

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING  
FEBRUARY 13, 2018**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, February 13, 2018, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Albert Koskela at 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Koskela.

Roll call:

The following commissioners responded to roll call:

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Albert Koskela, District 2; Anton Pintar, District 3; Scott Ala, District 4-by telephone; Tim Palosaari, District 5.

Public Hearing-Houghton County Revolving Loan Fund Loan

Open hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to open the hearing.

Discussion and Public Comment:

Commissioner Ala commented on the expansion of a local business. Jeff Ratcliffe, Executive Director with Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance, informed the Board of the refinancing short term working capital loan, and four (4) new jobs with this financing.

Close Hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to close the hearing.

The Motion carried by a voice vote: Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting dated January 9, 2018 as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Tikkanen requested an addition to the agenda for the former Houghton County Road Commission Building in Ripley be listed for sale. To be added to number 9.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the Agenda with the addition to #9 as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

Linda Belote with the League of Women Voters addressed the Board.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,056,180.96 as presented. The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela, Ala 5.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Palosaari had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Upward Talent Council.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Planning Commission, and Western Upper Peninsula Health.

Commissioner Ala stated he would report later regarding the Revolving Loan Fund later in the agenda.

Chairman Koskela had nothing to report to the Board.

New Business:

1. Opioid Litigation

Mark Bernstein and Paul Novak presented many handouts to the Board, and gave a lengthy presentation on the process of the Court litigation happening in Michigan.

The Board decided to place this matter on the March Agenda and vote at that time on a Resolution.

2. Houghton County Fair – request to purchase property

Rick Freeman addressed the Board regarding the Houghton County Fair Board purchasing two (2) lots of land that the County owns at the Fair Grounds. The Board discussed this matter.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ala, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to sell the two (2) lots of land that the County owns at the Fair Grounds to the Houghton County Fair Board.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0

Commissioner Tikkanen encouraged the City of Hancock to consider the purchase of the Houghton County Arena in the future.

County Officers:

No one had anything to report.

3. Jail Addition – discussion and update

Karin Cooper addressed the Board regarding the three (3) day meetings that were held with the Law Enforcement Committee. She stated the proposed jail addition adds onto the Courthouse and jail with two (2) levels of cells (double & single occupancy), 58 beds, the renovations to the current jail, and 3 individual dorm cells to hold approximately 30 inmates. The next step is for further development. The County should receive the cost estimate by the end of March 2018.

The Board had discussion.

Commissioner Ala stated the jail addition is not a wise decision. Sheriff McLean, Board Members and Karin Cooper had a discussion.

Rick Freeman, a former officer from the Houghton County Sheriff Department addressed the Board and stated he supports the jail addition.

4. Department of Veteran’s Affairs Millage renewal

Gene LaRochelle, Houghton County Department of Veteran’s Chairman, addressed the Board regarding the proposed millage of .15 mills to be voted on the August 7, 2018 ballot. He stated this increase would help more veterans, would provide a garage for the Veterans’ van. The proposed millage is for 10 years.

Commissioner Ala expressed his support.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ala, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Resolution for the proposed ballot language for the August 7, 2018 election.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.  
NO: None 0.

5. Marina rates

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, informed the Board of moving the season slip rates from Rate 10 to Rate 9.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the season slip rate change to Rate 9.

Commissioner Ala had a discussion with Eric Forsberg.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Ala 5.  
NO: None 0.

6. Copper Country Mental Health – request for reappointments

Commissioner Ala made a Motion for Eric Forsberg to advertise for reappointments.

The Motion died for lack of support.

The Board had a discussion with Eric Forsberg.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to appoint Patrick Rozich, James Tervo and Barry Fink to the Copper Country Mental Health Services Board of Directors.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

#### 7. Houghton County Land Bank – board member applications

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to appoint Tom Tikkanen and John Haeussler to the Houghton County Land Bank Board.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Koskela, Ala 4.

NO: None 0.

Commissioner Tikkanen abstained from voting.

#### 8. Houghton County Revolving Loan Fund Loan

Commissioner Palosaari stated he would abstain from voting due to his son applying for this loan.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the Resolution for the \$108,000.00 loan to Quincy Wood Rights.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Tikkanen, Ala, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None 0.

Commissioner Palosaari abstained from voting.

#### 9. Houghton County Road Commission Building – Ripley

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, advised the Board that the building has been toured. He recommended the parcel list for \$225,000.00 with 35 feet and the bump out parking area retained. He stated it would take three (3) years to pay back the money to the general fund.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to list the Houghton County Road Commission Building for sale with a listing price of \$225,000.00 with 35 feet land adjacent to the dock and the bump out parking area retained.

The Board and Eric Forsberg had a discussion.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: Ala 1.

#### 6. Appropriations

- a. Western U.P. Health Department - \$64,912.75
- b. U.P. RC&D Council - \$350.00
- c. KEDA - \$5,0000.00
- d. NorthCare Network - \$22,140.45
- e. WUPPDR - \$2,866.50

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the above-mentioned Appropriations.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Pintar, Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Ala 5.  
NO: None 0.

10. Travel Requests

- a. MAC Conference
- b. Brenda Cadwell – Friend of Court
- c. Brenda Cadwell – Friend of Court
- d. Stacy Kochan – Prosecutor’s Office

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the above-mentioned Travel Requests with four (4) people going to the MAC Conference.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

Horst Schmidt addressed the Board.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to adjourn at 6:55 pm. The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

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Albert Koskela, Chairman

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Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk