

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
JANUARY 5, 2026**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 10:00 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 10:01 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 County Clerk, Jennifer Kelly:

Tom Tikkanen, District 1; Glenn Anderson, District 3; Roy Britz, District 5.
By Microsoft Teams: Joel Keranen, District 2; Gretchen Janssen District 4.

Agenda/Additions:

Commissioner Anderson requested discussion about the audit #4, discussion on ARPA monies #5, and discussion on Tri County Public Defenders #6 be added.

Commissioner Keranen requested #7 be added to discuss the December Board meeting and his three (3) questions.

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

Todd LaRoux, Building Manager, discussed the lapse in time the inspectors are receiving their mileage checks.

Houghton County Board of Commissioners Work Session:

1. Letter from County Administrator

Commissioner Anderson stated he feels a Commissioner should be able to put something on the Agenda.

Commissioner Keranen stated the Commissioners should submit a request by Friday by Noon before the meeting.

Faith Morrison stated the public would like to see all information in the packets that are put online.

Chairman Tikkanen said that anything added after the packets are put online, could be available to the public at the meeting.

2. Finance Committee Discussion (appointment of alternatives)

Commissioner Anderson stated the Finance Committees goal is to meet weekly.

Commissioner Keranen agreed to adding an alternate. He appreciated receiving scanned copies of the AP.

Administrator Rheault went over the Finance Manager procedure she has put into place. The goal has been to have checks done by Wednesday, and if there is no response from the Finance Committee, the Finance Manager would contact the alternate(s).

Todd LaRoux asked if checks could be given out before the Finance Committee meets.

Administrator Rheault stated there is an internal finance procedure. Invoices are to be provided by the departments by Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. and would be processed by Wednesday.

3. Rules of Order Update

Administrator Rheault discussed the need to change public comment from five (5) to three (3) minutes.

Commissioner Anderson discussed eliminating #19 or changing shall to may.

The committee discussed getting a better quality for recording, and putting the recorded Microsoft Teams or Zoom meetings on YouTube. Alex, IT, will look into recordings and being able to hear people speak and to put the meetings on YouTube.

Chairman Tikkanen will meet with Clerk Kelly regarding the Committee Appointments on the Rules of Order.

4. Update on Audit

Administrator Rheault stated the contract with Anderson and Tackman is on the last year. She requested the next audit be started earlier in December as the County can do this, but she was informed that the audit could not start until February 2026. She has received no response, and the CPA has not requested any documents. She hopes the CPA will process the audit on time.

Faith Morrison suggested the Board bring up these topics during negotiations for future contracts.

5. Update on ARPA monies

Administrator Rheault stated all ARPA monies have been used. She tried to submit everything by the December deadline, but there was problems. There has been an extension to submit to December 2026 as their portal is down.

Administrator Rheault will email all of the Commissioners a list of the late projects that were approved.

6. Update on Tri County Public Defenders

Administrator Rheault had left, so no discussion took place.

7. Discussion on December Board meeting

Commissioner Keranen stated he had asked three (3) questions. The first was why nothing was done when the 12 year old was laughed at for reading a bible verse. The second was why nothing was done when the last person told him to f* off. The third was if procedures have changed for how Commissioners interact. He referred to Commissioner Anderson's comment that he didn't have guts to make a Motion on his Resolution. Commissioner Anderson admitted to saying Commissioner Keranen did not have guts to make the Motion, but did not call him a coward. Commissioner Anderson agreed to the bad comments being made.

Chairman Tikkanen stated he would pay more attention in the future.

Commissioner Janssen stated there was a large audience and felt the Sheriff looked out for everyone's safety. She felt Chairman Tikkanen monitored the meeting very well.

Faith Morrison stated she did hear the bad comment and felt the meeting was handled properly.

Chairman Tikkanen stated he felt the Resolution was not a topic for County Government and the Resolution was disruptive.

Public Comment-*(3-minute limit):

Todd LaRoux expressed concern for late fees for past due invoices.

Faith Morrison gave a brief explanation about the Jail and Jail Needs Subcommittee meetings.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adjourn at 11:32 a.m.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

APPROVED_____

JK