

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 12, 2024**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing & Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with the public viewing in person and by Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tikkanen at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Tikkanen.

Roll Call:

The following Commissioners responded to roll call done by the Teresa Poyhonen, Deputy Senior Accounts Processor:

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Joel Keranen, District 2; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Gretchen Janssen, District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Public Hearing-Rural Development Patrol Car Grant Applications (2)

a. Open Hearing

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to open the hearing.

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

b. Discussion and Public Comment

Administrator Larson discussed the USDA Rural Development applications for two (2) Patrol Vehicles (Dodge Durangos). Undersheriff Jon Giachino stated the radio equipment can be moved from some other vehicles to the new vehicles if needed. If the applications are successful, the County would pay 65%.

c. Close Hearing

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to close the hearing.

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

Approval of Minutes February 13, 2024 Regular Meeting:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2024 meeting as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Britz requested adding #7A for a letter of support for Stanton Township Grant Request.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to accept the Agenda as presented with the one (1) addition.

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

Public Comments:

Judge Nicholas Daavettila addressed the Board regarding District Court going to Sharon Avenue and the \$400,000 in obligated ARPA fund upgrades that were supposed to be done. Chairman Tikkanen stated no decision has been made. Judge Daavettila asked that the pre-approved ARPA Funds for District Court security be used if District Court is staying at the courthouse. Nikki Jollimore, Magistrate, stated the Court and Magistrate’s Office are still in need of security improvements.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,305,718.29.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen reported to the Board on the following:

District Court Treatment Court, and shared his corner about State agencies who are not working to support the need for more housing, and he referenced the River Trails, LLC Development.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

Portage Township & the City of Houghton are supporting the Annexation for the Sharon Avenue property. He discussed the marijuana payments for 2023.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

BHK has listed a property for sale through Century 21. Transfer Station. Next Materials Management meeting will be on March 21st at 2:00 pm.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

River Trails LLC. Administrator Larson has been in communication with state legislatures.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:

Canal View.

County Officers:

Nicholas Daavettila, District Judge, thanked the Board for the Opioid Settlement Funds support.

Dan Helmer, Prosecutor addressed the Board. He stated the Prosecutor’s Office is now fully staffed. Pre-Trial Diversion Program will be starting. A new Karpel system is coming online, and he is working to go paperless in his office. He referenced a salary and wage study and talked about the imbalance of wages from the Prosecution to the defense side.

Jon Giachino, Undersheriff, addressed the Board on the jail inmate average has been 32. There are 4 women.

Todd LaRoux, Building Department, updated the Board on the Building Department and stated 34 building permits were issued in February 2024

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

1. Approval of Grant Funds from Rural Development and Obligation FY 24/25 Budget

Administrator Larson stated the County has applied. He asked for 35% of the Grant Funds be put aside for the next budget. No action was taken.

2. Purchase Agreement-Airport Outlot A

The Board discussed the Purchase Agreement. The Airport Committee approved the Purchase Agreement at their last meeting.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the purchase agreement for \$20,000 for Outlot A. to sell this lot to Signature Research

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

3. Resolution 24-05 Sale of Outlot A

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution 24-05 for the Sale of Outlot A as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Houghton County Courthouse
401 East Houghton Avenue
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(906) 482-8307



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Sale of Outlot A to Signature Research, Inc.
RESOLUTION #24-05

WHEREAS, The Houghton County Board of Commissioners, as successor in interest to the dissolved Houghton County Airport Authority on July 24, 1989 is authorized to 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, Tom Tikkanen, Houghton County Board Chairman, is authorized to sign all closing documents for the sale of Outlot A of Houghton County Airpark Plat, to Signature Research, Inc.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, at a Houghton County Board of Commissioners Meeting held on March 12, 2024, a resolution was adopted to approve the conditions set forth in the purchase agreement presented on February 29, 2024 with final acceptance of February 29, 2024 from Signature Research, Inc., for Outlot A, Airpark Plat, for the purchase price of \$20,000.00 pursuant to the Airport Industrial Park Covenants Section 5, Resale Rights, contained within the Houghton County Airpark Plat, September 12, 1973, in Liber 23 of Miscellaneous Records, Page 157, Houghton County Register of Deeds Records.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk of Houghton County, do hereby certify and set my seal to the above Resolution as adopted March 12, 2024, at the Houghton County Courthouse, 401 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI 49931.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

4. Resolution 24-06 State & Federal Drought Declaration Request

Administrator Larson discussed adopting the Resolution to request Houghton, Keweenaw and Baraga Counties to be added to the Federal Drought Declaration which will allow for businesses to apply for Federal SBA loans. This is in relation to a Press Release that was sent out by the Governor’s Office on March 4th, and her saying that there are many Counties and Businesses in Michigan that are suffering from the lack of snow and winter tourism. Houghton, Baraga and Keweenaw Counties were not included in the list of the 42 Counties. He requested the Board adopt the Resolution for Houghton County, and to encourage support for Baraga and Keweenaw Counties.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt Resolution 24-06 for the State & Federal Drought Declaration Request as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

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RESOLUTION #24-06
REQUESTING STATE AND FEDERAL CONSIDERATION FOR
DROUGHT DECLARATION ADDITION AND SBA LOAN FUNDING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOUGHTON, BARAGA AND KEWEENAW
COUNTIES

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2024 Governor Whitmer sent out a message urging Michigan small business owners impacted by the lack of snow to apply for Federal funding from the Small Business Administration through Economic Injury Disaster Loans; and,

WHEREAS, 42 Counties were identified in the release citing disaster drought designation, and businesses in these 42 Counties have the ability to get short term relief in the form of SBA Loans. Surprisingly, Houghton County was not included on this list; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor's story highlights the impacts of a much warmer than normal winter tourism season, and the negative impacts that has on local communities and businesses who now may be in need. This included spotlighting the Copper Dog 150 sled dog race being cancelled in the Keweenaw; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor, State and Federal Legislators have told **our** story of winter hardship in the release, and have sympathized with the plight of those in need, but somehow have not included Houghton, Keweenaw, and Baraga Counties on their list of 42; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of every business owner in our County and in our neighboring Counties, strongly encourages Governor Whitmer and our Legislators to ensure that Houghton County and all Counties who were left out receive this same opportunity.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Date

I, Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk for Houghton County, do hereby certify and set my seal to the above Resolution as adopted March 12, 2024 at the Houghton County Courthouse, 401 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI, 49931.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

Resolution #24-06 will be sent to State Representative Greg Markkanen, State Senator Ed McBroom, US Congressman Jack Bergman, US Senator Gary Peters, US Senator Debbie Stabenow, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

5. Resolution 24-07 Establishment of CAA/MMP/DPA for Multi County Part 115 Compliance

Administrator Larson discussed the 115 Plan that if adopted would create a five (5) County effort to work together to comply with the coming Part 115 requirements from EGLE.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution 24-07 for the Establishment of CAA/MMP/DPA for Multi County Part 115 compliance as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

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RESOLUTION #24-07 ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNTY APPROVAL AGENCY, MULTI-COUNTY APPROACH, AND DESIGNATED PLANNING AGENCY FOR MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PLANNING UNDER PART 115, PUBLIC ACT 451 OF 1994, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan, with the intent to modernize the Solid Waste Management statute, has enacted amendments to Part 115, Public Act 451 of 1994 (“Part 115”), which among other components, will require development of County management plans (“MMP”), and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy “EGLE” issued a call for MMPs effective January 8, 2024, and

WHEREAS, Part 115 requires that within 180 days of the call for MMPs, each County Board of Commissioners for a County with a population of less than 250,000 conduct several actions, the first of which is to submit to EGLE a notice of intent indicating whether the County Board will prepare a MMP and act as the County Approval Agency (“CAA”), and

WHEREAS, if the County Board opts to prepare a MMP and act as the CAA, Part 115 requires that the County Board consult with each of its adjacent Counties regarding the option of preparing a multi-county MMP pursuant to the urban cooperation act, Public Act 7 of 1967, and that the County Board provide to EGL documentation of both this consultation and the outcome of the consultations, and

WHEREAS, the Houghton County Board of Commissioners has consulted with adjacent Counties through multiple mechanisms, including engagement with other Counties' governing officials, facilitated by Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region Commission, and

WHEREAS, Part 115 requires that if the County Board opts to become part of a multi-county MMP, the County Board will provide to EGLE a copy of an Interlocal Agreement identifying the process for creating a multi-county MMP, and

WHEREAS, Part 115 requires that if the County Board opts to prepare a MMP and act as CAA, the County Board Designates a Planning Agency ("DPA") and an individual within the DPA who shall serve as the DPA's contact person for the purpose of Part 115, and

WHEREAS, Part 115 requires additional actions before preparation of the MMP can proceed, including but not limited to appointment of a planning committee, oversight of creation and implementation of the DPA's work program, and various submittals and public notices.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that all of the following are true:

Houghton County's CAA is the Houghton County Board of Commissioners.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners intends to prepare a multicounty MMP in conjunction with Baraga, Gogebic, Iron, Keweenaw and Ontonagon Counties.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners has selected WUPPDR for its DPA, and its Executive Director (currently Jerry Wuorenmaa) as the contact person.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners intends to enter into a multi-county Interlocal Agreement as soon as possible.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners hereby designates the County Administrator Benjamin Larson as the authorized official who will submit the Notice of Intent for the County.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners will meet the remaining requirements of Part 115 in the future, and at the appropriate and required times and dates.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

NO:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Date

I, Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk of Houghton County, do hereby certify and set my seal to the above Resolution as adopted March 12, 2024, at the Houghton County Courthouse, 401 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI 49931.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

6. TLASA Lagoon Expansion Cost Share ARPA Request \$200,223.70

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to pay \$200,223.70 for the TLASA Lagoon Expansion costs at the Airport with ARPA funds.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

7. Sharon Ave Update

Administrator Larson stated the Portage Township Board is going forward with an Annexation process and that he hopes that a Resolution will be passed by the County Board next month and for the City of Houghton and Portage Township to do the same. He is working with the County Attorney. Commissioner Keranen suggested a work group session with the Judges, Prosecutor and Sheriff. The church may turn the keys over to the County during the summer of 2025. The agreement requires them to vacate the Church by 2026.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to schedule a work session with the Sheriff to discuss the Jail at the courthouse in the next 30 days.

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

a. Stanton Township letter of support for Grant request

Commissioner Britz stated the Stanton Township Supervisor, Marty Rajala, has asked for \$5.1 million for road repairs and a letter of support from the County for his effort that will be sent to US Congressman Bergman for Federal Funds for road repairs in Stanton Township.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve a letter of support for the Stanton Township grant application.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

8. Travel

a. District Court-Support Staff Training \$791.00

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the \$791.00 for District Court as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

9. Appropriations:

a. UPACC Dues-\$174.00

b. Western UP Planning & Development-\$2974.25

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

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

Public Comments:

Faith Morrison addressed the Board regarding the Jail/Sharon Avenue property.

Craig Waddell addressed the Board regarding the Governor's March 4th press release.

Announcements:

Administrator Larson discussed the Enduring Gifts County Fund Raising Program that is on the Houghton County website. Any citizen wishing to learn more or to discuss a gift can contact Administrator Larson.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adjourn at 5:15 p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk