

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
JUNE 10, 2025**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing & a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 3:00 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 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; Gretchen Janssen, District 4; Roy Britz, District 5.

Approval of Minutes: May 13, 2025 Regular Meeting, May 29, 2025 Special Meeting

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the minutes of the May 13th and May 29th Meetings as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

Commissioner Keranen asked that #9 be added to the Agenda for Work on Courthouse bathrooms.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the agenda with the one addition as presented.

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

Public Hearing-Truth in Taxation

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

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director, stated that Houghton County is required to hold a Truth in Taxation Hearing in order to collect the maximum allowable millage rate of 6.2464 for the 2025 summer levy.

The Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF) is 0.9915

The Base Tax Rate Fraction (BTRF) is 0.9617

The 2025 taxable value is 1,318,823,506

The Base Tax Rate (after application of the BTRF) is 5.9692

After adjusting the Base Tax Rate by the estimated Convention/Facilities Tax revenue of 175,821

The resulting adjusted Base Tax Rate is 5.9690

The difference between the Maximum allowable rate of 6.2464 & the adjusted Base Tax Rate of 5.9690 is 0.2774 mills.

If approved, that difference nets a 4.65% increase in operating revenue beyond last year's base rate or approximately \$365,800 (841) beyond the base rate established with last year's levy.

c. Close Hearing

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

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

Public Comments-Agenda Items only *(3 minute limit)

Sarah Green stated she supports Resolution 25-08.

Approval of Bills-\$2,259,166.27:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2.259,166.27.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen reported to the Board on the following:

Wage Study. He referenced an email received from a Heather from Gallagher. They have submitted a proposal.

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

MSU Extension: There will be a Tall Ship coming to Houghton County in July. There will be family events.

Commissioner Anderson had nothing to report to the Board.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

HCRC: The April 2025 snow total was 329.8" in Painesdale compared to 154.9" last year.

Sheriff Department: He stated he met with Commissioner Keranen and the Sheriff. The new Houghton County Sheriff application will be coming soon for viewing inmates.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:

Jail: He stated members of the community will form a citizens group with the League of Women Voters to raise hopefully \$10,000 in funds to promote support for the August jail millage.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the Democrat and Republican parties are supporting the jail.

County Officers:

Clerk Kelly stated each City and Township should prepare for new voting equipment in 2027. The cost will be approximately \$15,000 per precinct. As of right now, the Bureau of Elections stated the State does not have the money to put towards the new equipment like they did in 2017. The Cities and Townships will also be responsible for getting new equipment for the Early Voting Center.

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director, stated that the three (3) in the Equalization Department are doing assessing. The P60 audits have been favorable audits.

Todd LaRoux, Building Department Manager, stated the marina ceiling and door frames have been painted. The FRP board is a problem, and the new one hasn't arrived yet. It will need to be installed. The roof is 100% done. The new generator should be here in 4-5 weeks.

Nolan Miles, the new Houghton County Drain Commissioner, introduced himself to the Board.

Administrator Rheault introduced Alex who is the new Finance Manager.

Old Business:

1. Disposable County Properties

Commissioner Janssen stated that she has reviewed 6 properties. Out of the 6 properties, 5 are land locked. She will meet with Jaikob Djerf about 1 of the properties and report back to the Board.

2. BOC 2025 Meeting Schedule Update

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the updated Board of Commissioners monthly meeting and Work Session meeting schedules as presented.

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

3. Materials Management Purchase Request-\$12,620.00

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the bid from Badger Scale for \$12,620.00 for the repair of the weighing equipment as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

4. Phone Update

Commissioner Anderson stated that he had met with people on Friday from UP and Running. They provided a Hosted Phone System Agreement for \$21,600 per year for 3 years. They can start work on June 11th.

Commissioner Janssen stated that she spoke with a representative from Baraga Telephone and they recommended UP and Running.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Hosted Phone System Agreement with UP and Running for a 3 year contract for \$15 per telephone beginning June 11th, and rescind the Board's previous Motion for approving \$50,000.00 for purchasing new telephones.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

5. Wage Study

Commissioner Keranen stated he has only received a response from Gallagher. He said MGT Consulting should submit a proposal by next month's Board meeting.

New Business:

1. Resolution 25-10 Authorize Collection of County Taxes

Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt Resolution #25-10 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0



RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF HOUGHTON BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION IMPOSING 2025 SUMMER PROPERTY TAX LEVY PURSUANT TO PUBLIC ACT 357 OF 2004, AND NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF COUNTY ALLOCATED TAX LEVY

Resolution # 25-10

WHEREAS, The Houghton County Board of Commissioners is authorized under the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, as amended to levy and collect County allocated property taxes; and

WHEREAS, the General Property Tax Act has been amended by Public Act 357 of 2004, being MCL 211.44a, to require all Michigan Counties to impose a summer tax levy of the total County allocated tax;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Public Act 357 of 2004, the Houghton County allocated tax shall be levied and collected on July 1, 2025 at the rate of 100% of the amount allocated after application of the "Headlee" millage reduction fraction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of each city and township in Houghton County is directed to account for and deliver all County allocated tax collections for 2025 in accordance with the provisions of Public Act 357 of 2004; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Clerk shall deliver a copy of the Resolution to the Treasurer of each city and township in Houghton County.

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

Moved by Commissioner

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No: None (0)

Motion carried.

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 June 10, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 10th day of June, 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

2. Resolution 25-11 Authorize 2025 County Millage Rate

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt Resolution #25-1 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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



**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF HOUGHTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**TRUTH IN TAXATION
Resolution # 25-11**

WHEREAS, The Houghton County Board of Commissioners has the authority to establish the number of operating mills to be levied from within its authorized millage rate;

AND WHEREAS, the additional millage rate will increase revenue from Ad Valorem Property Taxes by \$365,841.00 over such revenues generated by levies permitted without holding a public hearing;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the operating rate for the County of Houghton will increase by 0.2774 mill, yielding a total operating rate of 6.2464 mills in 2025 in accordance with Act 5, P.A., 1982, Act 2, P.A., 1986 and Act 264, P.A., 1987.

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

Moved by Commissioner

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No: None (0)

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

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STATE OF MICHIGAN)
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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 June 10, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 10th day of June, 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

3. Treatment Court SAMHSA Grant-Gail Ploe, WUPHD

Gail Ploe explained the SAMHSA Grant to the Board. She stated the WUPHD would be the fiduciary for the grant and to receive \$2 million over 5 years. Gail had written the grant and Administrator Rheault was in support of the grant. Gail stated the Judges are in support of the grant.

Chairman Tikkanen asked if the grant creates a job position. Gail stated it would change the part-time employee to full-time for Treatment Court. Chairman Tikkanen said this matter never came to the Board. Gail said she has worked with Ben Larson. Commissioner Britz asked who would oversee this employee. Gail said the person could be a WUPHD employee.

Gail stated Jason Rota is the current part time employee of Houghton County for Treatment Court.

Commissioner Britz feels the employee should be a WUPHD employee.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to authorize Cathryn Beer to be the new Signing/Business Official. The County and WUPHD will discuss who will be the supervisor for the new full-time position by the next Board meeting.

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

4. MSSA Scholarship Fund-Christy Hilgers, Canal View

Christy Hilgers stated that she is looking for all 83 counties to pay \$241 so they could reach their \$20,000 target.

Commissioner Anderson stated the County cannot contribute, but people can individually.

5. Resolution 25-08 To Oppose Proposed Cuts to Medicaid by the Federal Government

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution 25-08 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Britz 3.

NO: Tikkanen, Keranen 2.



RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF HOUGHTON BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

URGING ACTION TO OPPOSE PROPOSED CUTS TO MEDICAID BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Resolution # 25-08

WHEREAS, the Houghton County Board of Commissioners recognizes that Michigan's public mental health system is facing a serious and escalating funding crisis, driven by several compounding factors, including the loss of Medicaid-covered lives, inflationary pressures, increasing demand for services, and expanding regulatory burdens; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan public health system funding increases for core behavioral health and intellectual/development disability services have not kept pace with medical inflation and have in fact, recognized flat funding for the last five (5) years, while medical inflation has increased by over 10% and Medicaid expenses have increased by nearly 25%; and

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has lost nearly 700,000 Medicaid beneficiaries since the end of the Public Health Emergency (PHE), resulting in reduced capitation payments to CMHSPs despite continued or increasing demand for mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the proposed cuts to Medicaid would force impossible choices including-shrinking access to care, shifting costs onto the State budget and to local providers and threatening the coverage of people with disabilities who require daily support; and

WHEREAS, additional factors exacerbating this crisis include skyrocketing inpatient psychiatric and residential costs, AND Misclassification of Medicaid eligibility groups resulting in lost revenue; and

WHEREAS, failure to adequately fund the public behavioral health system undermines the ability of CMHSPs and the State of Michigan to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents-including children, adults with serious mental illness, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and those with substance use disorders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners urgently calls on the United States Legislature, and the President to:

1. **Fully allocate Medicaid behavioral health funds to the State of Michigan** in fiscal year 2025 and beyond.
2. Forego propose reductions to Medicaid through; Shifting to block grants, Per Capita Caps, reducing Medicaid expansion, or other suggested means of reducing the federal share for Medicaid spending which would transfer the financial burden to the State of Michigan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to local Senate and House of Representatives of the U.S. Legislature and the Michigan Association of Counties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Michigan’s members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, as well as to the Michigan Association of Counties.

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

Moved by Commissioner

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No: None (0)

Motion carried.

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 June 10, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 10th day of June, 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

6. Resolution 25-09 to Declare the Week Beginning June 17th as “Big Annie Week” in Houghton County

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution 25-09 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0



**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF HOUGHTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THE WEEK BEGINNING JUNE
17TH AS “BIG ANNIE WEEK” IN HOUGHTON COUNTY**

Resolution # 25-09

WHEREAS, Anna “Big Annie” Klobuchar Clemenc was a courageous labor leader, community advocate, and symbol of resilience who played a pivotal role in the Copper Country Strike of 1913-1914; and

WHEREAS, Big Annie led marches, raised morale, and stood as a towering symbol of strength and solidarity for the working men and women of the Copper Country; and

WHEREAS, her legacy continues to inspire the community, labor rights advocates, and those who champion social justice and equality; and

WHEREAS, Houghton County wishes to honor the enduring contributions of Big Annie and ensure her story remains a vibrant part of our shared heritage; and

WHEREAS, June 17th marks a meaningful date to begin a week of remembrance and celebration of Big Annie’s life and legacy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaim the week beginning June 17th of each year as:

“BIG ANNIE WEEK”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during Big Annie Week, Houghton County encourages residents, schools, organizations, and visitors to reflect on and celebrate the life, impact, and values of Big Annie through events, educational programs, and acts of community service.

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

Moved by Commissioner

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No: None (0)

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

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Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

7. Jail Rendering-\$3,500.00

Commissioner Britz discussed paying the \$3,500.00 for the jail rendering so the public can see what is happening with the jail.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve \$3,500.00 for jail rendering.

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

8. Materials Management-July 5th

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to close Materials Management on Saturday, July 5, 2025.

Commissioner Britz stated a lot of people go on Saturdays.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Keranen, Anderson 3.

NO: Tikkanen, Britz 2.

9. Work on Courthouse bathrooms

Commissioner Keranen stated that there is a cracked pipe in the IT department with a wet floor, and issues with the bathrooms with the pipes on the 3rd floor. Todd LaRoux explained the pipe lines that run from the building to the outside. Northern Plumbing could start on the project in a couple of weeks.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the estimated cost is approximately \$25,000.00. The bathrooms having issues are now closed.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranenn and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to agree to a contract with Northern Plumbing and Hearing for up to \$25,000.00 for sewer line repair.

Administrator Rheault stated there is money in the courthouse maintenance for this project.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

Todd LaRoux stated Tom Bingham did all the work in locating the pipes.

Travel::

None.

Appropriations:

a. CCCMH Monthly Appropriation-\$13,707.91

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

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

Public Comments:

Faith Morrison stated she has the tri-folds for the jail for people to hand out.

Craig Waddell suggested setting up something for people to make donations for the jail using a credit card.

Faith Morrison said the Committee has to be set up before donations can be made.

Sarah Green discussed various concerns.

Announcements:

Chairman Tikkanen reminded everyone that Vet Fest would be from 11 am to 3 pm at the MTU SDC.

Commissioner Keranen stated Joe Andretti celebrated his 100th birthday. He is a Keweenaw County resident.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 4:27 p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk