

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 19, 2018**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing/Regular meeting on Tuesday, June 19, 2018, 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 5:00 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 and Tim Palosaari, District 5.

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting dated May 15, 2018, the Special Meeting dated May 24, 2018 and the Special Meeting dated June 8, 2018 as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Approval of Agenda:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the Agenda as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Public Hearing-Truth in Taxation

Open hearing:

A motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to open the public hearing.

The Motion carried by a voice vote: Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Discussion and Public Comment:

Cheryl Patrick, Equalization Director, gave a brief presentation to the Board regarding the handout she provided regarding mileage reduction fractions and based tax rate fractions. In order to collect the maximum allowable mileage rate of 6.2911, the increase will be .0864 mills which is up from the based tax rate of 6.2047 which is an increase of 1.39%.

Close Hearing:

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

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None 0.

Public Comments:

Jeanine Stevenson addressed the Board regarding support for Gretchen Janssen.

George Dewey addressed the Board regarding support for Gretchen Janssen.

Erin Matas addressed the Board regarding support Gretchen Janssen.

Andrea Puzakulich addressed the Board regarding support for Gretchen Janssen.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$4,015,316.76 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

Chairman Koskela informed the Board and the public that Eric Forsberg, Randy Crouch, and Tim Palosaari were at the Courthouse on Sunday, June 17, 2018 and worked extremely hard on the clean-up of the courthouse inside and outside from the flooding.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: KEDA, Solid Waste & Recycling Initiative, and Houghton County Road Commission. KEDA received recognition from the Copper Country School Board Association for scholarships for technical schooling.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Planning Commission and Western Upper Peninsula Health Board.

Commissioner Palosaari reported to the Board on the number of telephone calls he has received from residents regarding flood insurance.

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, stated teams are ready to help. People must call 211 to begin the process. For individuals needing help to clear out debris from their residence or wish to volunteer, they are asked to call (906) 233-6621.

Chairman Koskela reported to the Board that there are volunteers across the UP and other states assisting Houghton County. Companies such as Rubicon and John Deere have contacted our County.

County Officers:

None reported.

New Business:

1. Resolution authorizing 2018 County millage rate

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adopt the Resolution authorizing the 2018 County millage rate as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela, Palosaari 4.

NO: None 0.

2. Resolution authorizing collection of County's taxes

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to adopt the Resolution authorizing collection of County's taxes as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar 4.

NO: None 0.

3. Appointment to fill unexpired seat

Commissioner Tikkanen stated the Board had received two (2) qualified candidates to fill the District 4 seat on the Board. One (1) was a Democrat, and the other was a Republican.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to appoint Gretchen Janssen.

The Board agreed to have the candidates address the Board.

Gretchen Janssen addressed the Board.

John Sullivan addressed the Board.

Commissioner Palosaari asked if both candidates could state if they were in support of the jail addition. The Board agreed the candidates could answer if they wished.

Gretchen Janssen stated that she felt there is a need to do something.

John Sullivan stated he had not decided.

The Motions carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Pintar, Koskela 3.

NO: Palosaari 1.

Gretchen Janssen joined the Commissioners at the table. Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk, will swear Gretchen Janssen into office following the Board meeting.

4. CDBG Income

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the CDBG Income to the Board. WUPPDR is set up to administer this program.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to have the CDBG money put towards Houghton County home improvements.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

5. Houghton County Master Plan

Commissioner Pintar commended the members of the Houghton County Planning Commission on their hard work on the Master Plan.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the 2018 Houghton County Master Plan as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

6. Request for Letter of Support

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to send a letter of support for the Pike Lake Equestrian Trail and the Simar Equestrian trail expansion proposal by MI-TRALE.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Representative Scott Dianda addressed the Board. He stated Sara Cambensy-109th District was also in attendance. He advised the Board on the flooding and stated they were starting with Franklin Township to review damages.

7. Copper Country Mental Health Request for Appointment

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to appoint Catherine Paavola to the Copper Country Mental Health Board.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

8. Cardboard Recycling

Commissioner Tikkanen thanked Commissioner Palosaari and members of the Solid Waste Committee and Copper Country Recycling Initiative for their hard work. He recommended an additional worker be hired for the cardboard recycling due to an increase of cardboard at the landfill. He stated the County should see an increase of income.

Commissioner Palosaari said he would like a 6 month trial to see if having a person at the bailor would be an option. He stated a minimal fee should be charged for people bringing cardboard only.

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, questioned the Board as to a flat fee being charged and stated the grant money has run out, and the County is now losing money

Commissioner Tikkanen suggested a temporary Committee be appointed. He stated it would be himself, Commissioner Palosaari, Eric Forsberg, Terry Brey, and 2 Copper Country Recycling members. They will consider moving the bailor and explore other opportunities such as hazardous waste.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to appoint a Committee for the recycling issues, create a part-time new hire, and set a flat fee for cardboard recycling and order bins.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Tikkanen, Palosaari, Koskela, Pintar 4.
NO: None 0.

9. Marina contract approval

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the Marina contract as presented.

A Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela 4.
NO: None 0.

10. Resolution regarding proposed State changes to assessing process

Cheryl Patrick, Equalization Director, advised the Board that if the Resolution was to pass, the County must take over assessing, appraisals and sales studies. Cheryl Patrick stated it is a conflict of interest. She stated that the County would need to hire approximately four (4) additional employees if they had to assess the County.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adopt the Resolution opposing the Bill.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 4.
NO: None 0.

11. Appropriations

- a. Michigan Townships Association Dues - \$385.00
- b. Copper Country Mental Health - \$41,123.73

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

The Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Palosaari, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 4.
NO: None 0.

12. Travel Requests

- a. Dan Giachino and Brenda Cadwell – Friend of Court Office

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

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

John Litzner, resident of Houghton County, addressed the Board regarding a Death Certificate of his grandson that has not been corrected by Dawn Nulf, Medical Examiner. Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk, offered to try and assist the family and she will contact Dawn Nulf to see if the child's death certificate can be corrected.

Linda Belote addressed the Board regarding the letter of support. The Board advised her it is a horseback riding trail.

Evan McDonald addressed the Board and thanked Commissioners Palosaari and Tikkanen regarding the cardboard recycling.

Announcements:

Chairman Koskela advised the Board of a meeting tomorrow morning regarding the flood, and complimented Chris VanArsdale, Emergency Director and Eric Forsberg, Administrator, for their hard work since Sunday's flooding.

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, thanked Commissioner Palosaari for the use of his equipment at the courthouse for removal of debris from the flood.

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adjourn at 6:02 p.m. The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

Albert Koskela, Chairman

Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk