

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 9, 2025**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 6:15 p.m. in the Circuit Courtroom on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with the public viewing in person and by Zoom.

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tikkanen at 6:00 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 the 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 31, 2025 Special Meeting; November 3, 2025 Work Session; November 12, 2025 Regular Meeting:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the October 31, 2025; November 3, 2025 and November 12, 2025 minutes as presented.

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

**Approval of Agenda/Additions:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the agenda as presented.

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

**Public Comments-Agenda Items only \*(3 minute limit)**

1. Aryel Azimuth opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
2. Shelby Owens, MD. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
3. Maryann Gobrogge opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
4. Mariah Dunham opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
5. Lacy Cygan opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
6. Dan Holcomb supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
7. Bill Manderfield supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
8. Alan Salmi opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
9. Victoria Bergvall opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
10. Craig Waddell opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
11. Denise Heikkinen opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
12. Julia Markey opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
13. Maddie Manderfield supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.

14. Susan Autio opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
15. Katie Sullivan opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
16. Solona Skubick opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
17. Paul Luoma opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
18. Elizabeth Waylan opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
19. Sarah Russo opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
20. Teresa Kariniemi supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
21. Jessica Phillips opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
22. Susan Lavolette opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
23. Chad Johnson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
24. John Kurkowski opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
25. Lee Phillips opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
26. Pastor Peter Norland opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
27. Ian Lewis opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
28. Kyleigh Pemble opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
29. Matteo Gonzeuez opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
30. Emily Shaw opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
31. Hannah Rundman Lowney opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
32. Cam McIntosh opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
33. Justin Plichta opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
34. Michael Verive opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
35. Evan Lanese opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
36. Vanessa Trevisan opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
37. Pastor Bucky Beach opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
38. Inga Johnson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
39. Emily Stanton opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
40. Suzie Harris opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
41. Ziggy Salmi opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
42. Emma Juntunen opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
43. Judy Isaksson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
44. Rony Campbell opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
45. Jean Heider opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
46. Marissa Jayne Wolfe opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
47. Brett Harrison opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
48. Rick Stanitis opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
49. Joan Schumaker Chadde opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
50. Anne Newcombe opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
51. Marna Fransas opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
52. Logan H.-W. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
53. Karen Blanco opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
54. K. S. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
55. Betsy Lehman opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
56. Stelle Acero Barone opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
57. Nicci Farrell opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
58. Jo Poeschl opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
59. Matt McCormick opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
60. Pastor Ivan Niemela & Austin Niemela supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.

61. A. Gerdes opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
62. Kristin Vichich opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
63. Chloe R. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
64. Alexis Tater opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
65. Eli Haber opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
66. Patrick Morath Jr. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
67. Lucas Sheppard opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
68. Rev. Sarah Diener Schlitt opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
69. Daisy Rae Nelson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
70. Stefanie Schuchert opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
71. Katie Atkinson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
72. Max Meyer opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
73. Gabriel Roberts opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
74. Alexia supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
75. Harmany Peterson supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
76. Clay Peterson supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
77. Tony R. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
78. Sky Harris opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
79. John Taylor opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
80. Nick Kwiek opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
81. Lela Miller opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
82. Aili Palmer opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
83. Luca Rirondo opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
84. Cole Peterson supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
85. Rhys Toerniges opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
86. Emery Feidru opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
87. Cynthia Drake opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
88. Brandon Mukavetz opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
89. ??Devin Raasio opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
90. Rev. Meg (Mo) Trimm opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
91. Rich Canevez opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
92. Ruby Miller opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
93. Hailey M. opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
94. Donavon Young opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
95. Steve Raasio supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
96. Rain Isaksson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
97. Chris opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
98. Caitlin Jameson opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
99. Comet Trimm opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
100. Jesse Aho opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
101. Male Speaker #101 opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
102. Jerome Niemela supported the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.

By Zoom:

103. Sherry Wyatt opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
104. Alex opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
105. Lydia Christersen opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
106. Tessa opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
107. Audrey opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.

108. Ashley Bergeron opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
109. Julie opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
110. Teresa Ross opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
111. Maggie opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
112. Lynne Barrette opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
113. Ash opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
114. Ryan opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.
115. Charles White opposed the Resolution saying that there are only male and female sexes.

Chairman Tikkanen adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes at 10:45 p.m.

Chairman Tikkanen called the meeting back to order at 10:57 p.m.

### **Approval of Bills-\$2,693,544**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,693,544 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

### **Correspondence:**

None discussed.

### **Reports:**

### **Standing Committee:**

### **County Officers:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to skip all reports.

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

### **Unfinished Business:**

None.

### **New Business:**

#### **1. Joe Foster, Remonumentation**

Joe Foster was not present.

#### **2. Adam Laplander, Update & Gust Speaker**

Adam Laplander stated there are currently 113 residents and they had 38 visitors during Thanksgiving.

John with Plan Moran went over a handout that he provided to the Board. He stated if Canal View is sold, the Class 3 status Canal View currently has will go away. Approximately \$7.3 million could be recaptured to the State if it is sold.

Adam has received one (1) quote for \$6,500 for a survey/appraisal and the second quote should be coming soon.

### **3. Schedule of Board of Commissioners 2026 Meetings**

Clerk Kelly informed the Board that the dates for the Work Sessions are incorrect.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the 2026 Board of Commissioners monthly meeting schedule and to have the Administrator put the Work Session schedule on the January monthly Agenda.

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

### **4. Resolution #25-030 Transition to Direct Deposit**

Commissioner Britz stated he has had conversations with staff.

Commissioner Janssen stated there are approximately ten (10) people who receive paper checks.

The Board agreed to table this until January 2026.

### **5. 97<sup>th</sup> District Court Renovations Change**

Todd LaRoux, Building Department Manager, explained the renovation changes to the Board.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the #2 Change Order for \$33,235.00.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

### **6. Death Certificate Filing fees**

Clerk Kelly explained that the Agenda and explanation in the Board's packet are not correct, so for transparency, she asked for this to be tabled until January 2026.

The Board tabled this until January 2026.

### **7. Resolution #25-031 To Declare there are only two sexes**

Commissioner Keranen read a statement.

Chairman Tikkanen gave his opinion opposing the Resolution.

Commissioner Janssen stated she felt that people wanted their voices heard.

Commissioner Britz stated the Resolution has nothing to do with the County Board.

Commissioner Anderson stated the Resolution has nothing to do with the County Board.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to vote on Resolution #25-031.

The Motion failed by the following vote.

YES: Keranen 1.

NO: Anderson, Jassen, Tikkanen, Britz 4.

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THERE ARE ONLY TWO SEXES MALE AND  
FEMALE  
RESOLUTION #25-032**

**WHEREAS**, Houghton County currently uses the State of Michigan’s Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates; and

**WHEREAS**, unknown, other and undetermined are not options that should be considered on birth, marriage and death certificates; and

**WHEREAS**, a male has XY Chromosomes, and a female has XX Chromosomes; and

**WHEREAS**, if you are born a male XY or born a female XX that sex will follow you from your birth, marriage and death certificate; and

**WHEREAS**, there are no other options.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners encourage all other Michigan Counties and the State of Michigan to recognize there are only two sexes, Male, and, Female, and science is clear you cannot change your chromosomes.

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

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes

No:

**Motion failed.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Tikkanen, Chairman  
Houghton County Board of Commission

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.**

STATE OF MICHIGAN       )  
  )ss.

COUNTY OF HOUGHTON )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular meeting held on December 9, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk  
County of Houghton

## **8. Authorizing Temporary Administration Staffing due to Maternity Leave**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to authorize temporary staff for the Administration for maternity leave. A person will be temporarily hired part-time and then go full-time when needed.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

#### **9. Authorizing On-site Contractual work for IT in January**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to authorize negotiations with VC3 and to pay Alex Radke, IT, during the month of January 2026.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

#### **10. Adoption of County Credit Card Policy**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt the County Credit Card Policy as presented.

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

#### **11. Tri County Public Defenders, October 2025 Payment Request: \$121,620.93**

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve payment of \$121,620.93 to the Tri County Public Defenders as presented.

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

#### **12. Materials Management Customer Accident Discussion**

Chairman Tikkanen stated a person requested the County to pay for a rental car in the amount of \$650.00 as their vehicle was totaled at the Transfer Station.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve limited reimbursement of \$650.00 for rental expenses for the person who totaled their vehicle at the Transfer Station.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

#### **13. Resolution #25-33 Behavioral Health Hospital for the UP**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve Resolution #25-33 Behavior Hospital for the UP as presented.

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

NO: None 0.

### **HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION FOR A U.P. BEHAVIORIAL HOSPITAL RESOLUTION #25-033**

**WHEREAS**, there are currently five (5) Behavioral Health Hospitals in the entire State of Michigan, none of them located in the Upper Peninsula; and

**WHEREAS**, the need for such a facility is very high in the Upper Peninsula but the only facilities available to meet this need are below the Bridge; and

**WHEREAS**, Local law enforcement agencies in the Upper Peninsula are frequently tasked with transporting citizens with severe mental health issues to one of these downstate facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, these mental health transports involve many hours and hundreds of miles taking much needed manpower off the street and incurring great expenses for local units of government; and

**WHEREAS**, Every Upper Peninsula law enforcement agency has been contacted, and everyone has acknowledged the tremendous waste of manpower and the risks inherent in transporting individuals with mental health issues over great distances by law enforcement officers who are untrained in how to handle these special need individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, Contact has been made with every county, village, township, tribal and college law enforcement agency throughout the Upper Peninsula and they unanimously support the establishment of a Behavioral Health Hospital in the Upper Peninsula; and

**WHEREAS**, Collaboration amongst the local governments in the Upper Peninsula is also critical to creatively identifying and securing funding necessary to augment any forthcoming state funds necessary to adequately build and operate a Behavioral Health Hospital that can be shared and benefited from by all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners supports the establishment of a Behavioral Health Hospital in the Upper Peninsula; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Houghton County Board of Commissioners stands ready to work collaboratively with other local units of government in the Upper Peninsula in order to accomplish that goal by lobbying our representatives in Lansing to provide funding, and by identifying our own resources that may be used to make such a facility a reality. Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:  
Yes  
No:

**Motion carried.**

_____	_____
Tom Tikkanen, Chairman	Date
Houghton County Board of Commission	

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.**

STATE OF MICHIGAN            )  
  )ss.  
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular meeting held on December 9, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk  
County of Houghton

**Other Business/Communications**



None.

## **Travel**

None.

## **Appropriations:**

### **1. WUPPDR-\$3,717.75**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to pay\$3,717.75 to WUPPDR as presented.

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

## **Public Comments:**

Faith Morrison stated that no report was done on the Jail Committee.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the Jail Committee met recently and a Jail Needs sub-committee is being formed.

Commissioner Britz stated the Sharon Avenue Properties Committee will meet soon and he is going to be talking to the City of Houghton.

Commissioner Keranen stated the County Held Properties Committee just met and another meeting will be scheduled.

Alan Salmi commented about Canal View.

Shandel Marcol commented about Canal View.

Hannah Rundman Lowney commented about Canal View.

Nadia commented about Canal View.

Alex Radke, IT, stated approximately 400 were on Zoom during the meeting.

## **Announcements:**

1. There will be two positions for the Houghton County Land Bank Authority beginning with the new year. Glenn Anderson and James Hainault Terms are expiring 12/31/2025.

Chairman Tikkanen explained the two positions that are expiring on 12/31/25.

Faith Morrison informed the public about the questions/survey on Houghtoncounty.net regarding a new Jail.

## **Adjournment:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adjourn at 12:19 a.m. on December 10, 2025.

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

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Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

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Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

APPROVED:\_\_\_\_\_

Clerk:\_\_\_\_\_