

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING/WORKGROUP SESSION
JULY 14, 2022**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting/Workgroup Session on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton and public viewing by Zoom and in person.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Tikkanen at 1:00 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; Kevin Codere, District 2; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Gretchen Janssen (arrived at 1:01 pm), District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Codere to approve the Agenda as presented.

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

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

Mary Babcock, Hancock City Manager, requested assistance with ARPA fund for local street work.

Correspondence:

Administrator, Elizabeth Bjorn, stated she had verbal correspondence from County Treasurer, Lisa Mattila, that the second half of the ARPA funds are in the bank.

Old Business:

1. American Rescue Plan (CSLFRF) \$6.8

The City of Hancock is requesting a \$275,000 match for road repairs.

Commissioner Anderson stated there is a total of \$950,000 that includes all villages with a match.

Commissioner Codere is concerned with the overall requests, and recommended the Board get accurate numbers from the villages on what they can match, and the Board get a plan in place within 2-4 months to appropriate the funds by the end of the year.

Commissioner Britz stated the townships do not receive Act 151 money.

Commissioner Anderson stated the Road Commission received the money for the townships. He suggested to offer to other municipalities and see if they could match the County.

Commissioner Codere questioned the IT's capital budget. Administrator Bjorn stated that there is a rolling 3 or 5 year capital outlay budget forecasted underneath the general

fund for the FY appropriation. Commissioner Codere stated he would like to see a thorough analysis of the IT with cloud options.

Commissioner Britz stated Joe Schneller was putting emergency signs on the trails with the DNR's permission.

Joe Schneller stated he works on trails and has put 300 steel poles on Keweenaw County trails. Trail 133 is not complete. He will begin working on hiking trails. He will also begin working on Houghton County trails soon and is looking for assistance with the costs. He puts signs up about every half of a mile. The approximate cost is \$125.00 per mile.

IT: Tom Ressler stated important software upgrades are necessary for the Courts, and may be required every 2 years, and they also need data storage.

He discussed his opinions on cloud based storage and stated the cloud storage could be problematic in ways.

He discussed \$130,000 for cyber security and a mixture of hosted services and in house consultations for security.

Nickole Jollimore, Magistrate, stated District Court has audio recording, and Circuit and Probate Courts have video recording. The Courts hope to standardize all three (3) courts. Baraga Courts use a tape recorder and jump drive.

2. Sharon Avenue Property

Commissioner Janssen gave a handout to the Board with all vacant listings in the City of Houghton or Portage Township.

1. Mattson property-He sold 1/3 of an acre. There are 22.52 acres left to sell. 10 acres are flat with 9-10 feet of fill which is rubble from construction sites.

Commissioner Codere asked if there is potential for full excavation of the property.

2. Behind the Oakridge properties there is 4.5 acres for sale. There is no road access. The cost is \$49,00.00.

Commissioner Britz discussed the 5-8 acres for a full County complex.

3. 61 acres behind the Shopko building. Cost is \$500,000. The access is limited.
4. 5 acres on Superior Road
5. Sharon Avenue property-the agreement was not signed, but was prepared.

Chairman Tikkanen stated he believes the prices is still agreed upon.

Commissioner Codere discussed his tour on the approximate 14,000 square foot property. There is a garage. While discussing things with a member, he was told the Church could be asking for a different amount from what was previously agreed upon. He recommended going to Portage Township and taking the jail off the table and put offices into the building along with the Courts.

Commissioner Anderson stated the County needs to find out the purchase price and work out an agreement.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the County needs to make the court system secure and agrees to get an agreement with the Church. He stated the County can use ARPA funds for the property. The County was not using ARPA money when the previous agreement was made for the Church. He stated his contact said the price was still the same.

Commissioner Codere stated an appraisal could be higher now.

It was agreed upon that Commissioners Britz and Codere make contact with the church.

New Business:

1. Work Group Session

Nickole Jollimore will forward Judge Daavettila's email to the Board.

Commissioner Codere stated the Land Bank is getting bids for the six (6) properties and it may take up to two (2) months to receive the bids.

Commission Britz discussed the plow truck the Maintenance department requested. The truck would come with a plow. The cost is \$33,496 for the truck. The current truck would be traded in. The new truck would need a topper.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to authorize \$35,000.00 to purchase a new truck with plow and trade in the current County truck.

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

Air Conditioning and Elevator: The estimate is \$250,000.00. Administrator Bjorn stated the elevator is in compliance for maintenance.

Commissioner Codere recommended getting two (2) quotes.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Codere and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to authorize Administrator Bjorn to get two (2) local vendors from engineering firms to give quotes for the air conditioning system and the elevator.

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

Commissioner Janssen stated cyber security and security for the courthouse are most important to her.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Codere and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to direct the IT Director, Tom Ressler, to get comparable proposals for IT for the next work session.

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

The Board agreed to schedule the next workgroup session at the August 9, 2022 Board meeting.

Commissioner Janssen discussed a handout for the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District. There is a workshop on August 26, 2022 from 9:00 am-1:00 pm at the Nara Park.

Public Comments: (5-minute limit)

Mary Babcock, Hancock City Manager, offered to reach out to the villages to see how much they can contribute. The Board agreed.

Announcements:

Commissioner Codere stated he received an email from Jeff Ratcliffe stated the DNR Advisory will be in town next week.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adjourn at 2:43 pm.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk