

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2017**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing/Regular meeting on Tuesday, October 17, 2017, in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Albert Koskela at 5:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Koskela.

Roll call:

The following commissioners responded to roll call:

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Albert Koskela, District 2; Anton Pintar, District 3; Scott Ala, District 4; Tim Palosaari, District 5.

Public Hearing-Houghton County Airpark Sewer Study

Open hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari to open the hearing.

Discussion and Public Comment:

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the grant to the Board for the Airport's sanitary sewer system.

No Public Comment.

Close Hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to close the hearing.

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

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting dated September 12, 2017 as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Ala requested #11 be added to the Agenda for discussion on the District Court Administrator's vacation.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Alar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the Agenda with the one (1) addition as presented.

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

Public Comments:

None.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,904,743.91 as presented. The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 5.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, discussed NorthCare with the Board. Commissioner Ala will contact NorthCare on Wednesday, October 18, 2017 for an update.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Copper Country Mental Health, and the Copper Country Recycling Initiative.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: WUPPDR, Copper Country Recycling Initiative, Houghton County Planning Commission, Western UP Health Board, and Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District.

Commissioner Ala reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Road Commission, and a new venue for a jail to be further discussed in the Agenda.

Commissioner Palosaari had nothing to report to the Board.

Chairman Koskela reported to the Board on the following: Will discuss further on #11 of the Agenda.

County Officers:

Brian McLean, Sheriff, addressed the Board and stated the jail is again overcrowded for the 7th day in a row.

New Business:

1. Public Defenders Proposal

David Gemignani, Public Defender Attorney, addressed the Board and provided a lot of information regarding the state standards and the Proposal. He informed the Board of a possibility of a tri-county Personal Defender office for Houghton, Baraga, and Keweenaw Counties. The deadline to submit the Proposal is on November 20, 2017.

The Board had some discussion with David Gemignani.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ala, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to accept the Public Defenders Proposal.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

2. Resolution regarding 2017 Otter Lake Special Assessment Roll

John Pekkala, Drain Commissioner, addressed the Board and stated the Otter Lake Dam has been repaired. The Assessment is \$23,072.00.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the 2017 Otter Lake Special Assessment Roll Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar, Ala 5.

NO: None 0.

3. Resolution regarding 2017 Twin Lakes Special Assessment Roll

John Pekkala, Drain Commissioner, addressed the Board and stated the Twin Lakes structure is complete. The Assessment is \$40,000.00.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the 2017 Twin Lakes Special Assessment Roll Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Pintar, Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

4. Resolution regarding 2017 Rice Lake Special Assessment Roll

John Pekkala, Drain Commissioner, addressed the Board and stated Rice Lake's water has dropped an average of one (1) inch per day over the last two (2) weeks. The Assessment is \$60,000.00.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ala, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the 2017 Rice Lake Special Assessment Roll Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

5. Houghton County Deputy Sheriff's Contract

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, advised the Board on the Deputy Sheriff's contract agreement.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the Houghton County Deputy Sheriff's Contract.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 5.

NO: None 0.

6. Request to purchase additional MERS time

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, advised the Board in the past against doing this.

The Board had a brief discussion, and agreed to have this on the Agenda for the next Board meeting to discuss stopping future requests to purchase additional MERS time.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the request for Scott Leonard to purchase additional MERS time.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Pintar, Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

7. Houghton County Jail Plans

Commissioner Ala provided a handout to the Board members with pictures of a new facility. He stated the City of Houghton was willing to sell 100 acres to the County at a reasonable price.

The Board discussed options, and took no further action at this time.

8. NorthCare Intergovernmental Agreement

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, informed the Board that this was for a three (3) year Agreement.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the NorthCare Intergovernmental Agreement as presented.

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

9. Houghton County Land Bank – Request for approval of lease

The Board discussed the Keweenaw Scrap property which is one (1) building. Commissioner Palosaari stated has a financial interested in the property.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the lease.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Ala, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

10. Appropriations

- a. Copper Country Mental health - \$41,123.73
- b. Wester U.P. District Health Department - \$62,909.25
- c. Keweenaw Peninsula Chamber of Commerce - \$400.00
- d. NACo- \$733.00

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the above-mentioned Appropriations.

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

11. District Court Magistrate/Administrator vacation

Chairman Koskela informed the Board that the Special Committee met regarding this matter, and agreed on the cap of vacation time, and informed Commissioner Ala he should not discuss this matter due to a conflict of interest.

Commissioner Ala addressed the Board regarding Sheryl Ala's vacation time. He requested a policy be established for future retirees, and three (3) weeks be put into her Health Care Savings Plan.

Eric Forsberg advised there are about five (5) employees over the ten (10) week cap.

The Board took no further action at this time.

12. Travel Requests

None.

Public Comments:

None.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adjourn at 6:25 pm.

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

Albert Koskela, Chairman

Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk