

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 9, 2019**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, in the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Agenda 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 Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve paying the bills submitted of \$ 1,587,470.83 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Britz had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Janssen had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following: Congratulated Prosecuting Attorney, Michael Makinen on his retirement, Houghton County Land Bank, Congratulated Calumet on the Kraft Hockeyville award, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District, WUPPDR, and the MAC Conference.

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Solid Waste Committee, and the Copper Country Recycling Initiative.

Chairman Koskela had nothing to report to the Board.

County Officers:

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, reported that the Airport received a \$10,000 grant for the holding area, another \$25,000-\$30,000 grant should be coming for equipment, and a \$2,500 AARP grant. The May Charter to Laughlin is sold out.

Lisa Mattila, Treasurer, advised the Board that as of March 1, 2019 there were 525 parcels for foreclosures. On April 1, 2019, 44 were foreclosed and will be included in the August Auction.

New Business:

1. Houghton County Audit Report – Debbie Bradford, Rukkila Negro & Assoc.

Debbie Bradford was not in attendance, so Eric Forsberg, Administrator, advised the Board that the audit was a clean opinion/report.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the Houghton County Audit Report as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

2. County Equalization

Cheryl Patrick, Equalization Director, explained the 2019 State Equalized Values for Houghton County. The 2019 equalized amount is \$1,280,233,698 which is up \$67,682,762 which shows a 5.58% increase. The top 3 units are the City of Houghton, City of Hancock, and Torch Lake Township.

The 2019 Taxable Value is \$942,026,482 which is also up by \$31,566,591 with an increase of 3.47%. The top 3 units are the City of Houghton, City of Hancock, and Portage Township.

In 2019, the County will collect \$198,589 more than the previous year which is an increase of 3.47%.

The millage rate for 2019 is 6.2911.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Equalization Report as presented.

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

3. Remonumentation Contracts

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the grant contracts to the Board. The Board had some discussion.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the five (5) Remonumentation Contracts as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

4. Courthouse I.T. wiring bids

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the bids to the Board. Bay Electric was the low bid of \$47,100.00 for information technology.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz seconded by Commissioner Anderson to accept the low bid of \$47,100.00 from Bay Electric as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

5. Canvasser's compensation

The Board had a discussion. Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk, explained the current rate, procedures for canvassing a small election compared to a countywide election, and stated that all monies paid out to Canvassers is usually recouped from the cities, townships or schools after the Canvassing takes place.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve paying the Canvassers \$50.00 per diems for small elections, and \$75.00 per diems for countywide elections.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

6. North Care

Commissioner Britz updated the Board on the money issue between the County and NorthCare. On October 1, 2014, the law changed that specifies all monies are required to go through NorthCare. In 2016 the County paid \$37,000 to Western UP Substance Abuse. He believes this money was sent in error and should have been sent to NorthCare according to the October 1, 2014 new law. According to a letter addressed to Scott Ala, it states that the monies the County sent to Western UP Substance Abuse were used towards Administration costs. The Board had discussion. Commissioner Britz will request a yearly report from NorthCare showing where monies have been sent to Houghton County. Commissioner Britz will report to the Board next month after his upcoming NorthCare meeting.

1-Continued. Debbie Braford, Auditor, came late to the meeting and stated the September 30, 2018 audit was a single audit, and the County received \$2,849,000,000 in Federal awards. The County had a clean audit.

7. Deficit Elimination Plans

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained that there are four (4) separate plans and Resolutions for the Board to approve. He also explained the high cost of placing delinquent children.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Passenger Facility Charge Deficit Elimination Plan and Budget as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the Twin Lakes Special Assessment District Deficit Elimination Plan and Budget as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the Rice Lake Special Assessment District Deficit Elimination Plan and Budget as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Childcare Deficit Elimination Plan as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

#### 8. Adams Township Resolution

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt the Adams Township Resolution for the flood insurance program as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

#### 9. Jail Taskforce

Commissioner Tikkanen reported on Camp Kitwen and stated a visit would be done soon. SB881 stated Camp Kitwen can be sold as a surplus with a bid deadline of June 26, 2019 for a minimum bid of \$75,000.00. Camp Kitwen has significant mold. The Board discussed getting cost estimates for a new jail and courthouse facility within the City of Houghton, a new jail on County property across on Dodge Street, with an option for District Court space. An update of the cost for the 2018 proposal to build a jail in the location of the current parking deck, and the cost to remodel Camp Kitwen.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to retain UP Engineering at the cost of \$9,600.00 to obtain cost estimates on the four (4) different construction facilities.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None.

10. 2020 Census

Commissioner Britz gave a brief presentation to the Board regarding the upcoming 2020 Census. David Springsteen, Census Manager, stated workers will be paid \$16.00/hour and receive \$.58 per mile. Houghton County is currently at 30% staffed. The work will begin in May 2019 and end in September 2020. The County needs to establish a Complete Count Committee.

11. Recreation Authority

Commissioner Tikkanen recommended Commissioner Anderson be appointed to the Trails Committee. Chairman Koskela said Commissioner Anderson is appointed to the Trails Committee.

12. Appropriations

- a. U.P. RC & D Council - \$350.00
- b. UPACC - \$174.00
- c. Western U.P. Health Department - \$65,147.50

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

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

13. Travel Requests:

- a. Todd LaRoux – Houghton County Building Department

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the above-mentioned travel request 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 Janssen to adjourn at 6:13 pm.

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

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Albert Koskela, Chairman

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Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk