

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

HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 14, 2025

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Circuit Courtroom on the 3rd Floor of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with the public viewing in person and by Zoom.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tikkanen at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Tikkanen.

Moment of Silence in Memory of Glenn Pyhtila:

Commissioner Anderson asked for a moment of silence for former Controller, Glenn Pyhtila who recently passed away.

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: September 9, 2025 Regular Meeting, September 23, 2025 Special Meeting:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2025 and the September 23, 2025 as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

Commissioner Britz asked that L #9 be corrected to be Houghton County Emergency Response Trailer.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the agenda with the one (1) correction as presented.

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

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

David Gemignani, Attorney, stated the Tri County Public Defenders Contract that is in the Board's packet is not the last draft that was circulated.

Approval of Bills-\$2,324,807.94

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve paying the bills submitted of \$2,324,807.94 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None discussed.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Keranen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Janssen had nothing to report.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following: Kate Beer will be retiring at the end of October.

WUPPDR: Commissioner Britz received the 2025 Oreste Chiantello Award at the September Annual Meeting.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following: A tour of the Sharon Avenue property will be on Friday, October 17, 2025 at 9:00 am. The public is welcome to attend the walk through.

Road Commission: He discussed the over \$2 million due from FEMA, and an award the Road Commission received for having the lowest employee injury rate. Roads will be fixed from Erickson Drive to the Post Office, and on US-41 to Scott Street.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: The State approved the budget for the Veteran's Office.

The third Jail Committee has been formed. Jared Hyrkas will be the Chair. Also on the committee will be Faith Morrison, and three (3) people from the Republican Party-Mark, Sharon, and Dan. He has a call out to the Democrat Party. Todd LaRoux will assist as needed.

County Officers:

Dennis Hext gave a report to the Board that 3-4 businesses are expanding. Construction has begun on the 6 hangers. The terminal construction is going forward. Interviews have begun for his replacement. He will be traveling to Utah in November about getting an additional seasonal flight. Century 21 has the listing for 2 lots for sale. They have approved the fence, and Opus Web to redo their website, and the snow removal for the upcoming season.

Todd LaRoux, Building Department Manager, stated they have had 400 building permits. For the maintenance department, the new mailbox has been installed, the back up generator is done, and the gas meter has been moved outside. The water issue under the deck is being taken care of. The entrance under the deck should be reopened by Friday.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

1. Michigan State University Extension Update, Paul Putnam-District Director

Paul Putnam was not in attendance.

2. Houghton County Road Commissioners Annual Compensation & Benefits

Commissioner Britz stated the County Board needs to adopt this annually.

Motion was made by Commissioner Britz, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the Houghton County Road Commissioners Annual Compensation & Benefits as presented.

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

3. Houghton County Equalization Annual Apportionment Report

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director, discussed the report that was in the Board's packet.

Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt the Houghton County Equalization Annual Apportionment Report as presented.

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

4. Houghton County Equalization GIS Contracting/RFP

Jaikob Djerf discussed getting RFP's from different companies.

5. Resolution #2025-021 Opposing Houghton of Representative's FY26 Budget Cuts to County Revenue Sharing

The Board tabled this Resolution.

6. Resolution #2025-026 Adoption Agreement for Eligible Governmental 457 Plan

Administrator Rheault explained this is an annual Resolution through Dan Emmendorfer.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution #2025-026 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

RESOLUTION # 2025-026

ADOPTION AGREEMENT FOR ELIGIBLE GOVERNMENTAL 457 PLAN

The undersigned authorized representative of Houghton County (the Employer) hereby certifies that the following resolutions were duly adopted by the Employer on October 14, 2025, and that such resolutions have not been modified or rescinded as of the date hereof:

RESOLVED, that the form of amended 457 Plan and Trust effective March 13, 2025, presented to this meeting is hereby approved and adopted and that an authorized representative of the Employer is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the Administrator of the Plan one or more counterparts of the Plan.

The undersigned further certifies that attached hereto as Exhibits A and B, respectively, are true copies of Houghton County 457 Plan as amended and restated and the Summary of 457 Provisions, which are hereby approved and adopted.

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
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 true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton as its Regular Meeting held on October 14, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of October 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

7. Resolution #2025-027 PA 152 The Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act

Administrator Rheault explained this is an annual Resolution through Osiaci that the Board has exempted from in the past.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt Resolution #2025-027 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None.

RESOLUTION 25-27

EXEMPTION RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE ANNUAL EXEMPTION OPTION AS SET FORTH 2011 PUBLIC ACT 152, THE PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION ACT

WHEREAS, 2011 Public Act 152 (the "Act") was passed by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor on September 24, 2011; WHEREAS, the Act contains three options for complying with the requirements of the Act;

WHEREAS, the three options are as follows:

- 1) Section 3 - "Hard Caps" Option - limits a public employer's total annual health care costs for employees based on coverage levels, as defined in the Act;
- 2) Section 4 - "80%/20%" Option limits a public employer's share of total annual health care costs to not more than 80%. This option requires an annual majority vote of the governing body;
- 3) Section 8 - "Exemption" Option - a local unit of government, as defined in the Act, may exempt itself from the requirements of the Act by an annual 2/3 vote of the governing body;

WHEREAS, the GOVERNENG BODY has decided to adopt the annual Exemption option as its choice of compliance under the Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Commission in Houghton County elects to comply with the requirements of 2011 Public Act 152, the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act, by adopting the annual Exemption option for the medical benefit plan coverage year January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

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
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 true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton as its Regular Meeting held on October 14, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of October, 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, Houghton County Clerk

8. Resolution #2025-028 County Clerk’s Office CPL Fund

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution #2025-028 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE CPL FUND
RESOLUTION #25-28**

WHEREAS, MCL 28.425X specifies on (2) that the expenditures from the County Concealed Pistol licensing fund shall be used by the County Clerk only for the cost of administering this act. Allowable expenditures include, but are not limited to, any of the following costs of the County Clerk:

- (a) Staffing requirements directly attributable to performing functions required under this act.
- (b) Technology upgrades, including technology to take fingerprints by electronic means.
- (c) Office supplies.
- (d) Document storage and retrieval systems and system upgrades.; and

WHEREAS, since 2015 the County Clerk agreed to 10% be taken from the CPL fund for two (2) employees from the Clerk’s Office; and

WHEREAS, it was discovered the County Clerk’s wages and benefits and two (2) other staff members had 10% of their wages and benefits coming from the CPL fund. This was then corrected to two (2) employees, one still being the County Clerk’s; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners acknowledges that County Clerk will submit the amount of time two (2) employees work on Concealed Weapons permits each pay period and the appropriate amount will be deducted from the CPL fund.

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 October 14, 2025, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of October, 2025.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

9. Houghton County Trail Project, Joe Schneller

Joe Schneller provided pictures and a letter to the Board to review. The trailer is stored at the Airport and is in perfect shape. He raised the money on his own, but is now asking the two (2) County Boards for financial assistance. He raised \$12,000 in the past. Due to vandalism, he is replacing approximately 65 signs in Keweenaw County that were taken. Quincy-Franklin Fire Department will assist with emergencies with the trailer as they are the closest to the Airport. Dennis Hext stated the trailer will be used if there is need for assistance at the Airport.

Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve \$2,000 for the Emergency Trailer Fund.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

- 10. Survey & Appraisal for Houghton County Marina &**
- 11. Survey & Appraisal for Houghton County Medical Care Facility**

Commissioner Keranen discussed the County Held Properties Committee meeting where the Committee discussed getting appraisals done at the Marina and Canal View.

Chairman Tikkanen discussed consequences if the County sold the Marina due to the DNR grants. Commissioner Keranen stated Jeff is getting a list of the grants for the Committee.

Chairman Tikkanen and Administrator Rheault will work on preparing a RFP for requests for appraisals.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to proceed with getting a RFP for a business survey and appraisal for the Marina and Canal View.

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

12. Tri-County Public Defenders Insurance Coverage Update

Administrator Rheault discussed the email in the Board's packet from Ann Harris.

Commissioner Anderson discussed the County being added as an insured under the TCPD's insurance coverage. Chairman Tikkanen stated the County should be added.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen for Article 16 for reasonable insurance is defined by the County as adding Houghton County as being insured.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

13. Tri-County Public Defenders FY26 & FY27 Contract Update

Commissioner Anderson discussed the edit/deletion on the 2nd paragraph of the contract from Prosecutor Chuck Miller.

Administrator Rheault stated the dates are incorrect.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to accept the Contract with the article revision by Prosecutor Chuck Miller on paragraph 12 E as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

David Gemignani confirmed the dates are correct on pages 1, 3 and 4. On Page 4, Paragraph B, Item E should say that Houghton County is to pay, not the Tri-County Public Defenders as required by MDIC.

Administrator Rheault stated per MDIC, Houghton County is responsible for the Tri-County Public Defenders cost.

Ann Harris stated they could bring the contract to the Baraga and Keweenaw County meetings tomorrow if Administrator Rheault can make the changes prior to the meetings.

14. Houghton County Snow Removal Service Bid Selection

The Board received 2 bids from Ziemnick and Superior.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to hire Ziemnick for snow removal.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

15. Houghton County Land Bank Authority Board Applications

The Board received 2 applications from Timothy Gasperich and Jeff Jepsen.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to appoint Tim Gasperich to the Houghton County Land Bank Authority.

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

16. Tri-County Public Defenders August 2025 Payment Request-\$70,644.88 (\$56,006.96 loan remaining before this payment)

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to pay \$56,006.96 for the August 2025 payment request.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to pay \$70,644 minus the \$56,006.96 pending the payment from MDIC is received this week.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

17. National Associations of Counties 2026 Dues-\$747.00

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to pay \$747.00 for the 2026 National Associations of Counties dues as presented.

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

18. The OEI Group, Courthouse Postage Machine Lease Payment Request-\$22,059.45

Administrator Rheault recommended continuing with OEI. She discussed the report done monthly by the Clerk's Office and thanked Renee for getting the report to the department heads each month.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve \$22,059.45 for the new postage machine as presented.

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

19. Houghton County Road Commission Resolution

Commissioner Britz discussed the rain damage that effected four (4) townships.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Britz and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Houghton County Road Commission Resolution for the disaster assistance as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

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

NO: None. 0

Appropriations:

- 1. Copper Country Community Mental Health-\$27,415.82**
- 2. Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce-\$440.00**
- 3. Michigan State University Extension FY2026 Payment Request-\$48,410.00**

Commissioner Anderson requested the Board table #3 and invite Paul Putnam to November's meeting.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to pay Copper Country Community Mental Health and Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce as presented.

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

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to table the Michigan State University Extension FY2026 Payment Request.

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

Public Comments:

Faith Morrison addressed the Board.

Wanda Kiiskila addressed the Board.

Announcements:

- 1. 97th District Court Treatment Court Case Manager Position Opening**

Administrator Rheault stated the opening in District Court is on the County website under Employment. Applicants can contact Keith Anderson.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk