

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 11:00 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 Chairman Tikkanen at 11:00 a.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 Agenda/Additions:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to accept the agenda as presented.

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

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

Dave Gemignani, Attorney, stated he just received a copy of the proposed Contract before today's meeting. His Board approved a different proposed Contract yesterday. He requested a five (5) year contract. Has concern about the Indemnification clause and stated his Board would like it removed or make the clause bilateral. He would like to speak with Attorney Roger Zappa.

Unfinished Business:

1. Tri-County Public Defenders Contract Proposal

Commissioner Anderson discussed the Indemnification Clause and stated the County Board was following Attorney Zappa's advice. He discussed a contract for two (2) years to get the financials taken care of and have good accounting, and reporting.

Commissioner Keranen agreed with what Commissioner Anderson said.

Attorney Gemignani discussed the term clause and his concerns for having a one (1) year contract that can be terminated after 6 months for no cause. He discussed a 2 year contract with potential termination after 1 year, first paragraph and discussed changing it.

Ann from Gemignani's Office stated they had a conflict in Section 8 and would like to add or her successors. Under Section 14 to add Houghton County will also provide any financials that the Tri-County Public Defenders request.

Commissioner Anderson discussed Section 25-first paragraph and suggested changing it to 1 year or more, not 6 months.

Ann from Gemignani's Office stated they had issues in the past with previous Administrator's in getting general ledger information to them. They are getting it now.

Dave Gemignani again requested the Indemnification Clause be removed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the Tri-County Public Defenders Contract with adding "or her successors" to Section 2, and changing it to say "1 year or more" instead of 6 months.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Keranen, Tikkanen, Britz 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams-Janssen-no vote.

New Business:

1. Notary Service Cost

Clerk Kelly explained that the cost for notary services has increased. She requested the cost for notarizing documents increase from \$5.00 per document to \$7.00 per document effective October 1, 2025, and then increase to \$10.00 per document effective April 1, 2026. Also, home births done in the County Clerk's Office have a cost of \$50.00. Cost for photocopying will be \$1.00 per page.

Commissioner Britz had concern regarding the cost at the Sheriff Department. Clerk Kelly will speak with Sheriff Saaranen.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the County Clerk's Office charging \$7.00 per document effective October 1, 2025 and \$10.00 per document effective April 1, 2026 for notarizing documents, and to charge \$50 for home births being recorded in Houghton County, and \$1.00 per page for photocopying.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Britz 4.

NO: None. 0

By Microsoft Teams-Janssen-no vote.

Public Comments:

David Gemignani discussed the indemnification clause and the requirement for insurance.

Commissioner Anderson stated that Attorney Gemignani could send a letter to the County if they could not get insurance.

Ann from Attorney Gemignani's Office stated they have malpractice insurance if a client files a lawsuit against them, but they cannot get directors insurance.

Administrator Rheault will make the required two (2) changes to the Tri-County Public Defenders Contract.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adjourn at 11:36 a.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

Approved at BOC Meeting:_____

Clerk’s Initials