

**SHARON AVENUE& JAIL PROPERTY USE COMMITTEE
MEETING
SEPTEMBER 5, 2025**

The Sharon Avenue & Jail Property Use Committee held a Meeting on Friday, September 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.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 Vice-Chairman Britz at 9:00 a.m.

Roll call:

The following Committee members responded to roll call done by County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

Roy Britz, Jennifer Kelly, Lisa Mattila, Barry Fink, Todd LaRoux, Alex and Chelsea.

Also in attendance was Tom Bingham and Nickole Jollimore.

Approval of Agenda/Additions:

A Motion was made by Lisa Mattila and seconded by Todd LaRoux to approve the agenda as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 7, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

None.

New Business:

- 1. Set date(s) and time(s) for the Committee to tour the Sharon Avenue Property and the current jail.**

The Committee will discuss touring both facilities at a later date.

- 2. Discuss the Sharon Avenue property and the current jail**

Vice Chairman Britz stated he spoke with John Paul Pietila and they should be out of the church by October 1st. Once they are out, they will do a walk through and the County will get the keys. They still have to replace the roof over the garage per the Purchase Agreement. He asked if the County would like to do it, or if they should.

Todd LaRoux recommended the church replace the roof.

Lisa Mattila asked for a copy of the Purchase Agreement. Vice-Chairman Britz stated Ben Larson was in charge back then, but he will locate it.

Vice-Chairman Britz discussed the church taking the pews and the kitchen equipment that both were also in the Purchase Agreement.

He stated the voters want to know what will be done with the Sharon Avenue Property and the current jail.

Todd LaRoux provided a copy of a Design Professional's Opinion of Probable Cost-Preliminary Design from OHM Advisors from September 25, 2023 which was to renovate the Sharon Avenue Property for non-essential court employees. The total was \$2,524,710.00. Todd questioned whether the structure is worth \$2.5 million to renovate. He stated the property was built in the 1970s and pre 1978 properties will have abatement costs. He questioned the tile in the kitchen area.

Jaikob Djerf asked if the property would have to be winterized for this upcoming winter, and if it could be used as storage. Todd LaRoux and Tom Bingham commented on the storage units the County currently rents for the Courts. The stuff in storage could be moved to save money.

Vice-Chairman Britz discussed what departments could be moved to the Sharon Avenue property. He stated that possibly the Administration Offices, Building Department, Commissioners Hall, and possibly others. Lisa Mattila and Jaikob Djerf stated they are not interested in moving up to Sharon Avenue. Jaikob explained that he should be where the Register of Deeds and Treasurer are. Clerk Kelly stated that she is open to going to Sharon Avenue. Jaikob asked if Sharon Avenue could be rented out or used as a daycare center since there is such need for daycare.

Lisa Mattila suggested renting the property to other businesses.

Todd LaRoux stated that in his opinion, to not use the current property.

Jaikob Djerf stated the property is not fire safe.

Vice-Chairman Britz discussed UP Engineering designing the Sheriff Department Building and putting the jail behind the building at the Sharon Avenue Property.

Todd LaRoux discussed concerns about the roof and the costs for snow removal.

Jaikob Djerf asked what the cost would be to demolish the building. Lisa stated an average house is about \$10,000-\$15,000. It could be between \$60,000-\$130,000. Unknown cost at this time.

Todd LaRoux said the Sharon Avenue property needs a new HVAC system.

Lisa Mattila suggested getting bids for the cost to secure the beams in the sanctuary area where the roofing is bad. All of the other roofing is ok.

Todd LaRoux stated he feels the County needs to stabilize the structure, find out what offices would go up to the property, and the cost.

Tom Bingham will find out the square footage of the current storage units.

Jaikob Djerf asked if anything was budgeted for the Sharon Avenue property. Alex, Finance Manager stated it has been discussed.

3. Set future meeting dates and times.

The next meeting will be on Friday, October 10, 2025 at 9:00 am.

Public Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Lisa Mattila and seconded by Jaikob Djerf to adjourn at 10:10 a.m.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 7, Nays 0.

Roy Britz, Vice-Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

APPROVED _____

JK