

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, in the 5th Floor Conference room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton. The public was attending by Zoom.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Albert Koskela at 3:00 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 Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk:

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 Janssen, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the January 12, 2021 minutes 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 Britz to approve the Agenda as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote: Ayes 4, 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 \$2,597,307.00 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

1. Standing committee

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Planning Commission-voted to submit a letter of support for the Douglass Houghton Falls. Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District-the Board discussed a beach cleanup at the Bete Gris North public beach lakeshore, and a joint mailing for the Bete Gris Preserve sent out 650 letters that received \$4,890.00 in donations. Tree sale is up in the air due to Covid. MSU Extension Office-she encourages people to use the MSU Extension website for long list of online programs as she feels it is a great resource. WUPEDA-she commented on the virtual meetings are saving money on travel reimbursements and encourages the County to continue zoom meetings in the future for the public viewing. KEDA gave a presentation. WUPHD-WIC presentation. Board approved a 25% reduction in business licenses for those who complied with the COVID restrictions for the WUPHD fee, not the state fee.

Commissioner Anderson had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Sheriff Department-80% of the staff has received the COVID vaccine, and they are functioning at full staff. They applied for a USDA grant for 55% and 45% for the County for a vehicle purchase. They also received a 100% grant for a snowmobile and enclosed trailer. There were three (3) life savings awards given Helminen and Lasanen and 1 Stanton first responder. The 2020 totals for calls to 911 for Houghton County were 26,274 to dispatch. Broke down as follows:

574 Fire
4,045 EMS
21,655 Law enforcement

An average of 72 calls per day.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the grant would be for pick-up trucks or for SUV's. Commissioner Britz and Ben Larson stated SUVs preferably.

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Recreation Authority-DP Construction had the low bid of \$499,412 on the non-motorized trails from Houghton to Chassell. More funding is needed for the trails from Dollar Bay to Lake Linden. KEDA-active leadership role this past year, however, they are down approximately \$30,000 in their revenues. Services have expanded.

Ben Larson, Administrator commented on what Michigan Tech can do to assist the trails, widen the trails and move the shrubs by the Pilgrim River. The DNR should be contacting the County soon.

Chairman Koskela had nothing to report to the Board.

2. Special Committee

Chairman Koskela mentioned the previous meeting with Senator McBroom and Representative Markkanen.

3. County Officers

Todd LaRoux, Building Inspector, explained the 2020 Building Department permit totals that were included in the boards packets. The permits were down from 2019. New homes were down one (1) from last year.

Commissioner Tikkanen asked about the forecast of building costs this year. Todd LaRoux stated the costs are high right now. Do not see the cost dropping.

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, stated they sold the old pick-up, and received a new with a grant. Also received a \$2,0000 grant for firefighters. The new hanger is filled, they are

all leased. The airport will eligible for a EIP grant, freight is going out, and the boarding numbers were as follows:

2019 50,224
2020 24,137

Load factors are weak right now. Hoping in June things will increase. Rates on flights are cheap right now. Tickets can be purchased and used within a year.

Commissioner Janssen asked if there are any flights to Laughlin. Dennis stated not until next fall.

New Business:

1. First Quarter Budget Amendments

Ben Larson, Administrator, Tom is now a Houghton County employee. He has requested moving monies from the Controllers budget to establish department 103 for the IT Department for salary, benefits and supplies. He also requested an increase of \$3,400 for John Pekkala's budget to cover the Twin Lakes dams due to animal damages. Also, requested to move money for the Veteran banners from one account to another. Donations are received.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Budget Amendments are requested.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

2. Summer 2020 Marina Financial Report

Ben Larson, Administrator, discussed the 2020 year at the Marina. The Marina shows a Net Revenue of \$18,188.01 for 2020.

3. Airport Lot 19 and 20 Sale and Resolution, Kristine Weidner and Dennis Hext

Kristine Weidner was not present on zoom. Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, stated the Airport Board approved to sell Lots 19 & 20 and are now requesting the County Board's approval. Lots 19 and 20 have been for sale for seven (7) years.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the Resolution to sell Lots 19 & 20 for \$50,000.00 to Copper Island Academy (non-profit).

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

The Board discussed the power and the water at the lots, and stated there is no plans for the County to purchase other property near the airport. No gas or sewer is currently at the lots and the buyers were aware of this.

Commissioner Janssen asked when the contingencies would start. Dennis Hext said the contingencies would start on February 9, 2021.

RESOLUTION #21-02

WHEREAS, The Houghton County Board of Commissioners, as successor in interest to the dissolved Houghton County Airport Authority, which was dissolved on July 24, 1989,

is authorized to exercise all rights of interest and statutory authority granted to the dissolved Houghton County Airport Authority.

WHEREAS, the Houghton County Memorial Airport Committee, created on July 26, 1989, under the Authority of the Houghton County Board of Commissioners, pursuant to Act 73 of the Public Acts of 1970 and Act 327 of the Public Acts of 1945, and pursuant to the authority vested in the County of Houghton by the Aeronautics Code of the State of Michigan has the authority to adopt rules and regulations for the management, government and the use of said airport property.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Albert Koskela, Houghton County Chairman, is authorized to sign the closing documents for the sale of Lot 19 and 20 presented by Copper Island Academy, on behalf of Houghton County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, at a Regular Houghton County Board of Commissioners Meeting held on February 9, 2021, a resolution was adopted to approve the conditions set forth in the purchase agreement presented on January 11, 2021 with final acceptance of February 9, 2021 from Copper Island Academy for Lots 19 and 20 Airpark Plat, for the purchase price of \$50,000.00 pursuant to the Airport Industrial Park Covenants, Section 5, Resale Rights, recorded September 12, 1973, in Liber 23 of Miscellaneous Records at Page 157, Houghton County Records.

Motion Moved by:

Motion Supported by:

Roll Call Vote: Yes:
 No:

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Albert Koskela, Chairperson
Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Date

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution Within the County of Houghton, Michigan at a regular meeting on the 9th day of February, 2020, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office. I further certify that the meeting was held and the minutes therefore were filed in compliance with Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my official signature this 9th day of February, 2020.

SEAL

JENNIFER KELLY, COUNTY CLERK
County of Houghton

4. KEDA Business Assistance Grants for County Businesses with Jeff Ratcliffe

Commissioner Anderson discussed the businesses in Houghton County, 1,274 business received assistance, average business received \$43,000. He discussed the second round of PPE that will be happening. The federal Paycheck protection program will be handled by the banks according to Jeff Ratcliffe.

Jeff Ratcliffe from KEDA discussed the third round of state grants. Stated there was \$69,500 distributed to 12 companies in Houghton, Baraga and Keweenaw Counties. He discussed the Michigan Restart program for UP 4.5 Million to the region and \$680,000 to

three (3) counties. He also discussed the Survival grant that the UP counties received the amount of 2.5 Million, \$280,000 was applied to the 51 companies from Houghton County and there were 87 companies that applied.

5. Vaccine Update with Kate Beer

Kate Beer from WUPHD did not appear on Zoom.

Appropriations:

1. UPCAP Membership Dues \$1,100
2. Northwoods Rail Transit Commission Dues \$250
3. KEDA Membership Dues \$10,000
4. UPACC Dues
5. Copper Country Mental Health 1/12th appropriation \$27,415.82
6. UPEDA Membership Dues \$500

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

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Public Comments:

Erik Kiilunen addressed the Board and discussed a Covid data slide he had shared with Commissioner Anderson. The Board did not have the capability to watch it during the Board meeting as requested. He stated the COVID numbers do not make sense. He asked the Houghton County Board of Commissioners to send a letter requesting the Western UP Health Department drop the prosecution against Café Rosetta. He also requested a meeting with Commissioner Janssen to review the data.

Announcements:

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk, asked Chairman Koskela to have the Board approve the 2021 Calendar and the Rules of Order that were not approved at the January meeting.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the 2021 Houghton County Board of Commissioners yearly calendar and the Rules of Order as previously presented at the January 12, 2021 meeting.

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

Commissioner Tikkanen stated he was pleased with the State working on a Resolution with Café Rosetta. He said he hopes 2021 is a healing opportunity for everyone to find some common ground.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 3:46 pm.

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

Albert Koskela, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk