

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 9, 2024**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with the public viewing in person and by Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Britz at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chairman Britz.

Roll Call:

The following Commissioners responded to roll call done by County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

Joel Keranen, District 2; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Gretchen Janssen, District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Absent: Tom Tikkanen, District 1.

Approval of Minutes June 11, 2024 Public Hearing & Regular Meeting:

Commissioner Janssen requested a change to the minutes regarding what she said about the Meals on Wheels program. They are serving 300 and there is a waiting list.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2024 meeting with the one (1) change as presented.

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

Clerk Kelly asked the Board to change the year to 2024 for the minutes. Board approved.

Approval of Agenda:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to accept the Agenda as presented.

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

Public Comments –Agenda Items only (5 minute limit):

None.

Approval of Bills - \$1,484,818.55:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$1,484,818.55.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Keranen, Anderson, Britz 4.

NO: None 0.

ABSENT: Tikkanen 1.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

He discussed the recent alert to a possible PFAs concern at the defunct Peterson/Lahti landfill. Commissioner Anderson asked Administrator Larson to follow up with the County's PFAs Attorney Tim Smith. Administrator Larson assured him that Tim has been contacted, and that any reports or required actions from EGLE will be shared immediately with Attorney Smith.

Administrator Larson stated he will be going to walk the site with Treasurer Mattila and Jim Staley from EGLE on Thursday or Friday.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

Transfer Station-the recycling tonnage in June of 2023 was 2.43. In June 2024, the total tonnage was 11.35.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

Portage Township: He attended a meeting, the Board voted 6-0 to support the Annexation for the Sharon Avenue property. He stated the Board is now waiting on the City of Houghton to take action.

County Officers:

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, stated they are implementing an Omni Q Smart parking system that will have a QR Code to pay online. The yellow envelopes will no longer be required when the new system is implemented. They are painting all of the lines in the parking lot soon. In May 2024 they boarded 2,323 people and normally there are approximately 2,100 people.

Todd LaRoux, Building Department Manager, provided a handout to the Board. He stated from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 there were 171 residential permits issued, 36 commercial permits issued for a total of 207 permits.

Commissioner Anderson asked what the single-family numbers were. Todd stated he would have Sara run a report.

County Clerk/Register of Deeds, Jennifer Kelly reported on the Early Voting Center. The public is welcome to attend the Public Accuracy Testing at the Houghton City Center on Monday, July 22, 2024 at 9:30 am.

Vice Chairman Britz stated Chris VanArsdale's monthly report is in the Boards packet.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

1. CCMHS Resolution Opposing MDHHS Changes-Mike Bach

Mike Bach, Executive Director from CCMHS discussed the Resolution that the CCMHS passed. He provided more background and information on the proposed changes that are being considered by the MDHHS. Mike explained the position of CCMHS. He provided handouts with more information on this change.

Administrator Larson will type up a Resolution for the County Board to consider at the next meeting.

2. Amendment to Personnel Policies Article 9 and Article 28 Regarding Healthcare

Administrator Larson stated Articles 9 & 28 need to be fixed. Article 9 has three male references when referring to employees, so he recommended a fix. Administrator Larson shared that the two Articles would go together for any proposed change, and would address the wait time for coverage for healthcare for all new Full Time employees. This move will not cost the County much, and it would allow for better recruitment and retention of new employees if adopted. For all other fringe benefits, the 90 day Probationary period would remain, so this proposed change is for healthcare only.

He asked the Board to consider the two amended Articles for adoption for full-time health insurance.

Vice Chairman Britz stated the Personnel Committee recommends these changes.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to make the two (2) Amendment changes for Articles 9.3 & 28 in the Personnel Policy effective immediately.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Keranen, Anderson, Britz 4.

NO: None 0.

ABSENT: Tikkanen 1.

3. Copper Country Mental Health 2023/2024 24-25 FY Appropriation Request \$164,495

The Board discussed this being the same level of funding request since 1996.

4. Travel

a. Administrator to MMRMA Board and State Pool Committee Meeting-MMRMA Pays

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to authorize Administrator Larson to attend the MMRMA meeting.

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

5. Appropriations:

a. Western UP Health Department July-September 2023 \$68,081.00

b. Copper Country Mental Health Services \$13,707.91

c. WUPPDR 4th Qtr \$4,461.25

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the above-mentioned Appropriations as presented.

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

Public Comments:

None.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 4:25p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk