

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 24, 2019**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, October 24, 2019, 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; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Gretchen Janssen, District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2019 meeting as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

Chairman Koskela discussed changing the November Board of Commissioner meeting date to Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Britz to reschedule the November meeting to Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

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

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

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

Public Comments:

Brad Barnett addressed the Board.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve paying the bills submitted of \$ 2,300,666.38 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Solid Waste Committee.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Road Commission, and the Houghton County Sheriff Department.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following: UPAC Fall Conference, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District, MSU Extension, and the Health Department.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following: Provided a 2019 NACo Legislative Priorities handout to the Board.

Chairman Koskela reported to the Board on the following: Copper Country Mental Health.

County Officers:

Kevin Harju, Houghton County Road Commission-County Engineer, provided a handout to the Board, and informed the Board that the Road Commission has received \$1.4 Million from FEMA so far and has done about \$5.2 million worth of work so far.

Eric Forsberg, County Administrator, discussed the loss the County could see in the future from the 147 line item vetos that Governor Gretchen Whitmer vetoed. He also discussed the grants for the purchase of new county vehicles. The County will get the funding for the two (2) vehicles.

New Business:

1. Houghton County Jail

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed the recommendation of the Jail Task Force Committee and asked Eric Forsberg for information on cost estimates. It was recommended the Board of Commissioners look into the Dodge Street option within the City of Houghton. Commissioners Janssen and Britz will work with the City of Houghton for alternate sites.

Karin Cooper requested a site be determined, the number of beds and how many dorm style beds would be needed to save on money. Barrack/dorm style beds would save money, and discussed the County not overbuild initially. She recommended 5 acres of land for a site.

Commissioner Britz questioned if the Board could budget for marketing and do education for the residents.

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed future sites and obtaining a cost estimate.

Tim Sears from the Houghton County Planning Commission provided a handout to the Board. He stated the public needs more education before deciding what goes on the ballot.

Evan McDonald recommended getting the voters opinion, communicate engagement based on the County's needs.

Keith Meyers recommended the County do a survey through Survey Monkey to get information to people and get feedback.

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed getting a development and cost estimate. He suggested creating a group in the community and throughout the County. Tim Sears and Evan McDonald will be in charge of creating a group. The 2 members of the group requested the Board of Commissioners engage the Houghton County Planning Commission with the new group.

The Board discussed following up with the Delta County Board of Commissioners regarding the facility they built.

Commissioner Janssen will follow up with the Houghton County Planning Commission.

The Board gave permission to Commissioner Britz to discuss partnering up with the City of Houghton.

Commissioner Janssen recommended finding out from the voters on where they would like the Jail such as on Dodge Street or another location.

2. Houghton/Keweenaw Recreation Authority – Brad Barnett

Brad Barnett addressed the Board and provided an update to the County's status with the Houghton/Keweenaw Recreation Authority. The County is inactive and non-functional. The Board members terms have expired.

Keith Meyers, Vice-Chair of the Chassell Planning Commission, stated that the DNR recommended the Trail Authority be established. He discussed a non-motorized trail between Chassell and Houghton. He also discussed getting a snowmobile trail between Chassell and the Nicholas Trail.

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed support for securing easements.

Commissioners Anderson and Tikkanen will work with Keith Meyers and Brad Barnett. They will also ask Paul Lehto to join in on discussions.

3. Houghton Community Garden – Elena Busova

Elena Busova addressed the Board regarding the Community Garden. She stated the garden is wheelchair and stroller accessible, and has raised beds. There are approximately 20-25 people using the garden. Houghton students plant in the spring and have lunch in the fall from the items they grew. The City of Houghton has given a small grant to rebuild the beds in the garden. She thanked the Board for the use of the garden.

4. Rice Lake Special Assessment Roll and Resolution

John Pekkala, Drain Commissioner, stated the Rice Lake Special Assessment is in year 5 of 5. The fund is into the black, and the levels are in compliance.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Rice Lake Special Assessment Roll and Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

5. Houghton County Equalization - Apportionment

Cheryl Patrick, Equalization Director, advised the Board of the 2019/20 apportionment figures and stated that the current L-4029 would need to be amended.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve amending the L-4029 as requested.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Britz, Koskela, Anderson, Janssen 5.
NO: None 0.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the 2019/20 Apportionment Report as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Tikkanen, Britz, Koskela, Anderson, Janssen 5.
NO: None 0.

6. Houghton County Planning Commission/DHHS Board

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to advertise for the positions on the Houghton County Planning Commission.

The Motion carried by a voice vote: Ayes 4, Nays 1.

Chairman Koskela advised the Board that Eugene Londo and Matt Huuki wished to stay on the Planning Commission Board, and Gary resigned from the DHHS Board, and Christy Hilgers term expired.

Commissioner Anderson stated it is worth advertising for the open positions.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Britz to advertise for 1 position on the DHHS Board and appoint Christy Hilgers to the DHHS Board.

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

7. Resolution regarding 4 year County Commissioner term

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Resolution regarding the 4 year County Commissioner term as presented.

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

8. Houghton County Deputies Sheriff's Union – MERS Benefit E

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Houghton County Deputies Sheriffs Union MERS Benefit E plan as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Tikkanen, Koskela, Janssen 4.
NO: None 0.
Abstain: Britz 1.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the \$124,198 cost of living adjustment for the Sheriff Deputies Union as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Tikkanen, Koskela, Janssen 4.

NO: None 0.
Abstain: Britz 1.

9. City of Hancock Flood Insurance Resolution

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the City of Hancock Flood Insurance Resolution as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Koskela, Britz 5.
NO: None 0.

10. Appropriations

- a. Western U.P. District Health Department - \$66,680.75
- b. WUPPDR - \$2,866.50

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the above-mentioned appropriation as presented.

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

Public Comments:

None.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 7:10 pm.

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

Albert Koskela, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk