

**Public Hearing / Regular Meeting
November 8, 2011**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing and a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, November 8, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the following commissioners responded to roll call: Edward Jenich, District 1; Dennis Barrette, District 2; Anton Pintar, District 3; Scott Ala, District 4; and Timothy Palosaari, District 5.

Commissioner Jenich announced that the Public Hearing on Houghton County RLF was open. Commissioner Ala stated that revisions had to be made because of the regionalization that was coming. The change was necessary to follow the new guidelines and be conforming to the Federal Rules. The present loan the RLF is doing for REL has to have these requirements.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded the by Commissioner Palosaari to close the Public Hearing. The motion passed by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barrette and seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2011 meeting as presented. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the agenda with the additions of #11 Brownfield Public Hearing, #12 Support Letter for the Bridge Committee, and #13 start of acquisition of property which fair building are on. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Commissioner Barrette made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve paying the bills of voucher #128736 thru #128802 for a total of \$68,899.62 along with the late bills of \$35,124.63 for a grand total of \$104,024.25. The motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Barrette, Pintar, Ala, Palosaari, Jenich 5.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence None

Reports Standing Committee

Commissioner Barrette reported to the Board on the following: Portage Lake Lift Bridge Planning Group, Houghton County Memorial Airport, and Western Upper Peninsula Health Department.

Commissioner Palosaari stated he will defer his reports due to Kevin Harju, who is present for the Houghton County Road Commission and Richard Supina, who is present for the Houghton County Transfer Station.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Planning Commission, Copper Country Trail National Byway Committee, Keweenaw Scrap Group, and Western U.P. Resource Conservation & Development Council.

Commissioner Ala reported to the Board on the following: Michigan Works, and Portage Lake Multi Rec.

Commissioner Jenich reported to the Board on the following: Keweenaw National Park, Houghton County Medical Care Facility, his attendance of Salvation Army Board Meeting, and Houghton County Commission on Aging.

Commissioner Barrette had an additional announcement on behalf of Roy Britz, 911 Director. Due to the restructuring of the State Police at the Negaunee Post, the cost of dispatching has dropped from \$294,534 to \$157,980.

New Business

1. Enrolled Senate Bill No. 7. A motion was made by Commissioner Pintar and seconded by Commissioner Ala to opt out of the provision of Senate Bill No. 7 / Public Act 152. The motion passed by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

2. Houghton County Revolving Loan Fund Amendment. A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded by Commissioner Barrette to accept the revisions of the Revolving Loan Fund Plan as submitted. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

3. Proposal for Courthouse Renovations. Eric Forsberg stated that the front steps are in need of repair and for safety sake should be addressed immediately. A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded by Commissioner Barrette to approve U.P. Engineers and Architects (UPEA) fee of \$3,000 for the plans and details along with two inspections during the construction of Part One of the Courthouse Renovation. The motion also included approval for UPEA to assist the County with bidding and award the contract, for an additional fee. The motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Ala, Barrette, Pintar, Palosaari, Jenich 5.

NO: None 0.

4. Houghton County Junk Ordinance. Eric stated the Prosecutor, Michael Makinen, in a memo, stated that the Houghton County Junk Ordinance lacks proof that the Ordinance had been properly adopted. The Houghton County Junk Ordinance is not considered valid or enforceable. In a further memo from the prosecutor, it states that, unless specifically authorized by statute, a non charter county as Houghton has no authority to make an ordinance except as to county property. The prosecutor attached an Attorney General Opinion to confirm this.

5. Houghton County Transfer Station Construction.

a. Request for approval of 4th pay estimate

b. Request for approval of summary of Payments due and approved

c. Request for approval of Estimate of funds needed

A motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve payment of all Transfer Station Construction as listed above. The motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Barrette, Ala, Jenich 5.

NO: None 0.

6. Kevin Harju, Houghton County Road Commission Engineer, was present to ask the Board's support in opposition of the Road Commission's abolishment. He asked them to contact Michigan Associations of Counties MAC regarding their opposition to HB 5125 and HB 5126. A motion was made by Commissioner Pintar and seconded by Commissioner Ala to oppose the abolishing of the Houghton County Road Commission. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

7. WUPPDR – Request for Resolution. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrette and seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to approve the CEDS annual report and resolution as submitted. The motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Barrette, Palosaari, Pintar, Ala, Jenich 5.

NO: None 0.

8. Apportionment. John Partanen, Houghton County Equalization Director, was present and went over and explained the Apportionment Reports he had prepared. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrette and seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the 2011 Apportionment Report as presented. The motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Barrette, Ala, Pintar, Palosaari, Jenich 5.

NO: None 0

9. Appropriations

- a. WUPPDR – \$2,866.50
- b. Western U.P. Health Department - \$30,445.00

A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded by Commissioner Palosaari to pay the appropriations listed above. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

10. Travel Requests

- a. Brenda Cadwell – Houghton County Friend of Court
- b. Ron Ekdahl – Houghton County Building Department

A motion was made by Commissioner Pintar and seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the travel requests as listed. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

11. Brownfield. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrette to schedule a Public Hearing for Brownfield Plan at the Regular Board Meeting on December 13th, at 5:00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pintar. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

12. Bridge Committee. A motion was made by Commissioner Barrette to approve the support letter as presented to be signed by the Houghton County Chairman, in hopes of getting the National Guard to do the Bridge exercise. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pintar. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

13. Acquisition of property. A motion was made by Commissioner Ala to look into purchasing the property that may be available that the Fair now uses. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Palosaari. The motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 5, Nays 0.

Public Comment

Samuel Buschell was present and stated nothing has been done to resolve the over assessment in Schoolcraft Township. He asked the Board to direct that in January a correction be made so the over charge from 2009 be taken off. Commissioner Barrette stated it is up to the individual to go to the Board of Review and ask for a correction. If they do not get any relief from the Board of Review they can appeal it with the State Tax Commission. It was suggested that a meeting be set up with the Equalization Director, Mr. Buschell and any other parties involved and not be held at a Board Meeting.

Lawrence Corrigan presented a handout and talked regarding the tree die off due to lagoons within the County. He stated that the lagoons not only cause tree die off but are a health problem to individuals living near the lagoons. He was informed that his hand out will be forwarded on to others and suggested that the Health Department should also be sent a copy of the handout.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ala and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to adjourn.

Edward Jenich, Chairman

Mary Schoos, Clerk