

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2020**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, 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 done by the County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

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 Tikkanen to approve the minutes of the July Board of Commissioners meeting as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

Chairman Koskela requested #6 be added for the Transfer Station. Commissioner Tikkanen requested #7 be added for a Resolution for the Michigan Works UP Board, and #8 be added for a Houghton County Land Bank Request.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Agenda with the three (3) additions 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 Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve paying the bills submitted of \$ 1,236,508.91 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote:

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following: Health Department.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following: the 2020 Census

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

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Sheriff Department.

Commissioner Koskela did not comment on his report.

County Officers:

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, updated the Board on the Airport.

Paul Putnam, MSU Extension, discussed the handouts he provided to the Board.

Old Business:

1. Houghton County Jail

Commissioner Janssen stated she had contacted EGLE, and there would be a \$100 application fee, with an additional charge of \$400-\$500. She stated they would investigate the wetlands, and determine where the building should be built.

Commissioner Britz stated that him and Commissioner Janssen will schedule another meeting with Mr. Mattson.

New Business:

1. Kate Beer – Western UP Health Department

Kate Beer addressed the Board regarding the five (5) counties allocation of \$555,000. She stated the MERS funding has hurt them financially. She requested a minimum base for each county to consider of \$25,000.00.

Chairman Koskela stated there will be a Budget meeting in the future, and no action could be taken at this time.

2. Appropriation Request - KEDA

Jeff Ratcliffe, KEDA Directors, addressed the Board regarding a public health campaign, and requested \$2,000.00.

Chairman Koskela stated there will be a Budget meeting in the future, and no action could be taken at this time.

3. Tom Ressler – Meeting broadcast options

Tom Ressler, IT with Houghton County, addressed the Board and explained options for broadcasting board meetings.

The Board had discussion and decided to continue with Zoom meetings and look into other options in 2021-2022.

4. September budget meeting

The Board discussed the September budget meeting. They agreed to have it on September 29, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. A notice will go into the Gazette for the public hearing.

5. Appropriations

- a. WUPPDR - \$2,866.50

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

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

6. Transfer Station

Chairman Koskela stated he had been contacted by local roofers having to wait until Saturday to go to the Transfer Station, and would like the Transfer Station to be open 1 evening during the week until 7:00 pm.

The Board had discussion and agreed to refer this to the Solid Waste Committee. Commissioner Tikkanen is to schedule a Special Solid Waste Committee meeting. Commissioner Tikkanen scheduled it for August 12, 2020 at 11:00 am.

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, discussed staffing shortages at the Transfer Station, and possible closure on Saturdays.

Commissioner Tikkanen stated the Transfer Station is the busiest facility in Houghton County.

Commissioner Britz stated it would be injustice to Houghton County residents to close the Transfer Station down on Saturdays.

7. Resolution for Michigan Works UP Board

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed the facility and space program in KI Sawyer, Marquette, MI and the potential for 500-1,000 jobs.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve Resolution for the Michigan Launch Initiative.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

**RESOLUTION
REGARDING MICHIGAN LAUNCH INITIATIVE
RESOLUTION #20-13**

WHEREAS, Michigan Aerospace Manufacturers Association has organized the Michigan Launch Initiative (MLI) for establishing spaceport operations and command center facilities within the State of Michigan; and

WHEREAS multiple aerospace companies have plans to launch thousands of satellites into low Earth orbit (LEO); and

WHEREAS, the MLI will provide a collaborative platform for academia, industry, and governmental agencies to provide LEO and hypersonic launch technology for commercial and defense applications, with a priority to establish and launch a satellite launch facility and command center in Northern Michigan; and

WHEREAS the economic impact on the area is estimated to be \$8 million annually with an estimated job creation between 500 -1,000; and

WHEREAS Marquette County, with its minimal population density, favorable launch trajectories, and access to water is uniquely positioned for the site requirements to allow for a polar orbit satellite launch facility, low-density population, extensive restricted airspace, Interstate highway system accessible, engineering and manufacturing capacity; and

WHEREAS Chippewa County is uniquely positioned for the planned autonomous vehicle proving grounds.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Houghton County Board of Commissioners does hereby fully support the Michigan Launch Initiative, to move forward with all required next steps, including necessary licensing, permitting, fundraising and other legal and monetary requirements to bring the project to full fruition.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, JENNIFER KELLY, Clerk of the Houghton County Board of Commissioners and Clerk of the County of Houghton, do hereby certify that the above Resolution was duly adopted by the said Board on August 11, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the County of Houghton, Houghton, Michigan, on this 12th day of August 2020.

Jennifer Kelly
Houghton County Clerk

8. Houghton County Land Bank Request

Commissioner Tikkanen discussed a piece of property in Otter Lake that would like to be purchased by a neighbor. The Houghton County Land Bank agreed to sell the property for \$5,000.00.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to pull the Otter Lake parcel from auction by purchasing for the back tax amount and then to sell the parcel to the Land Bank Authority for the same price. The Land Bank Authority has agreed to sell the parcel “contingent on acquiring it”, to the neighbor for \$5,000.00. Authorization to transfer the parcel to the Land Bank is requested.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

Public Comments:

None.

Announcements:

Commissioner Anderson and the Board thanked Administrator, Eric Forsberg, for his many years of service to Houghton County and wished him well for his future endeavors.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 6:23 pm.

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

Albert Koskela, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk