

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing/Regular Meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

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

**Approval of Minutes August 13, 2024 Regular Meeting:**

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

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

**Approval of Agenda:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to accept the Agenda as presented.

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

**Public Comments –Agenda Items only (5 minute limit):**

None.

**Approval of Bills - \$3,706,262.77:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$3,706,262.77.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

**Public Hearing-Houghton County 2024-2025 Budget**

**a. Open Hearing**

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

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

**b. Discussion and Public Comment**

Administrator Larson discussed the IT Department, and what is now called Cost of Computing and investing into the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. There is \$3,879 in Revenue for the next year.

Bernard Kluskens, IT Department stated the Sheriff Department and the courthouse have been neglected for 5-8 years. The computers are approximately 10-12 years old, and all computers need Windows 11, but the change cannot be done with the current computers.

Prosecutor Helmer stated Bernard replaced a server for his office and saved 20 years of data.

Bernard stated replacing the computers now will save money for the long term.

### **c. Close Hearing**

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

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

### **Correspondence:**

Administrator Larson discussed the \$30 million for County Revenue Sharing that was explained in an email from the Michigan Association of Counties that is in their packet.

### **Reports:**

#### **Standing Committee:**

Commissioner Keranen reported to the Board on the following:

Houghton County Planning Commission-stated the windmills and solar panels will be put wherever the company wants to put them in Houghton County, and no one can stop them locally.

#### **Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:**

She would comment later in the Agenda.

#### **Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:**

Land Bank-The Land Bank is currently taking bids for demolition of 4-5 properties with a deadline of September 27, 2024.

Brownfield-they are proceeding with a project.

#### **Commissioner Britz had nothing to report to the Board.**

#### **Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:**

He would comment later in the Agenda.

### **County Officers:**

County Clerk/Register of Deeds, Jennifer Kelly, stated her offices are busy.

Dan Helmer, Prosecutor, discussed his office being underfunded. Two (2) employees are trying to be reclassified. He provided an envelope to the Administrator.

Todd LaRoux, Building Department Manager, discussed the commercial and residential permits, and the new homes being built in Houghton County.

Lisa Mattila, Treasurer, discussed the foreclosed homes, and 3 that went to the Land Bank. The 3 will be put up for Auction in November.

The Land Bank is working with KEDA and Jeff Ratcliff on 185 tires at the Superior Water Shed, and 6 abandoned cars. The deadline for bids will be September 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm.

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director, stated he has held 2 Continuing Education events in Houghton County.

**Old Business:**

**1. PA 233, CREO Template for Renewable Energy Ordinances**

Administrator Larson stated the Commissioners can attend meetings on October 8<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> if they wish.

Commissioner Anderson stated Stanton and Adams Townships could potentially be good wind farms.

Chairman Tikkanen discussed producing energy locally and if it's used locally. Could there be an energy credit.

**New Business:**

**1. Resolution 24-17 FY 2024-25 General Appropriations Act**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #24-17 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

**Houghton County Board of Commissioners**

Houghton County Courthouse  
401 East Houghton Avenue  
Houghton, MI 49931  
(906) 482-8307



Tom Tikkanen *Chairman*  
*District 1*  
Roy Britz *Vice Chairman*  
*District 5*  
Joel Keranen *Commissioner*  
*District 2*  
Glenn Anderson *Commissioner*  
*District 3*  
Gretchen Janssen *Commissioner*  
*District 4*

**COUNTY OF HOUGHTON  
GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT  
OCTOBER 1, 2024 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2025  
RESOLUTION # 24-17**

A Resolution appropriating monies and adopting the 2024-2025 Houghton County Budget including: the General Fund Operating Budget, Special Revenue Fund Budgets and other Proprietary Fund Budgets.

It being the finding and opinion of the Houghton County Board of Commissioners:

The committee of the Whole has had under consideration the taxes for the local units of government and the needs of various County departments/budgetary units.

The Committee of the Whole after considerable deliberations has recommended adoption of the budgets and reports attached and made a part of this Appropriations Act.

In recognition of the above-listed findings and opinion:

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners hereby resolves to adopt the attached 2024-2025 General Fund Operating Budget, Special Revenue Fund Budgets and other Proprietary Fund

Budgets, and appropriate monies from various County revenues and equity reserves to authorize expenditures in accordance with the Account Group Detail of the various funds.

The Board further resolves that an appropriation is not a mandate to spend but shall limit the amount which may be spent for such purposes as are defined by the Board of Commissioners and which shall be limited to the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2025. All Special Revenue fund balances at year end are to be considered the initial allotment under the Appropriations Act for the new fiscal year. If a budgetary unit contends that part of its year end fund balance is either obligated or otherwise restricted from being considered as an initial allotment of County monies under the new fiscal year appropriations, it will be incumbent upon that unit to demonstrate the obligation or restriction to the satisfaction of the County Board of Commissioners.

In recognition of the need to consider appropriation of monies from time to time to agencies or institutions outside of general operations the Board of Commissioners further resolves to review requests from such agencies when and as funds are available for such purposes. Any County Department, Agency, Board, Commission or unit whatsoever and any organization, public or private, which accepts a County appropriation shall do subject to an agreement which provides for inspection and/or audit by Houghton County Board or its designee. The Board, or its designee, shall have access for the purpose of audit and examination, to any and all books, documents, papers and records of the recipient organization.

The Board further resolves that the budget may be amended as conditions indicate provided the budget remains in a balanced state. It further authorizes the County Administrator to make certain budget transfers in accordance with the Board's Budget transfer policy up to ten percent of departmental expenditures. In addition, the Board instructs the County Administrator to incorporate into the 2024-2025 departmental general fund budgets, wages and related fringe benefits for the county elected and appointed employees as authorized by the Board of Commissioners.

The Board further resolves that in administration of the adopted budgets, budgetary control shall reside at the most detailed level of budget adopted by the Board, i.e., department, program or activity. Unlimited transfers among line items without prior approval within the Supplies and Other Services and Charges account groups may be made by the Administrator/Department.

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion Carried.

Absent:

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas 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 September 10, 2024, at the Houghton County Courthouse, 401 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI 49931

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Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

## 2. CC Great Start Collaborative Childcare ARPA Investment Update

Abbey Carlson they have been recruiting for more daycares. They currently have 5 participants. The 4 close to opening are in South Range, Ripley, Dollar Bay and Laurium. They will have 24 openings by the end of 2024.

Iola Brubaker discussed their partnership with KEDA, and advised how they helped someone obtain a grant. They are continuing education to support childcare with employers. She will get the number of people needing childcare and advise the Commissioners at the next meeting.

### **3. UPCAP Fall Conference for UP Commissioners**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Commissioners, County Clerk and Administrator to attend the UPCAP Fall Conference if they wish to attend.

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

### **4. Depart of Health & Human Services \$380,000 Grant “Connections, not Cuffs”**

Administrator Larson stated Gail Ploe gets credit for the Health Department receiving \$1.9 million from a Federal SAMSHA Grant for Drug Treatment Court over the next 5 years. District Court will receive \$380,000 this year and Judge Daavettila will spend the money appropriately.

### **5. E Part 115 Compliance Inspection of Atlantic Mine Transfer Station**

Administrator Larson stated the inspection report was fantastic for the Transfer Station.

### **6. Loader Purchase Materials Management Transfer Station \$116,000**

Administrator Larson stated the 1988 loader needed to be replaced. The Transfer Station Manager located a used 2010 John Deere 624K Wheel Loader for \$116,000 from D&B Construction Equipment.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve \$116,000 to purchase the 2010 John Deere Loader from D&B Construction Equipment as presented. This will come from the Transfer Station Budget.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

### **7. Travel**

#### **a. Building Dept. Todd LaRoux-Code Officials Annual Conference-COCM pays**

Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the above-mentioned Travel requests as presented.

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

#### **Public Comments:**

Karen Timmonen addressed the Board regarding Portage Lake District Library millage.

Horst Schmidt addressed the Board regarding Agenda items.

Tim Gasperich thanked the County Departments that help townships.

#### **Announcements:**

County Clerk Kelly stated there was election training on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. Anyone interested should contact their City or Township Clerk.

Administrator Larson stated Thursday at 1 pm that the MDHHS Leadership and the Prosecuting Attorney will be meeting to discuss the abuse and neglect cases coming back to the Prosecutor's Office. If a contract gets signed, it will create funding for the Prosecutor's Office.

**Adjournment:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 5:17 p.m.

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

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Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

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Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk