

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2024**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 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 Chairman Tikkanen at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Tikkanen.

Roll Call:

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

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Joel Keranen, District 2; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Gretchen Janssen, District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Approval of Minutes October 9th Special Meeting:

Clerk Kelly informed the Board that the minutes are not done yet.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Anderson requested #20.5 be added for Appreciation for Administrator Larson. A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to accept the Agenda with the one (1) addition as presented.

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

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

Eric Waara, City of Houghton Manager, addressed the Board regarding #3 in the Agenda.

Approval of Bills - \$2,956,934.50:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,956,934.50.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

She attended an UP Economic Development Alliance meeting in Marquette. She stated they discussed new corridors for new housing.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

DNR: Work has begun at the Douglas Houghton Falls. They are working on the parking lot and driveway.

Land Bank: He discussed the demolition of the 4 houses. One (1) bid was received and rejected. The new deadline for bids is on November 8, 2024 at 4:00 pm.

MAC Conference-He attended the Conference in Traverse City.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

He attended a local table top that was put on by Chris VanArsdale, Emergency Director, at MTU.

Chairman Tikkanen congratulated Clerk Kelly on her Recognition Award from the Michigan Association of Register of Deeds for the 5 Committees she has been on in 2024. She also received a trophy from her Vendor-Fidlar for having the most people sign up and be protected with the Free Property Fraud Alert Program in 2023. The County received a nice plaque for 15 years of service with Fidar.

County Officers:

Lisa Mattila, Treasurer, stated the Land Bank bids were posted for November 8th for the house on D Street in Calumet. A Habitat for Humanity home will be built on this property.

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.

Josh Saaranen, Sheriff, stated there have been 3,000 complaints and there are 29 inmates.

Bernard, IT Manager, stated approximately 30-70 new telephones have been installed.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

1. FY 23 Audit, Ken Talsma, Anderson and Tackman

Ken Talsma addressed the Board and provided audit booklets for the Board and the Clerk. He directed everyone to page 89, and stated budgeted items should be amended before the County spends the money. The General Fund increased \$1.5 million. Taxable values are up.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to accept the Anderson and Tackman audit and comments made by Ken Talsma.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen, Janssen 5.

NO: None 0.

2. FY 24 Audit Prep, Contract with Lauterback and Amen

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to accept Lauterback and Amen's Contract for monthly services and the FY 24 audit as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen, Janssen 5.

NO: None 0.

3. Pewabic Street Garden Request from City of Houghton

Commissioner Britz discussed the 60' x 200' property that was an abandoned right of way in 1998.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to grant the request from the City of Houghton and approve Resolution 24-18 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Houghton County Courthouse
401 East Houghton Avenue
Houghton, MI 49931
(906) 482-8307



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Roy Britz *Vice Chairman*
District 5
Joel Keranen *Commissioner*
District 2
Glenn Anderson *Commissioner*
District 3
Gretchen Janssen *Commissioner*
District 4

RESOLUTION #24-18

TRANSFER OF PEWABIC STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY

WHEREAS, the City of Houghton abandoned that portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way between Houghton Avenue and South Avenue, located between Block 26 and Block 27 of the original plat of the Village (now City) of Houghton and;

WHEREAS, afterward the abandoned right-of-way was owned by the County of Houghton with the intent that County facilities may be eventually constructed on Blocks 26 and 27 and that abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way and;

WHEREAS, no County facilities were constructed on Blocks 26 and 27 or in the abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way, Block 26 was sold to private parties, and the Pewabic Street Community Garden formed and occupies that abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way and;

WHEREAS, the City of Houghton desires to regain ownership of that abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way to secure its future as a public use benefitting the residents of the City and;

WHEREAS, the County has obtained other property with the intent of constructing County facilities, no longer has a use for that abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way and is agreeable to transfer ownership to the City of Houghton for the public good;

THEREFORE BE RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Commissioners of Houghton County hereby resolves that returning the abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way to the City of Houghton free of charge is in the public interest and to sign a quit claim deed transferring ownership of that abandoned portion of the Pewabic Street right-of-way to the City of Houghton.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Date

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners, for the County of Houghton, Michigan, at a regular meeting held on the 15th day of October, 2024, the original of which resolution is on file in my office. I further certify that the meeting was held, and the minutes therefore were filed in compliance with Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my official signature this 15th day of October, 2024.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

4. MSU-Extension Assessment Contract

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the MSU-Extension Assessment Contract for \$47,000 for services for the 2025 FY as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.
NO: None 0.

5. MERS 457 Program Resolution

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the MERS 457 Resolution #24-19 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.
NO: None 0.

****The document was not available in “Word” format, so please refer to the County Administrator or County Clerk.**

6. Jail Consultant Proposal for Master Plan

Sheriff Saaranen stated that Delta and Marquette Counties used this consulting firm. James Escamilla and Joe Mrak addressed the Board via Microsoft Teams. They explained they would give an evaluation for the jail and Sheriff Department based on their needs for the number of

beds, and square feet needed and the cost. They stated our current jail is outlived its mission and now goals for the future need to be done to meet the ever changing needs of our County. They will analyze data, and have several design options for budgets. They will recommend 1 or 2 proposals. They will be coming to Marquette on October 29th for their next meeting. They would try to save money on expenses by visiting the Counties as they can.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the proposal for the Houghton County Jail Master Plan from Abonmarche Byce as presented. ARPA money will be used to pay up to \$47,000.00.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

7. 9-1-1 Advisory Board Radio and Pager Spending Requests

Commissioner Britz stated the 9-1-1 Advisory Board met on September 30th and recommends purchasing a radio/battery management server for \$8,000, replace 3 APX 7000 portable radios for \$23,000, and purchase 70 more 800 mhz pagers for local Fire Departments for \$56,000.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the 3 requests as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Janssen, Tikkanen, Anderson, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

8. MMC Transfer Station Container Purchase Agreement

Chairman Tikkanen stated \$45,500 was budgeted last year.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the Purchase Agreement for an 80 yard roll out container for \$48,000 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Keranen, Tikkanen, Anderson, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

9. WUPPDR Part 115 MMPC Committee Members Adoption

Commissioner Janssen stated Jerry Wuorenmaa provided a list of suggested MMPC Committee Members.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the appointees as presented.

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

10. HCRC Board Reappointment

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to reappoint Peter Torala to the HCRC Board for a 6 year term.

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

11. HCPC Reappointment

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to reappoint reappoint John Larson to the HCPC Board.

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

Clerk Kelly stated that Tim Sears had also requested reappointment.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to reappoint Tim Sears to the HCPC Board.

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

Clerk Kelly will type a Gazette Notice for Allan Aho’s vacancy on the HCPC Board and send it to the Commissioners for approval before going into the Gazette.

12. PA 152 Resolution Publicly Funded Healthcare Exemption

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the Resolution for the PA 152 Publicly Funded Healthcare Exemption as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen, Janssen 5.
NO: None 0.

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RESOLUTION #24-20

EXEMPTION RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE ANNUAL EXEMPTION OPTION AS SET FORTH 2011 PUBLIC ACT 152, THE PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION ACT

WHEREAS, 2011 Public Act 152 (the "Act") was passed by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor on September 24, 2011; WHEREAS, the Act contains three options for complying with the requirements of the Act;

WHEREAS, the three options are as follows:

- 1) Section 3 - "Hard Caps" Option - limits a public employer's total annual health care costs for employees based on coverage levels, as defined in the Act;
- 2) Section 4 - "80%/20%" Option limits a public employer's share of total annual health care costs to not more than 80%. This option requires an annual majority vote of the governing body;
- 3) Section 8 - "Exemption" Option - a local unit of government, as defined in the Act, may exempt itself from the requirements of the Act by an annual 2/3 vote of the governing body;

WHEREAS, the GOVERNMENT BODY has decided to adopt the annual Exemption option as its choice of compliance under the Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Commission in Houghton County elects to comply with the requirements of 2011 Public Act 152, the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act, by adopting the annual Exemption option for the medical benefit plan coverage year January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

I, Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk of Houghton County, do hereby certify and set my seal to the above Resolution as adopted October 15, 2024, at the Houghton County Courthouse, 401 E. Houghton Ave, Houghton, MI 49931.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

13. County Parcel in Hancock Purchase Request from Moyle Companies

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to have the Chair and Vice-Chair forward the request from Moyle Companies to Canal View. Canal View purchased the land in 2009 for \$154,000.

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

14. CLS Laundry Machines Purchase Request for County Marina

Todd LaRoux stated bids were received from RJ Cool & CLS. They are looking to put 2 new washers, and 2 new dryers at the Marina. CLS bid was \$9,737.80 and RJ Kool was \$8,811.91.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the bid from CLS for \$9737.80 as presented.

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

15. Courthouse front sidewalk repairs proposal, new USPS Box

Todd LaRoux stated this sidewalk repairs proposal is an in house project with a projected cost for the 17 pads is \$10,300.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to authorize the Maintenance Department make \$10,300 in sidewalk improvements as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Keranen, Tikkanen, Janssen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

16. Houghton County Canvassing Board Pay Increase Request

Clerk Kelly explained this would be a change due to Canvassing taking more than 1 day to complete.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve a \$75.00 second day rate of pay for the Houghton County Canvassing Board as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Keranen, Tikkanen, Anderson, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

17. County Commissioners Per Diem and Monthly Salary Increase for Jan 1

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve an increase in per diem \$20/month, salary of \$200/month, and \$50/month for the Chairman.

The Motion failed by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen 2.

NO: Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 3.

18. Houghton County Equalization Apportionment Report

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director, presented the 2024 apportionment report for the County. This report details the taxable values and millage rates for the units of government within the County.

The Board Chairman clarified whether the taxable values listed included properties claiming a PRE, which the figures did as total taxable values.

The Equalization Director mentioned the importance of Townships and Cities turning their millage rate requests (form L-4029) over to the County in a timely manner. These are due annually by September 30.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Equalization Apportionment Report as presented.

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

19. County Remonumentation 2025 Contract with State of Michigan

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the 2025 County Remonumentation Contract with the State of Michigan as presented and authorize Chairman Tikkanen to sign the Contract.

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

20. Regular Monthly Meeting for November 12, 2024 Time Change 4 pm to 3 pm

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to change the November 12, 2024 meeting time from 4:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

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

Clerk Kelly will type up a notice and post at the courthouse and on the county website.

20.5. Appreciation for Administrator Larson

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to show appreciation for Ben Larson, Administrator, for his combined time of 2 years and 10 months with Houghton County.

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

21. Travel

a. Delaney Ruotsala to CER/CEO Certification Exam Lansing \$211.68

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve \$211.68 for Delay Ruotsala to travel to Lansing for her CER/CEO Certification Exam.

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

22. Appropriations:

- a. CCMHS 2 Monthly Apportionment Payments \$27,415.82**
- b. WUPHD Quarterly Appropriation \$63,960**
- c. Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce \$400**

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

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

Public Comments:

Faith Morrison thanked Administrator Larson for his work on the County website.

Todd LaRoux thanked Administrator Larson.

Bernard Kluskens thanked Administrator Larson

Announcements:

Karin Cooper reminded everyone that the Keweenaw Co-op was having their grand opening.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Chairman Tikkanen to adjourn at 5:40p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk