

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 15, 2017**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing/Regular meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 2017, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Albert Koskela at 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Koskela.

Roll call:

The following commissioners responded to roll call:

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Albert Koskela, District 2; Anton Pintar, District 3; Scott Ala, District 4; Tim Palosaari, District 5.

Approval of Minutes:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting dated July 11, 2017 and the Special Meeting minutes dated July 26, 2017 as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Pintar, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the Agenda and add #6-Jail addition, and #5 d-Travel Request for Sheryl Ala-District Court as changed.

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

Public Hearing-Rural Development Grant Applications

Open hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to open the hearing.

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

Discussion and Public Comment:

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the required Grant Applications to the Board for the two (2) Sheriff patrol cars.

Close Hearing:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Pintar to close the hearing.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela, Ala 5.

Public Comments:

Melissa Davis, Energy Manager with HEET provided a handout to the Board on an Energy Forum and gave a brief presentation.

Horst Schmidt addressed the Board.

Clarence McDonald addressed the Board.

Christina Sundstrom addressed the Board.

Approval of Bills:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve paying the bills submitted of \$841,819.06 as presented. The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar 5.

NO: None 0.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following: Copper Country Mental Health, Calumet Township and Hancock Township.

Commissioner Pintar reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Planning Commission, and the Western UP Health Board.

Commissioner Ala reported to the Board on the following: Houghton County Road Commission.

Commissioner Palosaari reported to the Board on the Houghton County Fair. The Fair will be on August 24-27, 2017. Volunteers are needed.

Chairman Koskela reported to the Board on the U.P. County Commissioners regarding the U.P. Energy.

County Officers:

Dennis Hext, Airport Manager, reported that the Airport service Proposals are done, and updated the Board on the sewer project.

Kathleen Beattie, Houghton County Treasurer, informed the Board that the Blight Grant for Houghton County was denied for this year.

Todd LaRoux, Building Inspector, updated the Board on the Houghton County Medical Care Facility construction progress.

Jennifer Lorenz, Houghton County Clerk, informed the Board that there will be three (3) vacancies on the Houghton County Planning Commission Board.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Tikkanen, seconded by Commissioner Ala to have an ad run in the Daily Mining Gazette for the three (3) vacancies that will occur on December 31, 2017, and have the Board vacancies ad on the Houghton County website.

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

New Business:

1. Houghton County Veteran's Affairs Office

Gene LaRochelle, Houghton County Department of Veteran's Chairman, addressed the Board, and introduced new Veteran's Service Officer, Joseph Battisfore. Joseph Battisfore gave a brief presentation to the Board and provided a handout.

2. 911 Dispatch MOU

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, explained the three (3) year Memorandum of Understanding with the Michigan State Police regarding 911 dispatch services for Houghton County.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ala, seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to approve the 911 Memorandum of Understanding with the Michigan State Police.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Ala, Tikkanen, Koskela, Pintar, Palosaari 5.

NO: None 0.

3. Building Code Discussion

Eric Forsberg, Administrator, addressed the Board regarding an incident. The Board discussed this, and decided that this matter go to the Appeals Board.

4. Appropriations

- a. WUPPDR - \$2,866.50
- b. NorthCare Network -\$48,548.00
- c. MAC Dues - \$5,343.64

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Pintar to approve the above-mentioned Appropriations.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Palosaari, Pintar, Tikkanen, Koskela, Ala 5.

NO: None. 0

5. Travel Requests

- a. 2017 Annual MAC Conference
- b. Todd LaRoux-Houghton County Building Inspector
- c. Michael Makinen-Houghton County Prosecutor
- d. Sheryl Ala-District Court

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari, seconded by Commissioner Ala to approve the above-mentioned Travel Requests.

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

6. Jail Addition

Commissioner Pintar provided an outline to the Board. The Board had a lengthy discussion. He stated he would like public input regarding the jail addition, and Commissioners Palosaari and Tikkanen also agreed.

Eric Forsberg asked if the Board wanted him to look into the cost of having a rough draft drawing of the jail addition done. No answer was given.

The Board agreed that the Board would not pursue the option of a ballot language decrease in millage for the Houghton County Medical Care Facility.

Public Comments:

Clarence McDonald addressed the Board.

Horst Schmidt addressed the Board.

Doug Hebner, Houghton County Sheriff Department, informed the Board and the public attending the meeting that approximately 90% of the inmates are all felony arrests who are currently lodged in the Houghton County Jail.

Christina Sundstrom addressed the Board.

Commissioner Ala stated he is working on something himself for a possible option for a community facility.

Announcements:

Jennifer Lorenz, Houghton County Clerk, announced that E-Recordings will be implemented soon in the Register of Deeds Office, and a major upgrade to the computer software. There will be two (2) companies for the customers to use, CSC Records and Simplifile. There will be a lunch/learn meeting for customers by invitation only on October 4<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm., and Jennifer announced that she saved the County \$134,000.00 by getting all of the upgrades and programs for free.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Palosaari and seconded by Commissioner Tikkanen to adjourn at 6:28 pm.

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

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Albert Koskela, Chairman

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Jennifer Lorenz, County Clerk