

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session on Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.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 10:00 a.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.

Agenda/Additions:

Didn't do.

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

None.

Houghton County Board of Commissioners Work Session:

Chairman Tikkanen discussed the jail committees, the packet from Attorney Zappa, the contract with the Tri County Public Defenders, and Clerk Kelly's email from her Clerk's Conference.

Commissioner Anderson discussed Resolution for changing the County Board meetings time and location and questioned if Houghton County has a purchasing policy.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the voters have commented that they want more information and to know what the County assets are, and to look into the possibility of funding for the jail construction. They also want to know what will occur with the Sharon Avenue property and what will be done with the current jail and to know the specifics on new jail construction costs. Could there be specialized use for juveniles, mental health, and to refine the ballot language.

Chairman Tikkanen requested that the new Committees all have agendas, proper public meeting notices, and minutes.

Commissioners Anderson and Keranen will look into County owned properties.
Commissioner Britz will do a Committee for the Sharon Avenue Property Use and the current jail. They will be meeting on Friday at 9:00 am in the Commissioners Hall.
Chairman Tikkanen and Commissioner Janssen will look into the new jail.

Chairman Tikkanen stated there can be up to 10 people on the Committees, including citizens, and each Committee will give a report at the monthly Board meetings.

Commissioner Anderson questioned if the previous jail committee will do anything at this time that the Sheriff appointed. Commissioner Britz discussed the two (2) recommendations from the Committee that was presented to the Board before the August election. Chairman Tikkanen stated he hoped the previous jail committee would be included in the new committee. The Committee will discuss this with Sheriff Saaranen.

Clerk Kelly offered to post the meeting notices, agendas and minutes for the Sharon Avenue Property use and the current jail since she is on the committee.

Clerk Kelly's pamphlet given to the Board from her Clerk's Conference:

Clerk Kelly informed the Board of a presentation done by a female Parliamentarian. She learned a lot at Conference. She found out that the Commissioners Rules of Order have "Unfinished Business" and the Agenda has "Old Business" which is incorrect. She will work with Administrator Rheault to correct the Agenda. The minutes should have an "Approved" and the Clerk's initials when the Board approves the minutes. Meeting notices should have the date and time the notices are posted with initials.

Tri County Public Defenders Contract:

Commissioner Anderson said it needed to be done by the end of September 2025. Chairman Tikkanen requested Alex, Finance Manager, send the contract to Prosecutor Helmer for his review.

Commissioners Anderson and Keranen will get together to review the contract and have a recommendation at the next monthly meeting.

Clerk Kelly will send the Commissioners the retention schedule for minutes.

Commissioner Anderson questioned if Microsoft Teams can be switched to YouTube. Alex, Finance Manager, will discuss this with Alex, IT.

Meeting times & location:

Commissioner Britz stated everyone can participate by Microsoft Teams if they cannot attend in person.

Commissioner Keranen suggested checking with Alex, IT, to look into a sound system for Circuit Court if Board meetings would be held there and to check with Judge Bulleit if this would be acceptable.

The Board had discussion regarding attendance in the Commissioners Hall and in Circuit Court. Several agreed that hearing is an issue in Circuit Court.

Purchasing Policy:

Commissioner Anderson discussed Marquette Counties Purchasing Policy. Alex, Finance Manager, will look into if Houghton County has one (1) or not.

Public Comment-*(3-minute limit):

David Gemignani requested a copy of the contract, a meeting with the finance committee as he had no response to calls and emails that he had done. Commissioners Anderson and Keranen, Finance Committee, will meet with David Gemignani next week.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adjourn at 11:21 a.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

APPROVED _____ JK