON COUNTY—The Iron County Board of Commissioners chose a new representative to the Upper Peninsula State Fair AuthorityOct. 23 amidst allegations of threats and intimidation.

Gary Burk was named to the seat during the board's regular meeting. Burk submitted his application after his wife, Lisa Masnova, withdrew herself from the running, citing threats to her job and confrontations with some community members. __PUBLIC__

"All she did was tell the truth," Burk said of allegations that Fair Board member George Brunswick threatened Masnova's job as county administrative assistant. Masnova is also an Iron County fair volunteer.

Brunswick, who was not at the meeting, denies the allegation. "I did not threaten Lisa," he said in a written statement to the board.

County Administrator Sue Clisch was quick to come to Masnova's defense, telling the commissioners, "I know for a fact that Lisa does not lie."

Board Chairman Wayne Wales concurred. "We have no doubt whatsoever in what Lisa told us," he added.

Commissioners Carl Lind, Fran Wills and Wales voted for Burk's posting to the U.P. Fair Authority. Only Commissioner Rosalie King voted against. Commissioner Bev Camp was absent.

Richelle DePuydt had also applied for the job.

Burk is a former Stambaugh city commission member. His term on the U.P. State Fair Authority runs from 2013 to 2016. The Fair Authority is run by the U.P. Commission for Area Progress. Authority members are not paid but can be compensated for millage.

Also during the meeting, the board delayed a decision to fund the Iron County Economic Development Corporation's director position.

Both Wales and EDC member Tom Lesandrini agreed that the EDC's future is uncertain. The county is exploring options for economic development that include sharing services with a neighboring county or participating in the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region.

The County Board also authorized the drain commissioner to seek proposals for lake level inspections. The state-mandated inspections are carried out three times per year.

During the meeting, the commission accepted Equalization Director Joan Mussatto's 2012 report. She said the county had collected $20 million in taxes.

The commission also voted to table action regarding recommendations for new County Board rules of order and on the purchase of new courthouse BS&A software. The issues will be revisited in January when a new board of commissioners is seated.