

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 11, 2025**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 3:00 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 3:00 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 County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

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

By Microsoft Teams: Gretchen Janssen, District 4.

**Approval of Minutes: February 11, 2025. Public Hearings & Regular Meeting:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2025, Public Hearings & Regular Meeting as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

**Approval of Agenda/Additions:**

Commissioner Anderson requested adding #12a for the MAC Legislative Conference.

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

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

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

None.

**Approval of Bills:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,354,145.11.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Britz, Tikkanen, Anderson, 4.

NO: None 0.

By Microsoft Teams-Janssen-no vote.

**Correspondence:**

1. USDA

Chairman Tikkanen discussed the 2 fiber optic proposals in the Boards packet.

**Reports:**

**Standing Committee:**

Commissioner Keranen reported to the Board on the following:

He said he would report next month.

Commissioner Janssen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

6 marijuana licenses that Houghton County received \$349,371.96, and discussed different Economic Developments.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

Road Commission-snow total, Canal View-2.25 renewal on August 2025 ballot, Sheriff Department-Sheriff showed the body armor.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:

Drain Commissioner retiring 5/31/25, Hancock Trustee Ron Racine passed away and Don Maki is the appointed Trustee. The Jail consultants will be here on 4/15/25. He asked the public to attend the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to schedule a Special Board meeting on April 15, 2025 at 10:00 am and to see if Circuit Court is available. The public is encouraged to attend.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

**County Officers:**

Sheriff Saaranen stated there are 20-25 inmates in jail and the Jail Committee is recommending 2 Proposals.

Lisa Mattila, Treasurer, discussed the 2024 Land Bank report and the 39 parcels in the inventory. She discussed 4 parcels that have been removed. For 2023 taxes there were 326 forfeitures, and for 2022 there are still 55 outstanding.

Todd LaRoux, Building Inspector, discussed the CTE meeting where kids built a home. There will be an open house in mid-April.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

**1. Collective Bargaining Agreement TA-Resolution #25-03**

Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #25-03 as presented for January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2027.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Britz, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams-Janssen-no vote.

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT  
 BETWEEN  
 THE HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
 AND THE  
 HOUGHTON COUNTY AIRPORT EMPLOYEES  
 CHAPTER OF LOCAL #226  
 AFFILIATED WITH AFSCME MICHIGAN COUNCIL #25,  
 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, MUNICIPAL  
 EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO  
 Resolution #25-03**

**WHEREAS**, the Houghton County Courthouse Employees Chapter of Local #226, affiliated with AFSCME Michigan, American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, is recognized by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission and the County of Houghton as the exclusive representative of certain employees of the County of Houghton, Michigan; and,

**WHEREAS**, the parties have bargained mutually acceptable terms and conditions.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the recommendation made to the Board of Commissioners, the County resolves that the Tentative Agreement amending the collective bargaining agreement for the period January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2027, is hereby approved. It is further resolved that the Board Chairperson is authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:  
 Supported by Commissioner:  
 Roll Call Vote:  
 Yes:  
 No:  
 Motion Carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman	Date
Houghton County Board of Commission	

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.**

STATE OF MICHIGAN        )  
   )ss.  
 COUNTY OF HOUGHTON    )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular meeting held on March 11, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk  
County of Houghton

## 2. Accounts Payable & HR Duties-Resolution#25-04

Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #25-04 as presented.

Clerk Kelly opposed the Resolution.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Britz, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.



### COUNTY OF HOUGHTON Resolution # 25-04

#### **A Resolution to Transfer Human Resources and Accounts Payable Responsibilities from the Clerk's Office to the Administration Office**

**WHEREAS**, the Houghton County Board of Commissioners has conducted a comprehensive review of departmental responsibilities to enhance operational efficiency and accountability; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that the functions of Human Resources (HR) and Accounts Payable should be consolidated under the Administration Office to ensure consistency, compliance, transparency, and effective management of these essential services; and

**WHEREAS**, to achieve this goal, all HR and Accounts Payable responsibilities, including but not limited to employee record management, benefits administration, payroll processing, accounts payable transactions, and associated documentation, shall be transferred from the Clerk's Office to the Administration Office; and

**WHEREAS** these duties shall henceforth be overseen by the County Administrator or their designee to promote streamlined operations and centralized oversight.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners formally transfers all Human Resources and Accounts Payable duties from the Clerk's Office to the Administration Office, effective immediately; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that all access rights, permissions, and system controls related to HR and Accounts Payable shall be revoked from the Clerk's Office and reassigned to designated personnel within the Administration Office; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Clerk's Office and Administration Office shall collaborate to facilitate a seamless transition, including data transfer, staff training, and ongoing support to maintain continuity of services; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that all County personnel and departments shall direct any HR or Accounts Payable matters exclusively to the Administration Office from this date forward; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall take effect on **March 11, 2025**, and all future HR and Accounts Payable functions shall be managed solely under the Administration Office.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Motion passed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Tikkanen, Chairman  
Houghton County Board of Commission

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.**

STATE OF MICHIGAN        )  
  )ss.  
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON    )

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular meeting held on March 11, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk  
County of Houghton

**3. Finance Manager**

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to post the Finance Manager position as recommended by the Personnel Committee.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**4. Kevin Store-Elder Nutrition Millage Request**

Kevin Store introduced Kathleen Harter. Kathleen gave a presentation regarding the Meals on Wheels program that has been helping seniors for 30 years and serves approximately 300 seniors. Kevin stated their Board would like a 1 mill ballot proposal on the August ballot.

Chairman Tikkanen stated he was not in support of their millage as it interferes with the Jail effort. Timing is wrong, and the Board of Commissioners needs to concentrate on the Jail.

Commissioner Anderson questioned if Kevin has the MCLS to do the ballot language, and if there is a legal opinion from an Attorney. Administrator Rheault emailed the opinion from the County Attorney to Commissioner Anderson.

Kevin stated he has the MCLs stating they can proceed with the ballot initiative.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to table this matter until the April meeting.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.

**a. Attorney Fees Related to Copper Shores Community Health Foundation**

Chairman Tikkanen questioned the bill from Attorney Zappa.

Clerk Kelly explained she had to ask for a legal opinion as Kevin Store filed ballot language for the May election prior to the deadline. The deadline passed. Jaikob Djerf contacted Clerk Kelly and stated it should not be on the ballot. Clerk Kelly contacted Kevin and the election vendor and said there was a problem and to not proceed. Clerk Kelly was informed that meetings took place with Kevin and Ben Larson, Jaikob Djerf, and then another with Kevin, Administrator Rheault, Teresa Hill, Chairman Tikkanen, and Commissioner Britz prior to Kevin filing his ballot language. The two (2) Commissioners told Kevin he could file. Clerk Kelly then contacted the County Attorney and asked for an opinion. The opinion stated the filing was wrong, and had to come before the Houghton County Board of Commissioners. Clerk Kelly stopped the May ballot language and informed her election vendor and removed the language from the State Voter system (QVF).

Chairman Tikkanen said it was Clerk Kelly’s responsibility to pay for the Attorney Bill. Clerk Kelly had asked Administrator Rheault to have the Board pay for the bill since they told Kevin to put the language on the ballot.

Kevin Store offered to pay for the Attorney bill.

**5. Mine Inspector Compensation & Reporting**

Chairman Anderson discussed the hourly pay rate of \$25.96 that is the same as the Drain Commissioner.

Teresa Hill, HR Manager, stated the Mine Inspector is required to do four (4) inspections per year with a quarterly report to be provided to the Board for every inspection.

The Board discussed the current balance of \$8,000 in the budget for the Mine Inspector’s position and the opt out the previous Mine Inspector received for many years. Chairman Tikkanen stated he felt previous administrations did this in error.

Teresa recommended \$150-\$200 per inspection.

Motion was made by Commission Britz and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to pay the Mine Inspector \$150 per inspection with no opt out on insurance and no benefits.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Britz, Keranen, Tikkanen, Anderson 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**6. Copper Country Habitat for Humanity Letter of Support**

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to authorize the Chairman to sign a letter of support for Copper Country Habitat for Humanity.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0. By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**7. Marina Grant Bid Update**

The Board discussed a \$70,000 match and the bid was above the amount that was budgeted.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to accept the low bid from Wuebben Construction for \$265,896.23, and to use the \$70,000 in match money from the ARPA funds.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen 4.  
NO: None. 0  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

### **8. RFP-Countywide Wage Study**

Teresa Hill, HR Manager, stated the RFP for a wage and classification study were in the Board's packet, and estimated the cost be \$50,000 with using ARPA funds.

Motion was made by Commission Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to issue the RFP and use ARPA funds, but do not release the funds until the review is received.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Britz, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen 4.  
NO: None. 0  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

### **9. Houghton County Planning Commission Appointment**

Commissioner Keranen stated there is one (1) vacancy, and there were two (2) candidates. He recommended Jan Strieter Jr.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to appoint Jan Strieter Jr to the Houghton County Planning Commission for a 3 year term.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

### **10. Bayside Development-Andrew Kemper**

Andrew Kemper, Moyle Companies, discussed issue he has had with the Health Department, and after much time and work, he was told to go to the State. The Board discussed an upcoming Health Department meeting on March 31<sup>st</sup> in Hancock.

### **11. Houghton County Fair Board Request of Earmarked Funds**

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to pay \$10,000 in Earmarked Funds to the Houghton County Fair Board.

Commissioner Keranen asked if the Houghton County Fair Board can pay for this themselves. Commissioner Anderson stated monies are used for improvements to the buildings for the Fair.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen 3  
NO: Keranen 1  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

### **12. Materials Management Sebright Products Inc. Invoice-\$62,132.41**

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the \$62,132.41 invoice as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Keranen, Tikkanen, Britz 4.  
NO: None. 0  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

#### **a. MAC Legislative Conference**

Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to authorize the Administrator, Clerk, and Commissioners to attend the MAC Legislative Conference on April 7-9 if they wish to attend.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**13. Travel**

- a. Brian Kangas & Stephen Zapolnik-IARI Spring Conference-\$900.00
- b. Todd LaRoux-COCM Conference-\$600.00
- c. Mechanical Inspector-MIAM Spring Conference-\$625.00
- d. Plumbing Inspector-PIAM Spring Conference-\$500.00

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

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**14. Appropriations:**

- a. UPACC Dues- \$174.00**
- b. CCCMH Monthly Appropriation-\$13,707.91**

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

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 4, Nays 0.  
By Microsoft Teams: Janssen-no vote.

**Public Comments:**

Jean McParlan addressed the Board stating she would like the opportunity to vote on the Meals on Wheels program.

Sarah Green addressed the Board regarding federal funding.

Jane Bodi addressed the Board regarding federal funding.

Faith Morrison addressed the Board and reminded the Board that copies be available to the public at the meeting for of any changes to the Agenda for late additions.

**Announcements:**

None.

**Adjournment:**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 5:03 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