

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 13, 2024**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing/Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 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 Vice Chairman Britz.

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 July 9, 2024 Regular Meeting:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2024 meeting as presented. The Agenda stated July 16, 2024 which was incorrect.

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

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 5, Nays 0.

Public Hearing-CDBG Loan to Red Hen Foods and Gifts, LLC

a. Open Hearing

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to open the hearing.

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

b. Discussion and Public Comment

Jeff Ratcliffe, Executive Director & HCRLF Administrator, stated the working capital loan would be a \$25,000 Revolving Loan Fund that was approved by the Houghton County Revolving Loan Fund Committee. This loan will be used for a \$200,000 loan project in Nisula. The \$25,000 loan will be for a 10 year term, and a 5 year balloon.

c. Close Hearing

A Motion was made by Commission Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to close the hearing.

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

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

None.

Approval of Bills - \$1,347,440.96:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve paying the bills submitted of \$1,347,440.96.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

Congratulated the City of Houghton for receiving an award.

She attended a Michigan Labor meeting.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

He discussed the Houghton County Fair being from 8/22-25.

He stated the Marina is looking good with the improvements that have been done.

The Wesley Karna sign is up in Adams Township.

He discussed Houghton County receiving money for Road Funding from the Governor's recent declaration for snow melt that was applied for by the County Engineer and will benefit the Houghton County Road Commission and the Townships of Calumet, Franklin and Portage.

He attended a National Byway meeting.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

He discussed the snow melt money for the Houghton County Road Commission.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:

He talked about Veterans Office and what services they provide.

He reminded everyone that Pasty Fest was the following weekend in Calumet.

County Officers:

County Clerk/Register of Deeds, Jennifer Kelly, reported on the August 6, 2024 election. The Library millage was accidentally missing from Portage Township Precinct 4's ballot. It was too late for reprogramming and reprinting per Lori Bourbonais at the Bureau of Elections.

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, stated SkyWest bid on a 3 year contract at the Airport. The Airport Committee signed a letter of intent. The Airport passed an inspection the end of June 2024.

Sheriff, Joshua Saaranen, stated there are currently 28 inmates and 2100 complaints for the year. They will be having a Jail Committee meeting soon.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

1. Resolution for CDBS Loan to Red Hen Foods and Gifts, LLC

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to adopt Resolution #24-16 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

Houghton County Board of Commissioners

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



Tom Tikkanen *Chairman*
District 1
Roy Britz *Vice Chairman*
District 5
Joel Keranen *Commissioner*
District 2
Glenn Anderson *Commissioner*
District 3
Gretchen Janssen *Commissioner*
District 4

**RESOLUTION 24-16
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT LOAN PROGRAM (CLP)
AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, assisting the startup, expansion, or location of companies that create new jobs is a priority for Houghton County; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Red Hen Foods and Goods, LLC will assist the creation of new retail jobs in the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) offers loans for assisting companies with permanent working capital; and

WHEREAS, Houghton County has requested Community Development Block Grant Loan Program funding authorization in the amount of \$25,000 from the MEDC; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed project is consistent with the local community development plan as described in the application and that at least 51% of the beneficiaries of the proposed project would be low and moderate income persons; and,

WHEREAS, no project costs will be incurred prior to a formal loan award, completion of the environmental review procedures and a formal, written authorization to incur costs is received from the MEDC.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners authorizes submission of a CDBG Application in the amount of \$25,000 for the Red Hen Foods and Goods, LLC project.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that Lisa Mattila, County Treasurer, is authorized to execute the application form and attachments on behalf of the County, sign the Loan agreement, and serve as the certifying officer for the environmental review.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Absent:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Dated: _____
Tom Tikkanen, Chair
Houghton County Board of Commissioners

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

ss.)

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 13th day of August, 2024, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office. I further certify that the meeting was held and the minutes were filed in compliance with Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have affixed my official signature this day of August, 2024.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

2. MERS 457 Retirement Plan

Tammy Marrier with MERS asked the Board to consider offering a 457 program to County employees. There will be no cost to the County. Administrator Larson stated the County currently has FT&J and Nationwide. Any employee currently with one of these providers can continue to use these companies. Administrator Larson will put this matter on the September Agenda and prepare a Resolution.

3. MIDC Tri-County Public Defenders Contract

Administrator Larson stated this is funded through the State. The Public Defenders are now handling the inmates at the Baraga Prison.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the MIDC Tri-County Public Defenders contract as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

4. Airport Conservation Easement Agreement

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, discussed removing a dam and turning it into a stream. The Airport Committee is in agreement.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the Airport Conservation Easement Agreement as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

5. Michigan ESTA Change in 2025

Administrator Larson stated all employers with more than 10 employees must offer 12 days off to employees effective February 2025.

6. Marina Development Grant UPEA Proposal

Commissioner Anderson stated that Administrator Larson applied for a grant and received a grant as approved in previous monthly meetings and with a contract with the Michigan DNR. In the grant proposal money was set aside to hire a Professional Architect and Engineering firm to assist with drawings and to ensure a proper bidding process for compliance

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to accept UPEA's proposal for \$25,000 to do the work at the Marina as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

7. Courthouse 2nd Floor Back Entrance Remodel LJJ Proposal

Chairman Tikkanen commented on the 2nd floor entrance at the Courthouse. He discussed LJJ's Bid of \$21,534.

Administrator Larson stated Superior Polymer bid \$700 for the flooring and it is in the Building and Grounds budget to be taken care of.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to the bids from LJJ and Superior Polymer as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

8. Western Upper Peninsula Health Department 2024-25 Request

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to accept the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department request of \$275,840 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

9. Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region 2024-25 Request

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to accept the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region request of \$14,871 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

10. Houghton County Employee Handbook

Administrator Larson stated the Houghton County Employee Handbook was updated in July by Chelsea Rheault.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt the amended Houghton County Employee Handbook as presented.

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

Commissioner Keranen suggested the Handbook be emailed to all employees.

11. Commissioner Appointment to Materials Mgmt Planning Committee, Part 115

Commissioner Keranen recommended Commissioner Janssen be appointed to the Materials Management Planning Committee.

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

12. Peterson-Lahti Landfill Compliance Inspection from EGLE

Administrator Larson stated the Peterson-Lahti Landfill is a part of the County Treasurer's holdings. The County may ask the Representatives to assist with getting grants if needed.

Commissioner Anderson asked who was the LLC that owned it prior to the County. No one answered. Administrator Larson shared that there was a chain of ownership included in the Commissioners Packets, and that it appears to be owned by the Peterson and Lahti families, then gifted to the St. Vincent DePaul group, who then turned it over to the County under former Treasurer, Kathy Beattie. Commissioner Anderson asked if our PFAS Attorney has been contacted, and Administrator Larson assured him that Tim Smith has been made aware of this.

An inspection report was shared by EGLE's Jim Staley, and that was also in the packets that were posted.

13. MAC Annual Conference in Traverse City September 24-26, 2024

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to authorize the Commissioners, Administrator and County Clerk to attend the MAC Annual Conference if they are able to.

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

14. Travel

- a. Finance Director to MGFOA Conference \$250**
- b. FOC Staff to Annual Michigan Family Support Fall Conference \$3,000**
- c. ROD to Fall Conference \$1,130**
- d. Administrator to WMHIP Summit and Board Meeting \$300**

Chairman Tikkanen stated Chelsea Rheault received a \$500 scholarship.

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the above-mentioned Travel requests as presented.

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

15. Appropriations:

- a. Michigan State University Extension 2023-24 Assessment \$45,000**
- b. Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region \$4,461.25**
- c. Copper Country Community Mental Health \$13,707.91**

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

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

Public Comments:

Angie Hamilton addressed the Board regarding the Early Voting Center and Canvassing.

Karen Timmonen addressed the Board regarding the missing Library millage on Portage Township Precinct 4's ballot.

Lynn Singer addressed the Board regarding an Election Commission meeting on 6/4.

Faith Morrison addressed the Board regarding voting at the Early Voting Center.

Announcements:

Commissioner Anderson reminded everyone about the Houghton County Fair from August 22-25, 2024.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 5:15p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk