

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 10, 2018**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, April 10, 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; Tim Palosaari, District 5.

Scott Ala called in for the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting dated March 13, 2018 as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Approval of Agenda:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Agenda as presented with the addition of Commissioner Pintar under Announcements.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

Linda Belote with the League of Women Voters addressed the Board regarding the survey they have done for the jail.

Horst Schmitt addressed the Board regarding the Houghton County Planning Commissions scheduled not being on the website.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,397,592.61 as presented. The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela 4.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Tikkanen had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: WUPPDR, Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District, Houghton County Planning Commission, and Western UP Health Board.

Commissioner Palosaari had nothing to report to the Board.

Chairman Koskela reported to the Board on the following: Alger & Wexford County Jails, the Hungarian Falls, and the Bridge Committee.

County Officers:

Chris VanArsdale, Emergency Director, addressed the Board regarding hiring a rescuing team and the Hungarian Falls. He stated there were two (2) incidents at the Hungarian Falls in the last month and a half.

Brian McLean, Sheriff, updated the Board regarding the jails over capacity of inmates and provided handouts to the Board for March and April 2018.

Kevin Harju, Houghton County Road Commission Engineer, advised the Board on the budget for the Road Commission, road repairs, and stated they will be accepting bids in April for the townships dust control.

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, advised the Board and the public that the Houghton County Transfer Station will be extending their hours on Wednesdays only until 6:00 pm beginning Wednesday, April 11, 2018.

New Business:

1. Houghton County Audit Report – Debbie Bradford, Rukkila, Negro & Assoc.

Debbie Bradford, Audit Manager, addressed the Board regarding the September 30, 2017 fiscal year audit. She stated the audit went great and thanked everyone from the County.

Commissioner Ala asked Debbie Bradford a question, and she answered.

2. County Equalization

Cheryl Patrick, Equalization Director, addressed the Board and explained the 2018 property tax numbers. She stated the total assessed value for Houghton County is 1,212,550,936, equalized is 1,214,264,276, the assessed had an increase of 1.13%, and an equalization increase of 1.27%. The top three (3) united for assessed value were Houghton City, Portage Township, and Torch Lake Township. The 2018 taxable value was 910,459,891 which was an increase of 2.28% from 2017. The top three (3) of taxable value areas were Houghton City, Hancock City and Calumet Township. The millage reduction formula is one (1) that should collect \$127,763 which is an increase of 2.28%.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve County Equalization Report as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

3. Alltel Tower Lease

Chairman Koskela explained the lease to the Board. The Board had discussion.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the Alltel Tower Lease as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela 4.

NO: None.

Commissioner Ala asked the County Clerk what was happening. The County Clerk informed him that he had to talk to the Chairman Koskela. Chairman Koskela informed Commissioner Ala that he could not vote.

#### 4. Jail Plan

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, recommended putting this matter on the May Agenda.

#### 5. Deficit Elimination Plans

Eric Forsberg explained the deficit elimination plans and the Resolutions to the Board.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the Twin Lakes Special Assessment District assessment.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the four (4) plans as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the Rice Lake Special Assessment District as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Pintar, Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela 4.

NO: None.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Otter Lake Special Assessment District as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the Passenger Facility Charge Deficit Reduction as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Pintar, Koskela, Palosaari 4.

NO: None.

#### 6. Resolution regarding Indigent Defense funding

The Board discussed the funding.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to have Chairman Koskela sign the Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None.

#### 7. Airport Industrial Park Lot Sale

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the sale of lots 25 and 27B in the Airport Industrial Park for \$37,000.00.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Pintar, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 4.

NO: None.

#### 8. Commissioner Absences

Chairman Koskela discussed a letter from the Houghton County Prosecuting Attorney. The board had discussion. Chairman Koskela asked for a Motion to penalize a Commissioner for not attending meetings according to the law up to \$100.00 per meeting. Commissioner Palosaari asked Commissioner Ala if he would attend future meetings? Commissioner Ala said yes. Commissioner Palosaari stated Board members are covering meetings for Commissioner Ala. The Board had discussion.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to table this matter until the May Board meeting. This shall be put on the May Agenda.

#### 9. Appropriations

- a. Northwoods Rail Transit Commission - \$100.00
- b. 4-H Platbook Advertisement - \$600.00
- c. Western U.P. Health Department - \$64,912.75

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

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela 4.

NO: None.

#### 10. Travel Requests

- a. Todd Laroux – Houghton County Building Department
- b. UPACC Spring Conference

Chairman Koskela and Commissioner Palosaari stated they will attend the UPACC Spring Conference.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the above-mentioned Travel Requests with two (2) Commissioner attending the UPACC Conference.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

#### Public Comments:

Louise Carroll addressed the Board regarding the public meetings regarding the jail. Commissioner Tikkanen explained that the Board needs to approve language before the public meetings can be scheduled. The Board had discussion with the public.

Faith Morrison had discussion with the Board regarding the jail and possible options.

Steve Salmi addressed the Board regarding the jail and questioned if a tri-county jail could be built. Commissioner Palosaari stated a regional jail would cost more than a local county jail.

Announcements:

Commissioner Pintar announced that he will be retiring as a Commissioner and will not be running in August.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to adjourn at 6:04 pm. The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

---

Albert Koskela, Chairman

---

Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk